

# Postmasters Gazette

July 2010

## Hawleyville, CT Celebrates Its New Post Office

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*NAPUS PO Closings  
Chair Betty Eickler Helps  
in Effort to Save Office*

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# Hawleyville, CT

## *The Little Town*

By Betty Eickler

**T**his small community was shocked when the USPS suspended its office on Valentine's Day 2009; town residents vowed to get it reopened. They even established a web site, [www.savehawleyvillepo.com](http://www.savehawleyvillepo.com), and an article appeared

Ann Marie Mitchell, member of the Save the Hawleyville Post Office Committee, waves a proclamation declaring March 22, 2010, Hawleyville Day during a visit by Gov. M. Jodi Rell (left) and Newtown First Selectman Pat Llodra. Postmaster Mark Favale holds his grandson, Reid Geissler.

in *The New York Times*. By the time I became involved on Jan. 29, they already were well organized.

How did this all happen?

The Housatonic Railroad owned the building and Robert Finley, vice president of finance, said the building was falling down. For years, railroad officials had offered to replace the old building. They were willing to build a new building and get a new lease. The USPS didn't do it—a definite



Mike Duffy photo courtesy of the News-Times/newstimes.com.

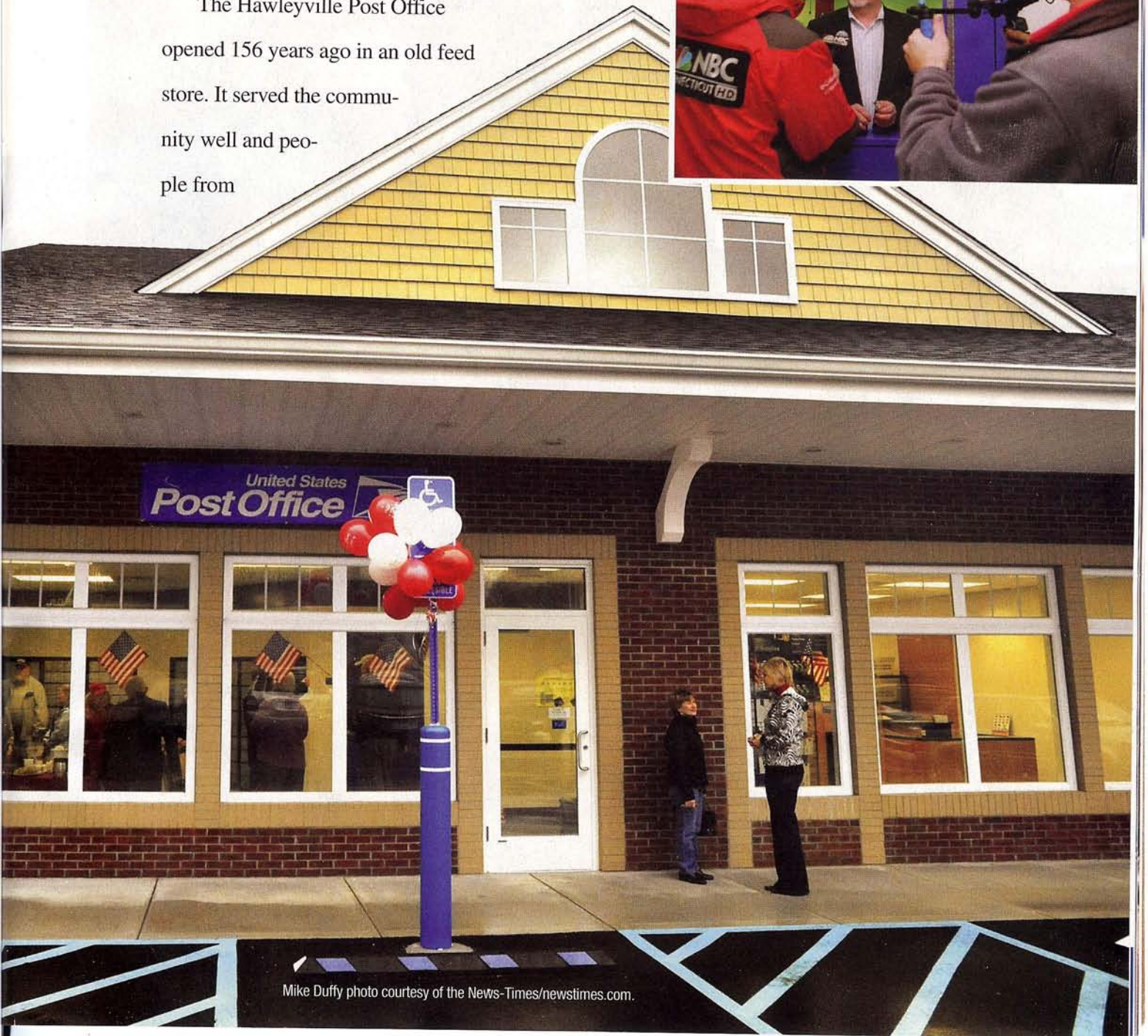


# *with a Big Heart*

“red flag” this post office would be suspended.

The Hawleyville Post Office opened 156 years ago in an old feed store. It served the community well and people from

Postmaster Mark Favale was interviewed for NBC Connecticut News.



Mike Duffy photo courtesy of the News-Times/newstimes.com.

other communities came there for the service. Mrs. Barbour, who lives near a much larger post office, goes out of her way to come to Hawleyville because, she said, "I love this post office. I've lived here 40 years and I never want it to go away."

An article appeared in the *Newtown Bee* newspaper that said, in part, "The wooden steps leading up to the Hawleyville Post Office are rickety and splintering. The pink paint is peeling. The inside is not much bigger than your average ATM lobby, but the patrons, who hail from the western Connecticut towns of Newtown, Bethel and Brookfield, adore their old jalopy of a post office for the community spirit and warm customer service they find inside.

And ever since the Postal Service began

**The Hawleyville  
PO reopened  
March 15, 2010.**

reconsidering the post office's future, they have been deeply worried."

Local history buffs treasure the old oak woodwork and brass detailing on the post office boxes. You don't see this type of craftsmanship anymore. Hawleyville residents echoed the sentiments of most of the communities across the

country who, indeed, love their post offices: When the post office goes, so goes the town.

Rep. Christopher Murphy (D) really got into the action and contacted District Manager Ed Phelan. It also didn't hurt that Sens. Joe Lieberman and Christopher Dodd also got on the band-

**Residents and visitors applaud during Gov. M. Jodi Rell's visit.**



Mike Duffy photo courtesy of the News-Times/newstimes.com.





From left: Rich Ruscitto, Hawleyville Post Office clerk, Save the Hawleyville Post Office Committee members Ann Marie Mitchell and Terry Laslo and Postmaster Mark Favale.

wagon. Gov. M. Jodi Rell, who drives by the office on her way home, also signed the petition. When the community gathered to say "goodbye" to their old post office on Feb. 14, 2009, she came too. It really says something when a governor takes time out of her busy schedule to say goodbye to a post office.

All the governors have signed a statement stipulating they do not want small post offices closed because of the negative effects on communities. So, when you are having a problem with a

post office suspension, make sure you contact your governor.

Murphy announced on Feb. 4, 2009, that a new facility would be built; this doesn't happen overnight. A big thanks goes to the involvement of the town's realtors: Maureen Colbert Wilhelm, developer Steve Nicolosi and Tower Realty broker Nick Consalvo, who confirmed on Aug. 26, 2009, a 20-year lease had been signed by the USPS with the Hawleyville Development Company, LLC.

Plans for a float appearing in the

Labor Day Parade were scrapped. I warned them about the long process, but started worrying again in September. I was assured the process was moving along.

Finally, on March 12, 2010, Ann Marie Mitchell contacted me and personally invited me to the grand opening on March 15, 2010. It was a very happy celebration. The positive comments heard definitely are a result of the positive service offered by Postmaster Mark Favale and his staff. They make this post office a warm, welcoming place. Keep up the good work, Mark.

This effort never would have happened without the involvement of the entire community. I mention Ann

Marie Mitchell and Terry Laslo because they were my contacts on the Save the Hawleyville Post Office Committee, but "it takes a village to keep a post office open." It also most definitely takes the help of our politicians. Keep the flags flying, everyone! ☺

*Betty Eickler, retired Postmaster of Washingtonville, NY, is chair of the Post Office Closings and Consolidations Committee.*

