

# FIRST SELECTMAN COLUMN

07/27 ISSUE DATE

Our Sherman Volunteer Fire Department has been busy this year with calls at all hours of the day and night. Along with the emergency calls that inter-

rupt SVFD members' work and leisure lives, they spend hours through intense and committed training in an effort to be prepared for a variety of emergencies. One type of rescue that the SVFD spends a great deal of time on is water rescue, and this weekend they were successful in saving two lives who were in peril on the currently fast-flowing Housatonic River. Thank you, SVFD!

As residents, we should all be proud of the SVFD and support them in every way that we can. On August 5, the SVFD is holding its Annual Roast Beef Dinner. You want to buy your tickets for this. They are \$30 per person and includes live music on the Sherman Green if you choose to stay in town and eat with your friends and neighbors. You can also "grab-n-go" your meal. The event runs from 4 to 8pm and if you are a vegetarian (as my doctor keeps advising me – unsuccessfully -- to be) there are terrific food options for you too. All proceeds go directly in support of our emergency services. Tickets are available online at [ShermanVFD.org](http://ShermanVFD.org).

The Board of Selectmen regularly scheduled monthly meeting is this Thursday, July 27 at 7pm in Mallory Town Hall. Several items are on the agenda including but not limited to a review of potential upcoming capital projects, progress reports on Park and Rec items such as additional dock slips and pickle ball courts, and a continued discussion on dealing with short-term rentals (Airbnb; VRBO) in Sherman. Regarding short-term rentals, we welcome all feedback on this subject from Sherman residents.

While a case can be made that many of these rentals are peaceful and they bring economic goodness to our Town as renters spend money here, I have, on the other hand, had to personally visit and deal with, on many occasions, noise-makers who rent on a daily/weekend basis. The long and short of it is that, currently, short-term rentals are not legal in Sherman as per our zoning regulations. Stopping them, however, presents several challenges and my board, in coordination with planning and zoning, are working towards some type of resolution.

Lately I have been thinking about our amazing music program in the Sherman School. The participation level is incredibly high and so is the skill level! These young one's play their instruments at an extraordinary proficiency given their ages and experience. More importantly, it looks like they are having a lot of fun doing it. From time to time, one hears disparaging remarks about art-driven programs in public schools. ("Why are we spending tax money on *that*!") Yet, all one has to do is look at what is happening in our Sherman School with regard to music and by extension theater and fine art to see what a value arts have in our students' lives.

In addition, and by further extension, we have a lot of artists in Sherman, artists of many disciplines -- fine art, photography, music, dance, and acting among them. We recently had the first meeting of a new commission I advocated for called the Sherman Commission for the Arts. Creativity and arts has value, some tangible and other value less tangible. But I hope this wave of artistic expression carries on this Town. I am in awe of the amount of talent in Sherman and we need to keep reinforcing it.



DON LOWE

TOWN OF SHERMAN