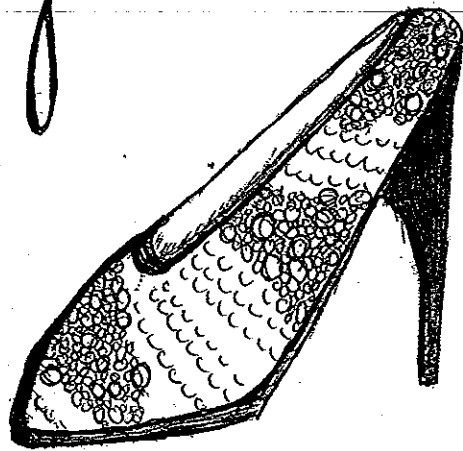


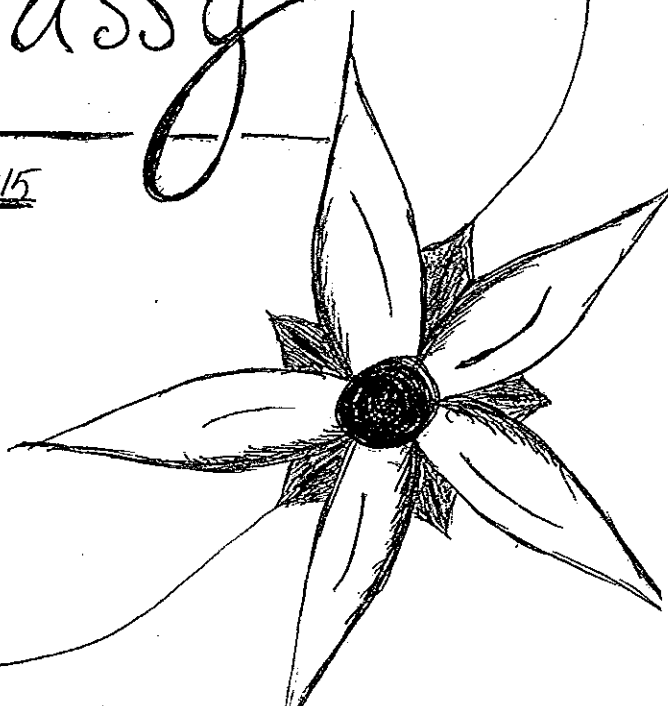
Laurelette

Wymantown



Stay Classy

June 29, 2015



The Laurelette -6/30/15

Wymantown Elected Town Officials

First Selectman - *Monisha Das*

Town Clerk - *Shannon Flangan*

Town Treasurer - *Sara Onley*

Nationalist Registrar of Voters- *Sarah Welch*

Federalist Registrar of Voters - *Melanie*

Rumbel

Board of Education

- Chairman - *Ellie Pinchbeck*
- Member - *Nicole Foertsch*

Planning and Zoning

- Chairman - *Nicole Roberts*
- Member - *Tina Olenick*
- Member - *Sofia Ricciardi*

Nationalist Committee Chairman - *Julia*

Christolini

Federalist Committee Chairman- *Claire*

Eschricht

Senator Flexer visits Laurel

Senator Mae Flexer was one in the trio of speakers who came to Laurel Girls' State yesterday. Flexer told her story of how she got involved in the political scene. It all started when she was a high school student. After a Board of Education member told Flexer that she and her friends were wasting their time by handing out flyers as a way to

raise awareness for their cause, she was left feeling upset and rather angry. Months later when that same Board of Education member ran for a position in the state government, Flexer got her revenge. She immediately jumped on the campaign party for the candidate that was running in opposition to the board member that had previously given her trouble. The candidate that she supported ended up being victorious. Since that campaign, Flexer took the reins for campaigns of her own. She now currently holds a position in the state senate.

Flexer admits that being a young woman in politics has its complication. She has had to fight for respect in a male dominated world. While Flexer confesses that it can be challenging, she encourages young women to get involved in their government to try and make these "boys clubs" as she referred them into political groups consisting of gender balance.

Prendergast Prevails

There was fierce competition for the position of Vice-Chairman for the Nationalist Party. Candidates Alexandra Prendergast and Melissa Bancroft were tied after more than four rounds of voting. The candidates had to stand out in the hall for at

The Laurelette -6/30/15

least ten minutes while the remainder of the party tried to come to a final conclusion. In the end Prendergast came out on top, however Bancroft ran for Treasurer just minutes later and was victorious. Both girls said that the experience was incredibly stressful however, the kindness of the other candidates made it much more tolerable.

BET Awards

Tracie Ellis Ross and Anthony Anderson took the stage last Sunday to host the annual BET awards. The BET awards began in 2001 by the Black Entertainment Television network to celebrate African Americans and other minorities in the entertainment business. The event carried on for approximately four hours and consisted of very few awards in a sea of performances. However, the awards show had its shining moments that will be talked about for weeks to come. It started off with Kendrick Lamar's performance of "Alright," which brought energy to the stage that no other act could surpass. Nicki Minaj made history by winning her sixth consecutive award for best female hip-hop artist. However, a more memorable moment by Minaj was when she won the Coca-Cola Viewer's Choice Award. While accepting the prestigious award, she did not hear what

the actual award was. An ironic highlight from the BET awards was when Sam Smith won best New Artist, but was not present to accept the award. His acquaintance who accepted the award on Smith's behalf stated, "Sam Smith isn't here tonight because he's white and he didn't think he'd win." This evening also spent time paying tribute to music icons. Smokey Robinson was given the Lifetime Achievement Award as well as the Ultimate Icon Award. Janet Jackson received a starry tribute as well.

A Strong Woman in Connecticut Government

A pioneer in state government, Nancy Wyman's path strayed from her original plan as she slowly ended up being the first woman elected to the position of state controller in Connecticut and later state government. An x-ray technician who was unhappy with the way her school system in Tolland was set up, Wyman tried to impeach the board of Education in Tolland. However, she ended up with her name on the ballot and serving on the Board of Education for eight years. A democrat, Wyman proclaims, "you have to make up your own mind," a lesson her parents taught her. Wyman came

The Laurelette -6/30/15

upon the title of state representative almost by accident. Wyman recalls she had a friend who wanted Wyman to "hold" his seat in the council. "Then I found myself serving eight years as state representative," Wyman said.

From there she was state controller for 16 years and now currently serving as Lieutenant Governor of Connecticut.

Finding herself in male stereotyped environment, Wyman expresses, "Find one topic you are passionate about and become a master at it. Remember to speak out for what you really believe in and fight what you do not. Your word becomes your bond."

Fueling campaign promises, Wyman with the help of CT state legislature raised minimum wage, brought in more business and helped undocumented workers born in the state of Connecticut. Looking towards the future Wyman has a few goals. Wyman sees that the trend of the number of young females in the STEM programs dropping after 5th or 6th grade. She witnesses girls becoming afraid to break barriers and be assertive in terms of business and money which means females are not using their voices. Wyman says, "I want women to speak up for what they are passionate about." With strong leaders such as Wyman

servicing as inspiration, the future of female involvement in politics looks bright.

Brains and Bras

Cheers roared across the Betty Tipton room from the delegates of Girls' State as State Representative Kelly Luxenberg stated, "Just because I have a brain *and* a uterus, it doesn't mean I can't them both" in response to the reaction of her colleagues in the local government on her decision to enter office soon after giving birth. Inspired from a childhood obsession with Bill Clinton, Luxenberg has had a distinct influence on her local Board of Ed and eventually continued in her political pursuits to become State Representative. Luxenberg answered many questions involving campaigning as a woman who just had a child. She stressed the importance of connections in the government, stating that she interned for Governor Malloy and got involved in her local governing body. Defense against criticism in her town for her aspirations lay in those connections, as well as against the negative stigma the word *politician* carries. "One on one is important," says Luxenberg. "So they see you as a person, not as a label".