

EAST WINDSOR

Seniors enjoy Thanksgiving feast, look forward to renovation

By JENNIFER COE
Staff Writer

Seniors were beginning to arrive as early as 10:30 in the morning to join in the Thanksgiving festivities at East Windsor Senior Center on Nov. 19. Upwards of 130 seniors were expected at their annual meal and entertainment party to celebrate Thanksgiving. It comes one month before a similar celebration held around Christmas.

Senior Center Director Laura Clynch has worked for the center since the early 1980s, and she obviously loves her job and the people she works with. "In tough economic times like this, it's good to know that they can turn to their community," she said. The center also sent out 50 meals to homebound seniors.

Clynch knows that many of her seniors consider their senior center friends to be as close as family, and celebrating the holidays with them is a very important tradition. "It's not just one person that makes this possible," said Clynch. Many individuals worked together to throw this feast, including generous residents who made monetary donations to expand the menu. Wal-Mart donated silk flowers for decorations, another volunteer assembled some of the flowers into wreaths, and the seniors themselves helped set up and clean up for the event.

The Senior Center, located at 125 Main St. in the Broad Brook section of East Windsor, has been in operation since May 1980, and it is about to see some much needed improvements. First Selectman Denise Menard sees the upcoming upgrades as extremely overdue. Utilizing a Small Cities Block

Grant, Menard says East Windsor will be "knocking down" the steep staircase and old ramp at the entrance of the senior center and replacing it with an ADA approved ramp and staircase that will be much safer and easier for clients of the center. "This will make it compliant with ADA approved specifications," said Menard. "It's time we pay attention to a lot of the ADA deficits in town we have neglected."

The project should take about three weeks. "I had hoped it would be done in the summer," said Menard. She had desired to see it done before cold weather had settled in, but the paperwork needed by the state for a project like this is unending. "It's been a long process," she said. "When you're working with grants, you have to fill out additional paperwork."

While construction is going on, senior activities will be moved to Scout Hall at 28 Abbe Road. The switch in location will be effective as of Nov. 23, and the new entrance will be in for seniors to meet at the center again by the week of Dec. 7.

On the menu for the Thanksgiving meal was a bounty of holiday treats including, hot mulled cider, festive roast turkey with gravy, herbed stuffing, chive mashed potatoes, peas and pearl onions, cranberry sauce, whole wheat dinner rolls and apple pie. But more importantly, the menu included "very sincere friendships," according to Clynch.

Upcoming events include Community Conversations with Tax Collector Samantha Lee on Dec. 1, Health Net's Senior Star Search on Dec. 15, and the annual Christmas Holiday dinner on Dec. 16.

