



P R E S S R E L E A S E

December 18, 2006

George Wheeler Honored at Housatonic Youth Service Bureau Dinner

The Housatonic Youth Service Bureau presented its Donald T. Warner Community Service Award to Canaan resident, retired teacher and education advocate George Wheeler, in a ceremony at the Wake Robin Inn in Lakeville last Thursday.

"George Wheeler has served the young people of our regional communities the past 36 years as a dedicated teacher, strong family advocate and concerned, involved citizen," said Canaan resident Ron Dower, HYSB Treasurer and member of the nominating committee this year. Mr. Dower gave a speech highlighting the honoree's 33 years in agricultural education at the Housatonic Valley Regional High School, during which time he initiated the FFA (Future Farmers of America) Alumni in 1975, directed the school's FFA chapter, which garnered numerous state and national awards over the years, and played a major role in the expansion of the Ag Ed Center, completed in 2002.

As a long time member of the Canaan Exchange Club, Mr. Wheeler has worked hard on child abuse prevention programs and he also started and directed the Canaan Summer Jobs Program for Youth, which still functions today. Though retired from teaching, both he and his wife, Kathleen Wheeler, continue to advocate for agricultural education programs and funding.

Also on hand at the December 14th dinner and awards ceremony were area legislators, State Representative Roberta Willis of Lakeville, who is also an HYSB Board Member, and State Senator Andrew Roraback of Goshen. On behalf of their colleagues in Hartford, the pair presented Mr. Wheeler with a Connecticut General Assembly Official Citation.

Donald T. Warner, a Sharon resident, was a founding member of HYSB and served on its Board of Directors up until his illness and subsequent death in 1995. As an active member of the HYSB, Mr. Warner led by example and motivated others to remain committed to the mission of assisting, advocating and providing support services for all children and families in the six towns of the far Northwest Corner. The Community Service Award was established in his memory and is presented to the recipient in acknowledgment of exemplary service to children and families within the community. Past recipients include Nancy Bird of Sharon (2004), Charlotte Reid of Salisbury (2002), and Jack Mahoney of Falls Village (2000).