



The Southington Observer

Volume 37, No. 5

Southington's only locally produced paper

Friday, February 3, 2012

FREE

Police Sgt. DePalma talks emergency preparedness with seniors, Page 2

Town looks to compromise with state over phosphorous, Page 21

SHS Knights place fourth at Mass-Conn Fusion wrestling tourney, Page 40



Dancing for charity



Photo courtesy of SOUTHLINGTON YMCA

Plantsville Elementary School recently held a Fox-a-Thon to help raise money for the Connecticut Children's Medical Center. The students put together the whole event, including music, pledge forms and organizing participants. Sixty-one fourth and fifth grade students danced for an hour and a half, raising \$2,359.60 for the medical center.

Renowned activist speaks about bullying

By ROB GLIDDEN
STAFF WRITER

Author and civil rights activist Arthur Miller spoke to Southington High School students about bullying and standing up for the downtrodden during a recent visit.

Miller, a friend of SHS teacher Jan Zaccardo, is the author of "The Journey to Chatham - Why Emmett Till's Murder Changed America." He was a childhood friend of Emmett Till, the young black boy who was brutally murdered in Mississippi for speaking to a white woman. The two murderers were acquitted by a jury and later, protect-

ed by double jeopardy laws, sold their confession to Look Magazine for a lucrative deal.

The notorious incident inspired many people at the time, including Miller, to join the burgeoning civil rights movement.

Zaccardo said the students in her College Reading course had been learning about the Emmett Till murder and that hearing Miller's firsthand perspective would be a very valuable experience.

"That story puts a name and a face to bullying," she said. "He was murdered by bullies and cowards."

Miller has remained an active humanitarian over the years and said that bullying has remained a constant part of society even though the targets may be different.

"There's always 'those people,' whether it's Muslims or gays or people we call 'geeks,'" Miller said. "They become dehumanized, and once they are dehumanized, people can do whatever they want to them."

While talking with students, he took a firm stand on the issue of bullying, referring to all bullies

See MILLER, page 23

Tranquillo files a complaint Claims age discrimination led to firing

By ROB GLIDDEN
STAFF WRITER

Former Public Works Director Anthony Tranquillo has filed a complaint with the state's Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities (CHRO), alleging that age discrimination was the reason behind the recent termination of his employment.

Tranquillo, who is 63, worked in the town's engineering department from 1972 to January 6 of this

year. Most of his tenure was in the position of Town Engineer. In 2007, his position was changed to Director of Public Works. In the complaint, Tranquillo alleges that during his first meeting with Town Manager Garry Brumback, the newly-appointed administrator asked him his age and how much longer he planned to work. Tranquillo replied that he wanted to stay on for four additional years, when he would be 66 and fully

eligible for Social Security. Age was not mentioned in the brief memo that Brumback sent Tranquillo in January regarding the end of his employment. The decision was attributed to his "inability to adapt to the changes in management style and organizational requirements necessary to meet the goals and objectives of the current management team."

See TRANQUILLO,
page 22

School board moves along budget

By ROB GLIDDEN
STAFF WRITER

Despite concerns about eliminated positions, the Board of Education voted unanimously to approve an \$82,652,600 budget request and submit the proposal to the Board of Finance.

The request, which amounts to a 3.82 percent increase over the current budget, is nearly identical to Superintendent Dr. Joseph Erardi's original request. The only change was an unexpected \$50,000 savings in transportation costs that was revealed by Schools Business Manager Sherri-Lin DiNello during the BOE's budget workshops.

"The superintendent and his team have worked very hard to bring in a conservative budget that is very respectful to the community in these tough economic times," said board member Jill Notar-Francesco.

She and others expressed reservations about the elimination of 22

full-time positions throughout the district, which reduced the budget request by about \$773,000.

Four positions at Southington High School,

See BUDGET, page 22



TAMMI KNAPIK

Fun at the dog park

Warm weather has lent man's best friend extra time at the dog park. More photos page 17.

Upcoming Special Sections.....

For Advertising Call: **860.628.9645**
to speak with a Sales Representative



The Observer

Southington Bristol Plainville

With helpful articles and advertisers who are there for your health needs.



Focus on Health
To Be Published
3rd week
of every month