

**Berlin Economic Development Commission Volunteer of the Year Award
Presented on April 2, 2014 by Mayor Rachel Rochette**

The annual Volunteer of the Year Award of the Economic Development Commission is presented to an individual who has contributed substantial time and energy on a volunteer basis in the Town of Berlin. This year the EDC has chosen to present the award to Mike Balinskas.

Mike is a long time resident of Berlin where he resides with his wife of 32 years, Nancy, and their two rescue greyhounds, Pretti and Bear. Mike and Nancy raised their 3 grown children; Kate, Greg and Jeff in Berlin.

Prior to stepping down, Mike served on the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission for 20 years including 12 years at its Chairman. The Wetlands Commission faced many challenges during this time and Mike successfully led them in reviewing a number of major projects. In addition, Mike led the recent revision of the Wetlands Commission regulations to bring them up to date and to conform to Connecticut DEEP requirements. Mike also served for many years on Berlin's committee overseeing the implementation of the Town's Plan of Conservation and Development.

In addition to his service on the Inland Wetlands Commission, Mike also serves the greater Berlin community in many ways including as President of the Congregation of Bethany Lutheran Church in Cromwell, as a Board member of Lutheran Social Services of New England and as a member of the Greater Middletown Chorale.

We all know that small Towns like Berlin rely heavily on our private citizens to serve on Boards and Commissions to help guide and manage the Town. Mike has spent countless hours doing important business for the Town on a volunteer basis.

In recognition of all his services to the Town of Berlin, it gives me great pleasure to present the Berlin Economic Development Commission Volunteer of the Year Award to Mike Balinskas.