

# FIRST SELECTMAN COLUMN

03/02/23 ISSUE DATE

The Board of Selectmen has received all of the budgets from Town entities in last week's budget intake meetings. We will receive the Board of Education's budget on March 6 at our Budget Workshop, which starts at 7pm and is held in Mallory Town Hall. Additionally, at this workshop, we will start to form a draft of the entire Town budget -- decisions on what to leave in and what to leave out. This is the most challenging budget year during my six budgets as First Selectman, but we will be trying our best to bring a budget that you will be comfortable voting YES on.

I submitted written testimony in opposition to proposed CT House Bill 6633 this week. It's a bill that enables the State government to assess a Town's response to affordable housing efforts and sue the town if it's deemed to be deficient in its response. The state would then force the Town to build the housing. The idea is about helping provide housing for individuals of all income strata. I support that idea. But this bill, in practice, does not do that at all. If passed, HB 6633 would be a game changer for our zoning, a major step in eliminating it. In addition, our state's court system would be knotted up for years with lawsuits over this. There are so many other things wrong with this bill that there's not space enough to express them all. I hope for the sake of Sherman and all the other beautiful Connecticut small towns that this proposed legislation is voted down.

As I write this column, the forecast for several inches of snow looms. Snow brings with it the usual inconveniences and we grumble away about bad roads, missed appointments, shoveling, and a whole bunch of other problems. However, snow also brings much needed moisture to our soil, streams, and lakes and we should feel good about the "normalcy" of that. This has been an odd winter so far with its warmth and lack of snow.

This first week of March is Aplastic Anemia Awareness Week brought about by the organization "Julia's Wings." Wearing red colored clothes commemorates this. You might also see the red ribbons around trees and the red lights of Mallory Town Hall, too. Julia Malsin, a Sherman teenager wise beyond her years, initiated this organization to help others afflicted with aplastic anemia. All the while, Julia was herself afflicted with this condition and, eventually, she succumbed to it. But during her trials fighting this condition, Julia didn't waste time feeling sorry for herself and, instead, turned her attention to helping others with aplastic anemia who Julia felt weren't as fortunate as she was. That's quite a generous and mature perspective for someone so young. So we celebrate Julia and "Julia's Wings" as we wear Red and, if possible, donate to this amazing organization.

We are still looking for another board member of the Commission on Aging. All ages can step up. Let my office know if you are interested.



DON LOWE

TOWN OF SHERMAN