

Janet Barnett 3/14/34 - 9/18/24

Thank you for allowing me take a few minutes of your time.

And thank you all for your time and commitment to this Committee.

Introduction

I'm here to present a proposal requesting a plaque be installed at the LHV Park Pavilion on Lantern Hill Road in Ledyard to honor Janet Barnett - a lifelong Ledyard resident and strong community advocate.

The JB Memorial Grant was created by monies she left after her passing last year to create and support projects that enhance community spaces. I applied for and was awarded \$5,000 to support the park and recognize JB. The pavilion will provide a gathering space for community and family events, educational programs, and outdoor recreation - all which reflect who she was.

- JB was born and raised in Ledyard, attended the Geer Hill one room school house for her grade school, which she then went on to host many of Ledyard's 5th graders for their history series field trips.
- She was a teacher at NFA - taught child development and Sociology for 27 years, and founded and directed a program to support teen mothers and their infants at NFA.
- She was deeply involved as a 4-H club leader to many age groups and genders for over 50 years in Ledyard, served as a local fair officer, and 4-H County Agent. She was involved as an exhibition judge for many years for the Ledyard Fair.
- She ran a Boys summer camp for years on Long Pond, and she supported her husband's Boy Scout Troops as a Scout mom helping many young men go on to become Eagle Scouts.
- She hosted many international foreign exchange students at her home through American Field Service and hosted inner city children for summers through the Fresh Air Fund.
- She was a lifelong member in the Ledyard Congregational Church, serving as a Deacon, on the Missions committee, and organized monthly community potluck dinners.
- She volunteered for years at the now named Linda Davis Food Pantry
- And at the Bill Library she founded and coordinated for several years the Amistad program, which was an after-school tutoring and homework assistance program for multi-language students – and recruited middle school and high school students to be tutors for this program.
- Living in Ledyard meant that she herself participated in many of the Ledyard Parks and Rec programs as did her 6 athletic children.

Her gift was her ability to bring people together which I can imagine mirrors the mission of this very Board. She was rooted in Ledyard, and was dedicated to helping those in need but also mentoring them to build stronger community relationships.

The large Holdridge pavilion in Ledyard Center, is named after her father Paul Holdridge who also was a very active member of our town, another reason I thought this project was fitting for her memory.

The LHV park area and Long Pond - Bush Pond were an important part of her life. This pavilion project sparked my interest in that it encompasses her love of bringing the community together but it's also just a short paddle away on Long Pond over to her family cottage that's been a part of her life since the 1940's.

The 5k will contribute to the new structure, other park amenities, or extra costs and represents a collaborative interest in our public spaces.

The plaque will recognize JB's legacy and her community service, build transparency in how grant funding is used, and could encourage future donations and volunteer engagement

I'm suggesting a plaque which could say "Pavilion funded in part by the JB Memorial Grant, honoring her dedication to the community" be installed somewhere on the pavilion to serve as a meaningful acknowledgment of community support.

I understand that this decision will need to be discussed and approved by this committee and may require additional approvals which I will gladly present.

The new LHV park is being constructed on land generously donated by Bob and Betsy Graham. I've spoken to them regarding this idea to which they are in complete agreement and happily support.

Thank you for your time.

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Other dedicated sites in Ledyard Center:

Don Griesse Sports Complex

Brad Roberts Field

Pete Olson Tennis courts

Depta Field

DeMuria Pavilion

Mary McGrattan Parklet

Linda Davis Food Pantry

Paul Holdridge Pavilion

Ray Holdridge Circle

Bob Donovan Way