



December 2021

WATT'S NEWS



HAPPY HOLIDAYS TO ALL



All Town Hall offices are closed on Friday
December 24 in observance of
Christmas Day and Friday,
Dec 31, 2021 in observance of New Year's Day

FUN FACTS: The Winter Solstice, also known as Midwinter, occurs around December 21 or 22 each year in the Northern hemisphere, and June 20 or 21 in the Southern Hemisphere. It occurs on the shortest day or longest night of the year, sometimes said to astronomically mark the beginning or middle of a hemisphere's winter. The word solstice derives from Latin, Winter Solstice meaning Sun set still in winter. Worldwide, interpretation of the event varies from culture to culture, but most hold a recognition of rebirth, involving festivals, gatherings, rituals or other celebrations. Many cultures celebrate or celebrated a holiday near the winter solstice; examples of these include Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, New Years, Pongal, Yalda and many other festivals of light. The solstice itself may have remained a special moment of the annual cycle of the year since Neolithic times. This is attested by physical remains in the layouts of late Neolithic and Bronze Age archeological sites like Stonehenge and New Grange in the British Isles. The primary axes of both of these monuments seem to have been carefully aligned on a sight-line framing the winter solstice sunrise (New Grange) and the winter solstice sunset (Stonehenge). The winter solstice may have been immensely important because communities were not assured to live through the winter, and had to be prepared during the previous nine months.

WATER METER REMINDER

To avoid a water meter freeze-up, potential failure or possible flooding of the area where the meter is located; keep the area near the meter above freezing.

****NOTICE****

CMELD CUSTOMERS MAY NOW SIGN UP FOR PAPERLESS BILLING. TO SIGN UP PLEASE EMAIL YOUR NAME, ADDRESS, ACCOUNT NUMBER(S), PHONE NUMBER AND THE EMAIL ADDRESS YOU WISH TO RECEIVE YOUR BILL AT TO:
cmeldadmin@townofchester.net ALL INFORMATION MUST BE INCLUDED IN ORDER TO COMPLETE THE SIGN UP PROCESS

From the desk of the Police Chief

I would like the town's people that have loved ones with Autism or Dementia to be on alert for an Autism/Dementia Elopement Form that will be included with the town street listing that will be mailed in January. People that would like to fill out the form can drop it off or mail it back to the police station. The form will then be added so first responders in Chester and the surrounding area will have access to the information provided. This will help first responders to act accordingly.

Notice from the Board of Assessors

The Board of Assessors would like to remind taxpayers that Real Estate Tax exemption applications are available for certain qualified individuals. These include persons over age 65 whose assets and income are below the eligibility amounts, veterans who have a 10% or greater service connected disability, veterans awarded purple hearts and certain service medals, and blind persons who have a certificate from the Commissioner for the Blind. The Commonwealth also allows towns to offer a Tax Deferral to persons over age 65 if they meet certain eligibility requirements, but must be repaid at 8% interest. Please call the Assessor's Office for details at (413) 354-6318. Applications are available on-line @ <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/taxpayer-forms-and-guides> then choose the appropriate form. OR leave a message at (413) 354-6318, Please leave your name, address, and the application form you are looking for. We will mail it to you.

Chester Historical Society

Chester History Museum is closed for the winter and will be reopening in April. Our meetings will be held at the Old Jail on the first Saturday of each month except for the January first meeting which will be held on January eighth. Watch for the 2022 Historical Calendar which should be on sale within a few days. It is hoped that 2022 will see the return of our fund raisers the Spring Penny Social and the Snowflake Holiday Craft Fair in the Fall. Bits and Pieces: From Town Report dated year ending December 21, 1921 – Trustees of the Chester Public Library – At the first meeting of the Board of Trustees held March 30, 1921 Rev. A. C. Ferrin was chosen chairman for the ensuing year and Mr. James M. Murtough secretary. It was voted at the meeting on increase the salary of Miss Emma J. Smith our faithful librarian to \$100 per year, and the salary of the assistant librarians, Miss Pearl Palmer, successor of Miss Genevieve Woolslayer to \$20 per year. About 100 new books have been purchased by the purchasing committee this year. The Sate Library Commission has generously donated 31 and 49 were gifts from other sources. The patronage of the library is steadily increasing. About 8,871 books were loaned during the year. The trustees greatly appreciated the generosity of Frank D. Hamilton of Westfield formerly a Chester resident, and accordingly sent him resolutions of thanks for his kind offer of ten thousand dollars to the combined high school and library fund with the provision that the library annex be known as the Hamilton Memorial. The usual appropriation of \$350 is recommended to carry on the work of the coming year. Respectfully submitted, Samuel J. Donnelly, Rev. A.C. Ferrin, Mrs. James M. Murtough. Mr. Charles H. Biggs, Frank Fay. Town Clerk John E. Cooney reported 30 births and 15 deaths recorded for the year 1921.

Chester Winter Parking Ban

Pursuant to the provisions and authority given the Police Department for the Town of Chester under M.G.L. Chapter 40, Section 22D, as amended, notice is hereby given of the following regulations regarding the Winter Parking Ban: During the period beginning on November 15 and ending on April 15 of each year the Chief of Police, Board of Selectmen, Town Administrator and/or Highway Superintendent may declare a Winter Parking Ban on all ways within the town for the purposes of snow and ice removal. The Declaration of a Snow Emergency and subsequent Parking Ban will be effective at the onset of any inclement weather and will remain in effect for the 12 hours following the storm. The Police Department may have any motor vehicle parked in violation of the Winter Parking Ban removed/towed at the owner's expense. The vehicle owner will be responsible for all towing and storage fees that may be incurred. Further penalties for violation of the Winter Parking Ban may apply. This may include, but not limited to, non-criminal disposition as provided in M.G.L. Chapter 40 Section 21D. Public Ways will have snow removal conducted on any thru street, or will be opened to the point of the last established residence determined by Certificate of Occupancy records. No shoveling snow into or across the street.

Any questions regarding these regulations please contact the Chester Police Department or Board of Selectmen.

The year end brings no greater pleasure than the opportunity to express to you season's greetings and good wishes. May your holidays and new year be filled with joy.



The Town of Chester Selectmen & The Electric Light Commissioners



TOWN OF CHESTER BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Snow and Ice Mailbox Replacement Policy

Mailboxes installed in the Town right of way are placed at the owner's risk. Each mailbox should be sufficiently solid to withstand snow-clearing efforts by the town. The Town does not replace mailboxes if damaged by snow or ice being discharged by the snowplow. The town only assumes responsibility if a town plow comes into contact with the mailbox or post. The town will not be responsible for damage to any mailbox or post if the front of the box extends past the curb line or is within 6 inches from the curb line. The town will only replace mailboxes if the town's plow came in contact with a well-maintained mailbox or post. A claim should be submitted to the highway Superintendent **within 24 hours** following the storm so that they can witness the damage and make their determination. Late claims are difficult to verify and will likely be denied since the Highway Superintendent may not be able to adequately determine the cause of the damage. A Homeowner will be reimbursed only one mailbox and post per winter season. Text of the full policy is available on the Town of Chester website or from the Town Administrator or Highway Department.

