

First Selectman's Letter

November, 2012

Hurricane Sandy came to town at the end of the month and reminded us of how weather systems can impact our lives on a very personal level. The Beacon Falls Emergency Management Team (EMT) met early and often, opening the Emergency Operation Center (EOC) and managing all aspects of the storm quickly and professionally. Lt. Edgar Rodriguez worked tirelessly throughout the event, ensuring the safety of both residents and workers. Fire Chief Michael Pratt and the other volunteer members of Beacon Hose Company #1 were on call and worked around the clock with all departments throughout the storm. Six members from the Beacon Hose water rescue team left Beacon Falls at 11:30 p.m., Monday night, to assist the National Guard in Lower Fairfield County. Senior Center Director Bernie Dione and Susan Mis, the town nurse, ran the Center for twelve plus hours every day, providing food and shelter to those in need. All public works employees worked almost around the clock Monday, keeping the roads clear for rescue vehicles and CL&P crews. The Beacon Falls CERT team was at the ready in the event that their disaster skills were needed. This was a collaborative effort and everyone worked extremely well together. Please join me in thanking each of these men and women for their faithful service; they work harder than we realize.

The Department of Transportation (DOT) has finished work on the bridge located within High Rock Park in the Naugatuck State Forest. DOT had closed Cold Spring Road while they rebuilt the bridge, and it has yet to be reopened to the public. It seems the DOT and the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) cannot agree on who has the responsibility to maintain and assume liability for this access road. I have met with officials from both agencies, pleading for this access to be restored to the public, for safety as well as recreational reasons. Currently, the only access to the State Forest is from a location in Naugatuck, which is inconvenient to Beacon Falls. I encourage any residents who enjoy High Rock Park and the Naugatuck State Forest to write the DOT and DEEP to voice your displeasure with both agencies for this unnecessary road closure; I will continue to fight the fight for the Town.

Predictions are for a severe winter, and I urge everyone to take the lessons learned from Sandy to prepare adequately for the winter months. Homes without a generator would be wise to make that investment. Those who own a generator but have discovered that it is inadequate for your essential needs, trade up to a more powerful one before the next storm. If you have specific needs, medical or otherwise, share this information with your neighbors; it may save your life. If you don't know your neighbors, please make the effort to meet them, for your sake as well as theirs. During an emergency, you may become each other's best asset. Sign up for CODE RED and subscribe to the Town News on the town website. Instructions can be found at www.beaconfalls-ct.org. The town administration and departments will do their very best to ensure the safety and comfort of all residents, but each of us must also take personal responsibility for ourselves. For tips on storm preparation, call the Police or Fire Department.

Gerard Smith
First Selectman, Beacon Falls