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The Young People's Center for the Creative Arts will put on the musical *Grease* next weekend at East Hampton High School. Kids involved with the production are shown here rehearsing the song "Grease is the Word" earlier this week.

'Grease' is the Word in East Hampton Next Weekend

by Michael McCoy

It's July and, as is customary in East Hampton, the Young People's Center for the Creative Arts (YPCCA) is gearing up for its summer play.

This year, that play is the classic 1950s period musical, *Grease*. Performances will take place Thursday, July 31, through Saturday, Aug. 2, at 7 p.m., and Sunday, Aug. 3, at 2 p.m. All shows will take place at the auditorium at East Hampton High School, 15 North Maple St., East Hampton.

Mike Mansfield started YPCCA in 1982, when the group put together *Li'l Abner*. He passed away in 1989, but the program continued, and in 1997, the torch was passed to his daughter, Rachel.

Rachel Mansfield is a social studies teacher at RHAM Middle School. She is also mother to a two-month-old child, so this year, while she is still the producer for the camp, she is not directing the show.

That job falls to Chris Briggs, who is normally the technical director for the summer musical. Briggs, an English and drama teacher at Middletown High School, met Mansfield when the two were students at the Hart School.

Briggs, 33, got involved with YPCCA in 1999, and has directed two previous shows, including one when Mansfield had her first child. A South Windsor native, Briggs and his family moved to East Hampton a year ago.

When asked what has kept him involved with YPCCA for the past decade, Briggs did not think long before responding, "The kids." He continued, "This year, the thing that really stood out to me is how kind the kids are to the staff and each other. Anything we ask, they go do it. This is probably the best year we've had in quite a while."

The kids "work so hard," Briggs said, "I sort of have to come back every year."

While Mansfield is the typical director of the summer plays, Briggs showed during rehearsals earlier this week that he's capable of holding his own. After a run through the song "Summer Nights," Briggs yelled, "That was about 60 percent of what you can do as far as energy goes!"

"I know it's hot! I know the lights are on, which makes it even hotter!" Briggs said. "Everybody's gotta give 100 percent all the time!"

YPCCA is a four-week program that takes place throughout July at East Hampton High School. This year's camp started July 7 and runs through Aug. 1. "We put on a whole Broadway show in 20 days," Briggs figured, and added that a real Broadway production only takes a little less time.

YPCCA exists "to provide students a creative outlet that goes beyond what they might get in the public or private setting," said Briggs, figuring that the students involved in YPCCA are the most creative performers from their respective schools.

The sock-hoppin' *Grease*, which concerns a high school-set romance between rebel Danny and nice girl Sandy, is a return to more traditional fare after last year's performance of the much more cynical *Chicago*. Other recent performances include *Beauty and the Beast*, *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*, *Les Miserables*, *West Side Story* and *Fiddler on the Roof*.

While *Grease* is well-known, thanks partly to the hit 1978 movie adaptation starring John Travolta and Olivia Newton-

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John, Briggs said the show is “becoming more popular lately.” Not only was the musical the subject of a reality show last summer – NBC’s *You’re the One That I Want* – but the *High School Musical* series of Disney Channel movies is a nationwide phenomenon. And *Grease*, Briggs said, “is really the original high school musical.”

This year’s performance boasts 80 students, up from 68 last year. Students have come from Colchester, East Hampton, Hebron and Marlborough, as well as Killingworth, Haddam, Durham and East Haddam. A pair of brothers even comes from Wallingford.

Meghan Monroe will be a senior at Haddam Killingworth High School this year and has been a part of YPCCA for nine years. She is playing the part of Sandy. She got involved because of her older sister and said she was “actually kind of surprised” when she found out she landed the female lead.

“I love it,” Meghan said about YPCCA. “It’s not just because of the theatre itself. It’s like a big family.”

East Hampton’s own Dan White will play Danny Zuko, Sandy’s male counterpart. This fall he will be a senior at East Hampton High School. This is his second year being involved with YPCCA. Dan said he got involved with the theater group because his friends were. “I

thought it was cool,” said White, who especially loved singing and dancing in last summer’s *Chicago*.

When it came time for *Grease*, Dan said, “I knew I auditioned well. ... I knew I was confident with being Danny.”

Dan added that he had his heart set on playing Danny after playing Kenickie in a March performance of *Grease* put on by Broadway Kids and Co., a school of musical theater and dance in East Lyme.

Dan also showed his appreciation for the staff and said, “It’s just a great atmosphere.”

These 80 kids are under the tutelage of 10 staff and junior staff members, including Spencer Bazzano, who played Billy Flynn in *Chicago* last year. (Bazzano now studies acting at PACE University in New York.)

In fact, every one of the junior counselors is a YPCCA alumnus. “It’s a family,” Briggs said. “When you come, you stay.”

In addition to putting together a musical every year, YPCCA doubles as a sort of catch-all performing arts camp that teaches students comedy improvisation, jewelry-making, set design, hip-hop dance, audition techniques and more.

Tickets for next weekend’s performances of *Grease* are \$15 for adults and \$10 for senior citizens and children. They may be purchased at the door or by visiting www.ypcca.com.

New RHAM Special Ed Director Looking Forward to New Challenges

by Sarah McCoy

Carl Gross, one of the newest additions to the RHAM family, is a hiring Superintendent of Schools Robert Siminski is thrilled with.

Gross, who began his tenure with the regional school district July 1, “has an understanding for providing a program that’s best for students while being cost-efficient and cost-effective,” Siminski said.

Looking for a slight change in career, Gross applied last spring for the position, and was hired in May. The RHAM middle and high schools serve students in Andover, Hebron and Marlborough.

Prior to his hiring, Gross served as the special education and speech pathology coordinator for New Britain secondary schools. The two roles sound similar, but they’re different enough for Gross. “I was looking for a director position that would allow me a greater role in the school community and afford me a close role in the classroom,” he said. “RHAM is the right size to do both; have a larger role in the school and still remain close to the school, staff and programming.”

Gross grew up in New York City and always had an interest in helping children overcome obstacles. Feeling confident in that ability, he went onto the State University of New York at Albany where he earned a bachelor’s degree in speech pathology. He would go onto earn his master’s degree, also in speech pathology, from the University of Connecticut.

In the early 1980s Gross took positions as a speech and language pathologist in East Hartford and, later, Hamden. In the early ‘90s, he received his sixth-year degree from Southern Connecticut State University in school administration and took his first leadership role as the department chair for special education services in Trumbull. In 1995, Gross was hired for his first formal administrative job in New Britain.

Now at RHAM, Gross said he’s looking forward to developing partnerships with parents to promote student achievement. His experience in this field is one of the things that impressed Siminski. Gross “has an ability to relate to parents and solve problems,” Siminski said. “We’ll be looking for him to do the same thing here.”

The change from a more urban environment to his new position, Gross believes, will allow him to have more of an impact on students. “There is a higher rate of incidence of students needing special education services in urban settings,” he said. “The comparatively smaller numbers at RHAM give me an opportunity to work with a more manageable number of staff, students, and families.”

There are plenty of things from his past work experiences that Gross is looking to bring to Region 8. For example, he is a proponent of bringing special education and regular education teachers together to develop a



On July 1 Carl Cross began his new position as Director of Special Education for the RHAM middle and high schools.

collaborative approach to promote learning for all students.

While employed in New Britain, Gross spent a good amount of time invested in the school’s approach to transitioning students to a work environment and independent living. “This is a comprehensive and intensive area,” he said. “And, I think I can help the program elements here.”

Gross is also working to create smooth, effective transitions within the tri-town school system. He’s already met with most of the special education directors of the three feeder schools – Andover Elementary, Hebron Elementary and Marlborough Elementary.

“I’m excited to foster what’s already going on in special education at RHAM,” he said. “I’m excited to foster best practices of education to ensure the successes for all our students.”

Gross and his wife Deborah met while the two worked for the New Britain school system (Deborah still works for the school system). The couple lives in Farmington with Carl’s 11-year-old stepson Matthew.

There were 17 applicants for the Director of Special Education position, Siminski said. A screening committee comprised of staff members, parents, a Board of Education member and school administration conducted the initial screenings and recommended three individuals for further interviews. Siminski held more interviews and site visits with the candidates before bringing the final two in front of the Board of Education in May. The school board then unanimously approved Gross to be the new Director of Special Education.

Bransfield Updates Residents on Water Portland Controversy

by Michael McCoy

Portland water woes have not yet been solved. However, the state is saying the water is fine to drink.

On July 21 and 23, testing revealed the presence of total coliform bacteria in the water system. After increased chlorine treatment, the water was tested once more on July 28; however, the results still came back positive.

Additional tests on Aug. 4 proved somewhat murkier. The EML laboratory of Wallingford, which routinely tests the water sampled by the town, reported the presence of the bacteria, while the Metropolitan District Commission (MDC), which also tested on Aug. 4, reported none.

Town officials have said that total coliform bacteria is merely an “indicator bacteria” that may suggest the presence of harmful bacteria, and is not harmful in and of itself. So far, no harmful bacteria, such as fecal coliform or E. coli, have yet been found.

First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield said the town has administered, and will continue to administer, increased chlorine to the water system, as well as flush out the system. Furthermore, Bransfield will continue to meet with engineers, MDC, the Chatham Health District and the state Department of Public Health (DPH) to fix the problem.

“I can’t say enough good things about our water department personnel,” Bransfield said at a Board of Selectmen’s meeting Wednesday night.

She also reported that the DPH declared that the town “did everything right,” as far as responding to the issue. This included notifying the public three days after the first positive

sample was taken. (Tests results take at least a day to receive.) By state mandate, they have 30 days to notify the public of such an issue.

Furthermore, Bransfield said the state altered its protocol template and is no longer advising residents to boil their water or find alternative water sources. However, she did add that those with compromised immune systems are advised to consult their physician on just what to do.

Bransfield admitted, “Dealing with 25,500 customers and dealing with test results is very important.”

Bransfield said the cause of the bacteria has not yet been pinpointed, though she mentioned a few possible factors. These include a water main break on High Street, increased water demand from South Glastonbury, a granted request from one of the local golf courses to use 200,000 gallons of water a day over the course of the weekend and a series of electrical storms.

“Water is a very complicated world,” said Bransfield, admitting she was no expert on the topic.

Bransfield also said several water customers have wondered if the town would reimburse them for money spent on energy to boil water or funds spent on purchasing water.

That is not likely. “We are not a water company that makes money,” she said. “We realized a deficit last year.”

Selectman Brian Flood figured that if this measure was taken, those people would simply pay that money in taxes later. Though no formal decision was made, it did not seem as if such a reimbursement would happen.

Colchester Duo Charged With East Hampton Racial Attack

by Michael McCoy

Two Colchester men were arrested last week after what police described as a racially-charged confrontation.

According to East Hampton Police Chief Matthew Reimondo, Daniel Moard and Albert Amaio, both of 38 Mill Hill Rd., Colchester, were driving along Route 16 in East Hampton Thursday, July 17. Around 11:45 p.m., while they were near the Food Bag/Citgo gas station, they yelled racial slurs at a 21-year-old black male pedestrian and East Hampton resident and incited “a very large commotion.”

Moard and Amaio “stopped and got out at the car and started to go at him,” Reimondo said, and “some sort of altercation took place.”

Reimondo said the two intimidated the pedestrian and continued to hurl racial epithets at the victim, but the altercation never escalated to physical violence. However, Reimondo said, one of the assailants reportedly did push the victim to the ground at one point.

As of press time, the police report had not been completed, and Reimondo said he was unsure just what the perpetrators were doing in town or what their motives could be. However, Reimondo did say that this incident was random, and that Moard and Amaio had no previous relationship with the victim.

The two men were each charged with breach of peace and intimidation based on bigotry and are due in court on July 29, police said.

When asked how often racially motivated offenses like this occur, the chief responded, “If we have one a year, that’s a lot.”

Reimondo continued, “This is a random act of violence that is not acceptable. This is not the way people should be treated.”

Hebron Sued By Two Golf Courses

by Sarah McCoy

Unless a settlement is reached beforehand, the town of Hebron and two local golf courses will head to court later this year.

The owners of Blackledge and Tallwood country clubs have taken the town to court for, what they deem, inaccurate tax assessments.

In 2006 Hebron concluded their state-mandated revaluation on every property in town, both residential and commercial. Of the 4,000 properties assessed, 99 appealed their assessment to the Board of Assessment Appeals. Of these 99 properties, four continued to be unsatisfied with the results – and two of these four were the Blackledge and Tallwood country clubs.

“At every revaluation there are people who disagree with the assessment,” Town Manager Jared Clark said. “The issue with the golf courses is not new to the town, and again we’re confronting this issue, along with the rest of the state. In short, everybody has difficulty paying their taxes, but everybody has to pay their fair share.”

The disagreement is over what exactly are the fair shares for those golf courses.

Hebron Assessor Robert Musson says the fair share market value is \$8.18 million for Blackledge Country Club, and \$4.38 million for Tallwood Country Club. This is based on property value as well as the value of the business being conducted on the grounds. Musson said both businesses refused to give the town information as to the number of holes played on each course, so appraisals of the property were conducted using estimates.

However, when the both golf courses hired the real estate appraisal company Wellspeak, Dugas, and Kane, to conduct their own appraisals, the results were about half what the town had calculated.

Both Michael McDermott, the owner of Tallwood, and Bill Anderson, owner of Blackledge, filed appeals with the Board of Assessment Appeals (BAA) regarding this discrepancy. The BAA, however, opted not to hear the cases, as per state statute 12-111, that permits local appeals boards to refer appeals of properties assessed over \$500,000 to court.

Trial dates to hear the cases are set for Nov. 19, 20 and 21.

The Board of Selectmen last Thursday heard an update on the issue and requested that Clark attempt to reach a settlement before putting taxpayers at risk for the cost of a court proceeding.

While Clark said at the meeting he stands by his statement that every property owner has to pay their fair share of taxes, he recognizes that the assessments assigned to each property are, in a sense, theoretical. Assessments “are a data-assessed value of judgment of a theoretically willing buyer and seller,” he said this week.

Clark said revaluation companies and assessors use a series of formulas and real-data in an attempt to support their judgment with as much evidence as possible. “A golf course is, perhaps, more aggressively assessed that what they can sustain, nevertheless we have to follow the law that guides all assessments in the state,” Clark said.

Musson agreed, saying, “I realize that these golf courses are running at a disadvantage because they are competing with municipal courses, which don’t pay taxes. It still doesn’t mean I can look the other way and give them preferential treatment.”

The only way a town can legally adjust a tax bill is through a legally binding decision by the state courts.

Musson reported that after the previous two revaluations the golf courses settled with the town for a phase-in of their new assessed value. This compromise was then signed by a judge, thus making it a stipulated judgment.

Whether the same thing will occur this time has yet to be seen. “The Board of Selectmen wants to develop the town’s commercial base,” Clark said. “We don’t want to be seen as anti-business but we want everyone to pay their fair share.”

Tallwood paid its \$77,937 tax bill last year, and Blackledge had paid a portion of its \$145,065 tax bill, Musson said. Because the assessments are under litigation the involved parties are required pay up to 75 percent of the total until a decision is made.

Robert Wynne, the lawyer representing both Tallwood and Blackledge country clubs, did not return phone calls seeking a comment.

Hebron Selectmen Vote to Install Streetlight

by Sarah McCoy

Wanting to see a corner in town more illuminated, Hebron resident Milton Porter took to the street. He collected over 70 signatures for a petition to install a streetlight on the corner of Route 66 and Loveland Road.

Porter’s work paid off as the Board of Selectmen voted unanimously in support of installing a light near the intersection. “Frankly,” selectmen Brian O’Connell said, “I’m surprised it wasn’t there from the beginning.”

Loveland Road is home to approximately 100 Hebron residents, Town Manager Jared Clark reported. This includes two newer developments, Loveland Farms and Loveland Hills. It is also a popular cut-through road for travelers looking to travel from Route 316 to Route 66, or vice versa.

O’Connell, an admitted cut-througher, said the road is often difficult to spot, especially coming from the center of Hebron when Loveland Road intersects with Route 66 after a sharp bend. Selectman Jeff Watt agreed, saying that he’s had to slam on his brakes in order not to miss the turn. A streetlight, both feel, would help to illuminate the intersection for travelers.

Hebron resident Alberta Hilding, who lives off of Loveland Road, said she remembers the town without any streetlights but feels that this is one corner that could really benefit from additional lighting. “You can see the skid marks from people trying to make the turn from Route 66,” she said. “It’s a necessary light in the name of safety.”

Hebron resident Todd Nemic, though, ex-

pressed concerns over the placement of a streetlight. Nemic, who lives at 30 Loveland Rd., is already bothered by the existing streetlights located in the commuter parking lot near the intersection of Loveland Road and Route 66. He can already clearly see the lights from his living room and an additional light, Nemic feels, would be even more bothersome. “There’s plenty of light at the bottom of the hill as it is,” Nemic said. “The speed limit is 25 miles per hour but no one follows it. If everyone followed the rules this wouldn’t be a problem.”

Nemic’s concerns were addressed by the selectmen, as they voted to install a streetlight with a shield to prevent its visibility by neighboring houses. “As long as I’m not drawn to the light when I’m in my living room, then it’s fine by me,” Nemic said.

Clark said the town spends approximately \$36,000 a year on streetlights. An additional light would cost the town between \$12 and \$50 a month, depending on the type of light installed. Clark said he would defer to the Connecticut Light and Power Company to select an appropriate fixture and bulb.

About three months ago the town installed reflectors on the street posts near the Loveland Road intersection as way to illuminate the entrance while keeping expenses down. “Apparently,” Clark said, “this group [of petitioners] feels these are ineffective.”

Clark said this week that he expects the streetlight to be installed within a month.

Hebron School System Gives Money Back to Town

by Sarah McCoy

For the third year in a row the Hebron school system will return money to the town.

Superintendent of Schools Ellie Cruz notified the Board of Selectmen at last Thursday’s meeting that the town can expect a return of \$35,549.04. This amount will be confirmed later in the year after the district conducts its annual audit.

The school system ended the 2007-08 fiscal year with a balance of just over \$100,000. Instead of returning the entire amount, Cruz and the Board of Education opted to begin the school system’s furniture replacement cycle.

Using \$65,000 of the surplus the school system was able to furnish two classrooms at both Hebron and Gilead Hill elementary schools with 30 new chairs and desks, new art stools, and many new chairs for teachers. The school system was also able to purchase the two air conditioning units initially denied by the Capital Improvements Program Committee for the computer servers and white boards to replace the now antique chalkboards.

“The Board of Education and myself were trying to think of one-time purchase ideas that would benefit the district,” Cruz explained. With some school furniture dating back to the 1960s, it seemed like the obvious choice for updating.

At last Thursday’s meeting, Cruz said these purchases are in line with the furniture re-

placement cycle that the boards of selectmen and finance can expect to see included in the budget process. Rather than replace furniture all at once, the board is hoping to create a cycle to replace a little each year to ease the financial burden on taxpayers.

“Frankly any return is good news,” selectman Jeff Watt said of the surplus.

Board of Finance member Mal Leichter echoed the same sentiments, “The budget has continued to decrease and we’re seeing scores go up,” he said. “The Board of Ed[ucation] has been very communicative and we’re now seeing the results of that.”

The surplus in the 2007-08 budget is largely due to unexpected revenue from the Special Education Excess Cost Reimbursement grant. “If a [school] district spends more than four and a half times the per pupil cost to meet the needs of a special needs student the state will reimburse them for that cost,” Cruz explained last Thursday. “Our district applied for the grant, expecting to see 60-70 percent of what we applied for, as has been typical in the past.”

However, for the first time in Cruz’s memory, the state is fulfilling 100 percent of the reimbursement the town applied for. This translates into \$78,000 of unexpected revenue for the town. The additional \$23,000 is due to savings in other areas, including health insurance benefits.

Court Sides With Town Over Hebron Road Closure

by Sarah McCoy

A recent court decision upheld the right of the Hebron Board of Selectmen to close Wellswood Road at the Columbia-Hebron town line.

In a 21-page ruling, Judge Lawrence Klaczak stated that the Town of Hebron was “properly exercising their police power to protect the health, safety, and welfare of their town,” by closing Wellswood Road.

It was four years ago that Glastonbury-based developer Ronald Jacques purchased a 188-acre parcel of land in Columbia for the purpose of converting the land into a six-phase active-adult community. The first phase called for the construction of 15 units but the property could withstand construction of over 100 units.

Jacques applied for, and was granted, proper approval for the proposal from all the necessary Columbia boards. However, his development hit a barricade when, in November 2005, the Hebron Board of Selectmen voted to close Wellswood Road at the town line.

Wellswood Road is the only entryway to Jacques’ property.

He filed for an injunction claiming that closing the roadway would cause “irreparable harm” to the project.

Hebron town officials and, later, their legal team argued that Jacques left the town with no other option. Having the already over-traveled Wellswood Road be the sole access way into the development would have negative impacts on the health, safety, and welfare of Hebron residents, the selectmen claimed.

Klaczak agreed, writing in his decision, “Their closing of Wellswood Road was not to achieve some ‘trivial public benefit,’...but rather was done to ensure that their town and its citizens were not adversely affected by a development not within their jurisdiction, but

whose impact and detriment would almost exclusively be felt by Hebron.”

After receiving Klaczak’s decision, Hebron Town Manager Jared Clark said he was “very pleased because the ruling was very clear and very supportive of the town’s right to regulate its roads.”

Mark Branse, the attorney representing Jacques, also expressed some degree of pleasure in the ruling. “What the ruling says is that the proper remedy for Mr. Jacques is to sue the town for the decreased value of his property,” Branse said. “We felt an injunction was better for all parties because it wouldn’t cost the Hebron money and it allowed Mr. Jacques to develop his land.”

Klaczak stated that Jacques is entitled to seek monetary damages, but to do so he must show a “total and permanent loss of the right of access to public roads.” This, the judge wrote in his decision, hasn’t been accomplished yet.

The Board of Selectmen have stated from the onset that they would reopen the road as long as Wellswood Road wasn’t the sole entry point into the property. While there is currently no access to Jacques’ property through Columbia, future access is still possible.

Branse wouldn’t commit to future litigation against the town of Hebron as he and his client are still analyzing the judges reasoning and weighing their next option.

Clark said he’s neither expecting nor not expecting additional suits on the matter. “We’re in a wait-and-see mode,” he said.

For now, Clark said, the town is exploring its options on how to close the roadway. A posted sign may be all that’s needed, but if it becomes necessary to physically barricade the roadway, Hebron would be responsible for re-routing two driveways along Wellswood Road that are located in Columbia.

Man Attempts to Rob Portland Citgo, Walks Away with No Money

by Michael McCoy

Portland Police reported that a white male attempted to rob the Portland Citgo on Route 66 early Tuesday evening – but came away empty-handed.

Officer David Bond said police received a call around 6:50 p.m. According to witnesses, the suspect purchased a coffee from the Dunkin' Donuts inside the convenience store, which is located at 1633 Portland Cobalt Rd. "He proceeded down to the other register and attempted to purchase a pack of Newport cigarettes," Bond said.

The would-be robber put six dollars on the counter, and as the cashier rang up the sale, "He lifted his shirt and flashed what he said was a gun," Bond said. But, Bond added, the cashier said it did not really look like a gun.

Bond said the male demanded, "Give me all your 20s!" At this, he lunged for the open register, but the cashier closed it first, Bond said. The cashier activated the silent alarm and yelled to the clerk at Dunkin' Donuts to call 911, Bond said, and the two then fled the building. In the meantime, the suspect leapt over the counter, grabbed some receipts and what turned out to be two empty money bags and "proceeded out of the store."

The Citgo cashier and the Dunkin' Donuts clerk, both women in their early 20s, said the male traveled west on foot. This led Bond to believe his vehicle was parked just down the road.

Bond said "we ended up getting some pretty good video surveillance" of the attempted robbery. The alleged perpetrator wore a Yankees cap, sunglasses, white sneakers, blue or dark-colored athletic shorts, and a white T-shirt that said "Las Vegas," among other things.

Bond described the criminal as in his 30s, and of average build. He estimated that he



stood between 5'8" and 5'10".

Bond also reported that the perpetrator entered the store about an hour previously after having purchased gas, assumedly to case the location. His outfit was the same, except that he wore a Boston Celtics cap and a green shirt. Bond suspected the male simply threw on the white shirt later, as the green one peered out from underneath it during the incident.

Also, during the earlier gas fill-up, Bond identified the male's vehicle as an early 2000s-style Nissan Maxima of a silver or champagne color.

Police are soliciting anyone who has information concerning the incident or the perpetrator to contact them at 342-6780 or 347-2541.

Gilead Neighborhood Day Coming Up

by Alison Doherty

The Village of Gilead, within the Town of Hebron, was settled in 1702, developed and grew into a beautiful farming community.

A May 1959 newspaper article noted, "One of the most pleasant rural streets in Connecticut is Route 85 where it ... runs toward Gilead, and suddenly becomes a rustic lane meandering through fields. Sunday traffic in the summer is fairly heavy, though during the rest of the week a dog can wander down the road for a long way before a car comes along ..."

All of our neighbors are invited to enjoy the beauty and history of Gilead on Aug. 2. The day's events include:

10 a.m.-noon: Country Carpenters Blacksmith presentation (three generations of Blacksmith's) 326 Gilead St.

Noon-4 p.m.: Farm tour at the Ellis' Mapleleaf Farm, 768 Gilead St., including tractor rides and Alex's lemonade stand (proceeds go to help pediatric cancer research).

10 a.m.-4 p.m.: Tour of old church and new fellowship hall, 672 Gilead St., with quilt raffle (drawing at 3 p.m.) and trio performance.

1:30-2:30 p.m.: Colonial games for children

11:30 a.m.-2 p.m.: Lunch available. Hamburgers, hot dogs, beverages and homemade desserts will be available for purchase. In addition, Gilead Church mugs, plates and other items will be available for purchase and a quilt made to portray the history of Gilead will be on display all day.

10 a.m.-4 p.m.: Cemetery tour. Wander

through the old Gilead cemetery with the caretaker present to answer questions. Ruth Shapleigh Brown, executive director of the Connecticut Gravestone Network, will also be at the cemetery from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. to discuss old gravestones, their epitaphs and carvings. All who have an interest in preserving history, gravestone art work and epitaphs and have respect in general for the importance of our cemeteries are encouraged to stop by.

There also will be an all-day house tour: Take a self guided house tour with an accompanying booklet on Gilead's historic homes, entitled "Glimpses of Gilead, Then and Now," available to purchase for \$10 at Gilead Church, 672 Gilead St.

This booklet includes every Gilead house built at least 100 years ago. One can find the 1838 Congregational Church, three one-room schoolhouses and the cemetery with headstones dating to 1752. The booklet includes not only pictures (old and new) of the houses, but also little bits of historical interest in both pictorial and narrative form, about the people and how they lived in Gilead many years ago.

This is a limited-edition booklet (300 copies), so be sure to purchase your copy early. After Gilead Neighborhood Day, any remainder of the books will be available for purchase at the Town Hall, Gilead Church and possibly other locations.

Alison Doherty is chairperson of the Gilead Neighborhood Day Committee.

New Owner for Colchester Hope Hardware

by Kristina Histen

A local hardware store may have changed ownership, but one can still expect the same quality in staff and products as before.

After 29 years of owning Hope Plumbing Supply and Do it Best Hardware, Fred and Kathy Adinolfi decided it was time to retire. They had started the business out of their own home, then moved to another facility before eventually settling at 212 Old Hartford Rd., which Kathy called "a great location."

But ready for a change, the Adinolfis ended up selling their store to family man Paul Zimmitti, who took over on June 30.

Zimmitti, married for 22 years and father of five, tweaked the name a bit to Hope Hardware and Plumbing Supply, but that's about all that is different. He kept on all the employees and has the place running the same way. And, rather than leave him in the gutter, the Adinolfis have stayed on a few extra months to show him the ropes and help with the transition.

"This is a good business," Kathy Adinolfi said. "It has good exposure and it is good because of the customer service. We have fantastic employees."

That is part of what sold Zimmitti on the business in the first place: the staff and the customers. "There is a great mix of both," he said. "Lots of experience with the staff and very loyal customers." Zimmitti was also looking for a business opportunity. Although he has never owned his own place before, he had worked in hardware at Home Depot for 12 years and more recently, United Builder's Supply, for five and

a half years.

Zimmitti admits to having some difficulties adjusting, and Kathy Adinolfi said with a smile that he is a "bit overwhelmed." He said, however, that he's just getting through the transition stage, and having the Adinolfis around has been very helpful as well as the staff, not to mention, a few of his children have been putting in some hours.

Until about eight years ago, the store was just plumbing supplies and bathrooms. Then, the Adinolfis brought in the hardware with Do it Best, which has grown every year since. Just a few years ago, they added on kitchen supplies. Zimmitti may look to expand the hardware aspect of the store by using different lines in the future. He may even consider remodeling in a year or so by setting things up differently throughout the store. He's also not ruling out the possibility of purchasing lumber and building supplies, depending on what they can fit in the store, because there seems to be a need for it.

Despite a lack in home building and remodeling, sales have actually been good, Zimmitti said. He said he is a "little bit worried" about the economy, but hardware is "somewhat insulated from ups and downs."

Zimmitti is excited about the future of his business, and said he benefits from owning his place because he is able to make his own decisions and control his destiny and future. With loyal customers and a knowledgeable staff, it seems as though he might just nail it.



After 29 years of owning Hope Plumbing Supply, Kathy and Fred Adinolfi recently decided it was time to retire, and sold their business to Paul Zimmitti. Zimmitti has slightly tweaked the name of the store, but the business remains largely unchanged. Pictured, from left, are Zimmitti, employees Tony Sargenti and Ann Marie Harrison, and Kathy and Fred Adinolfi. Employees missing from the photo: Ed Delaney, Kristine Pike, Red Laursen and Derek Rockwell.

Portland Fireworks Come Up Short on Money but Long on Fun

by Michael McCoy

Despite heat and an unrealized fundraising goal, the Portland Fireworks drew a crowd once again this weekend.

The festivities got under way earlier than normal, creating a sort of festival feel. Though spectators could congregate on the fairgrounds as early as they pleased, the music started at 5:30 p.m. with Small Town Roots, followed by Brother Sleeze. The music was capped off by the Tony Rome Band, whose set included Wilson Pickett's "Mustang Sally," The Beatles' "Ticket to Ride" and "Little Bit O' Soul" by one-hit wonders Music Explosion. The group featured a charismatic, not to mention mohawked, Glenn Carter on lead vocals.

Plenty of fair-style goodies were on sale, including cotton candy, kettle corn, popcorn, snow cones, fried dough, funnel cakes and jumbo pretzels. Connecticut Creamery was also there dishing out ice cream, with an eye-catching sign reading, "Undisputed World's Best Sundae." And, as always, the Exchange Club served up hamburgers, hot dogs, soda and coffee.

Shortly after 9 p.m., MC Dave Kuzminski commissioned last year's fireworks starter to pick this year's name. Each year, a child is picked at random to push the ceremonial button that sets off the first fireworks of the night. This year's winner was Sean Lindsey, a 10-year-old student at Nayaug Elementary School in Glastonbury. His father Steve called the event "the best fireworks around."

Just before the show started, Ed Dunham, who runs sound for the event, dedicated the fireworks to Scott Oakliff. Oakliff passed away last October, and had served on the Portland Fire Department for 33 years, filling the role of Lieutenant for eight.

Oakliff, 53, started the department's dive team in 1989, of which he was captain. Unfortunately, he lost a seven-year battle against cancer on Oct. 22. Dunham credited him with being "a big part of the fireworks show since it began."

The show began promptly at 9:15 p.m. and ended a half an hour later. Lee Greenwood's contemporary Fourth of July staple "God Bless the U.S.A." played as people filed out of the grounds. In order to give pedestrians safer passage off the grounds, cars were held up for 15 minutes following the show.

Admittedly, the committee had their work cut off for them this year. This is in part due to the fact that Mike Dapkus, a 30-year veteran of the fireworks industry, presented his last Portland show last year. Dapkus, a former Portland Police Sergeant, has phased out the showing portion of business over the past several years, and now solely focuses on importing and exporting. However, he is a member of the Fireworks Committee.

Last year, Dapkus estimated that the town paid \$20,000 for a \$45,000 show. (He had always provided the fireworks themselves at cost and executed the show for free.) This year the committee set the fundraising goal at \$30,000. As of the week leading up to the show, the committee had raised \$22,000 of this amount. Committee members brought in another \$3,000 in donations during the evening, which still leaves them \$5,000 short.

Well before the first Roman candle was shot, the field was littered with all sorts of people, just enjoying the evening with one another.

Portland residents Dan and Cynthia Weeks have been bringing their family, which includes sons Russell and Nathan and daughter Meghan, here for 10 years.

"It's a great show," Dan said. "It's the best show in the area." In addition to the fireworks, he also cited the music and the people as major draws for the event.

Dan and Janice Sullivan have lived in town for 30 years. "We've come since they started," Janice said. Dan added, "We used to go the Middletown fireworks." When asked what keeps them coming, Dan said, "Community and tradition."

When asked if he was excited about the fireworks themselves, Dan responded, "Oh yeah! It's some of the best fireworks around!"

"I have to give an A+ to the committee for their fundraising and the organization of the fireworks," First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield said this week. "There's a lot of people who volunteer their time."

She continued, "The show was outstanding. People of all ages enjoyed it. I saw little kids, senior citizens, young families and high school students."

Despite rain earlier in the day, Bransfield said she thought "the field looked great," and also said, "We're lucky to have the Exchange Club," adding that the organization doesn't always get



The annual Portland Fireworks show was held last Saturday night. The half-hour pyrotechnic display delighted thousands.

the recognition it deserves.

Bransfield usually works the Exchange Club booth at the fireworks show. This year, though, the group had enough workers, and the First Selectwoman got to view the show with her husband on the field. So, she said, "I got to enjoy it this year."

While noting the fun the event brings to the community, Bransfield also reminded people that the fireworks show is "really to celebrate the birth of our nation."

Bransfield also praised the Fireworks Committee members, saying, "They just give, give, give, give to make this happen."

Fireworks Committee Chairman John Sobczyk figured that the heat brought attendance down somewhat this year. (Police Lieutenant Ron Milardo estimated around 3,000 people attended.) However, he applauded the

job done by Ocean State Fireworks, which put together the fireworks themselves.

Sobczyk said the show draws people from all over who often tell him, "Our town has fireworks, but they're not as good as Portland's." He was aware of one family who travels from Altoona, PA, each year to visit family in Portland and see the fireworks.

"It's good to see kids coming off the field, laughing and having a good time," Sobczyk said, and figured that the show was really for them anyway.

Anyone interested in contributing to the committee's current deficit can mail checks to 265 Main Street c/o the Portland Police and include "The Portland Fireworks" in the memo. Sobczyk said the committee will have a fundraising booth at the Portland Agricultural Fair in October.

East Hampton Chatham Party Aims to Revisit Fertilizer Ordinance

by Michael McCoy

Though the East Hampton Town Council shot down a proposed fertilizer ordinance in May, some residents are not taking 'no' for an answer.

During Old Home Days two weeks ago, the Chatham Party began an effort to petition a revisiting of the issue.

In 2006, the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Agency (IWWA) began seriously exploring a potential ordinance banning the use of phosphorous-containing fertilizers, which included looking into what other communities have done. The idea was to address the deterioration of Lake Pocotopaug. The Town Council seemed poised to accept the ordinance during its March 25 meeting.

However, after spontaneous remarks from Paul Peszynski, longtime owner of Paul's and Sandy's Too, the council instead scheduled a special meeting in April to discuss the matter further. The council reconvened to vote on the ordinance on May 13 and shot it down. The following day, Lake Chairman Bob Hart, an outspoken proponent of the ordinance, resigned from the commission. However, he has not stated that this was related to the ordinance's failure.

This left two vacancies on the commission. On May 27, the council voted to appoint Peszynski to fill one of those. "I thought that was over the top," Chatham Party member Pat Gauthier, who is part of the petition effort, said

this week.

According to Chatham Party chairman Kyle Dostaler, who is also part of the petition effort, Peszynski "was given preferential treatment by Melissa Engel."

In a press release from the Chatham Party, Dostaler said, "At the March 25 Town Council meeting one resident who was against the ordinance was given preferential treatment to speak for 22 minutes. When he finished, the Republican and Democrat members of the Town Council, who had supported the ordinance, changed their minds and refused to allow a public hearing."

Gauthier, who has lived in town for over 30 years, said she has "watched the deterioration of the lake for some time."

Dostaler said, "If the state of Minnesota can have a no-phosphorous ordinance for 10,000 lakes, I think we can have one for one lake."

Dostaler said the Chatham Party collected "well over a hundred" signatures, and figured those that in support of the ordinance are "not necessarily the ones that Melissa Engel and the Republicans are talking to."

Tom Cordeiro, one of the town council members who voted down the ordinance, said he understood the position of those behind the petition and added, "I think we had a healthy debate a few months ago." However, concerning

the ordinance, he shared, "I really don't think it can be enforced."

"I don't want people to think that the Town Council doesn't care about the lake, because that's not the case," Cordeiro added. But, he said the proposed fertilizer ordinance was "a law for law's sake" and continued, "I don't like that it's become a political football."

Cordeiro said he did not feel this recent petition effort was foolhardy, but added, "I think anyone that thinks it's not politically motivated is naïve."

As for Peszynski, Cordeiro said, "I do remember Paul being given a significant amount of time to speak" at that March 25 Town Council meeting. But, he added, "I think part of that has to do with his experience."

"If you find an expert ... I have no problem with giving them extra time to speak," Cordeiro said. But, he admitted, Peszynski is "not a scientist. I didn't hang my hat on everything he said."

Cordeiro, who prior to Peszynski's March comments had been an outspoken proponent of the ordinance, said that Peszynski "wasn't the only reason I changed, which is what people think."

The town charter grants that residents may petition for an ordinance to go to town meeting, should they collect signatures from 10 per-

cent of eligible voters (in other words, 793 signatures). Dostaler said the group is aiming to collect 1,000 signatures by the end of August.

According to Dostaler, once the appropriate amount of signatures is collected, the Town Council may either approve the ordinance or send it to a town meeting.

Much of Lake Pocotopaug's problems have been attributed to algae blooms, which are caused by phosphorous. Hart and John Ciriello, past and current chairmen of the Lake Commission respectively, have explicitly stated on a number of occasions that Lake Pocotopaug is curiously and exceptionally sensitive to phosphorous.

"While no one is saying that a fertilizer ordinance will solve all the lake's issues, it's just one step we can take," Dostaler said, and added, "As a town we need to take action to help our environment and our property values."

According to Dostaler, the petition effort will become more aggressive next month, and in addition to planned sign-up events, people will go door-to-door to solicit signatures.

"This petition," Dostaler said, "will give residents a voice in determining the future of Lake Pocotopaug."

Those looking to sign the petition before the next sign-up event can contact Kyle Dostaler at 759-2903 or kyledostaler@chathamparty.org.

Local Marlborough Burn Victim to Benefit from Middletown Charity Event

by Kristina Histen

A local child badly burned in a February explosion will be the benefactor of a charity event being held in Middletown this Sunday.

Holley Chrysler Dodge Jeep will present its 15th annual, "Keep America Powerful All Truck and Jeep Festival" Sunday, July 27, at Holley Chrysler Dodge Jeep, 1000 Newfield St., Middletown (about 15 miles from Marlborough Town Hall).

Each year, a local child is chosen to benefit from all the proceeds, and this year, Marlborough resident Jordan Hyde has been selected.

Jordan, 10, was badly burned in a backyard explosion that took place at his Marlborough home in February. He has since become fairly well-known throughout eastern Connecticut, as people continue to be touched by his story and want to help.

People of all ages can come to the show and join in on the fun, whether or not they own a truck or jeep, as all earnings will help Jordan and his family. Those with vehicles can bring their jeep or truck of any type, age and condition when registration starts at 9 a.m. Show off with pride, because voting for the most popular will be all morning until 1:15 p.m. with awards given out at 2:30 p.m.

Originally, Jordan was supposed to receive his 16th surgery today (July 25) and wouldn't have been able to attend the event. However, the surgery was postponed until next week, so Jordan, along with his parents and two sisters, will make an appearance on Sunday (after a Jonas Brothers concert Saturday night) to enjoy the family picnic.

"We don't want to hang around and say 'Hey, this is Jordan,'" his mother Leslie said, because "it's hard for Jordan. Even though it's all about him, he's in the transition stages still trying to accept how he looks."

Nevertheless, the family wants "to make a presence and are happy to be able to show up," she said.

This is the only all-truck and jeep festival in New England, and people have driven from all over New England, Canada and even the Carolinas in past years, Karen Oaks, media contact for the event, said. However, she said she is worried that with the price of gas increasing, not as many people will come this year.

"We need the trucks and spectators to come in order to make money," Oaks said, "and I'm concerned we won't be able to this year."

The proceeds help pay for uncovered medi-

cal bills, special educational needs or special living expenses. For example, in past years, the event has raised enough money to renovate a bedroom to be handicap accessible and build a wheelchair ramp for a medically-fragile teen; build a specialized safe outdoor play area for a child blinded by cancer; purchase and install a wheelchair lift for a young teen bounded to a wheelchair by spinal bifida; and many more children suffering from cancer and/or other medical problems, Oaks said.

After Oaks read about Jordan in the *Rivereast*, he was chosen as this year's recipient. He has third- and fourth-degree burns over 45 percent of his body and will continuously need surgery for many years to come.

Although he is staying at the Shriner's Burn Hospital in Boston, there are still many costs to his treatment that have not been covered by insurance or the hospital. The family still owes thousands of dollars to Westchester Hospital in New York, where Life Star took both Jordan and his father (who was also burned in the accident) back in February.

Also, every time the family travels to Boston for treatment, there are additional costs for gas, hotel rooms, meals and other living expenses. Not to mention, his parents have been unable to work since the fire, and with no income, the bills have continued to pile up at home. However, Leslie was able to put hours in last week for her old job at the Hartford while Jordan attended burn camp.

Jordan's father, Mike, has also tried to go back to work with his tree-cutting business, but because of the economy, things have been very slow. It has also been especially difficult for Mike because "he has been punishing himself" for the accident, Leslie said, and has been hit hard with post-traumatic stress. Jordan and his family will continuously need support for many years to come.

"You never know what you can handle," Leslie said. "We have great family and community support."

Direct donations can still be made to The Jordan Hyde Family Fund at any Bank of America branch that was opened up in Texas. For more information, visit www.holleydodge.com.

"People don't always know how they can help," Oaks said, "and this gives them a way to. They think it always has to be [just] money or time."

Marlborough School Board Looking Into Solar Power

by Kristina Histen

The Superintendent of Schools and Board of Education (BOE) members have expressed great interest in using a renewable energy source.

On Wednesday, July 9, a special meeting was held to discuss the possibility of pursuing solar electricity. All BOE members present unanimously agreed it was necessary in order to move forward.

"Solar works," Jennifer Janelle, of Shipman & Goodwin LLP, said at the meeting. Janelle has worked with many schools to explain the process and benefits in purchasing solar electricity.

The project would not require a capital outlay on the part of the school district, Superintendent Sal Menzo said, and would be implemented through a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA). The PPA would involve a third financing party to take on the capital expenses, he said. The financing company would receive Connecticut Clean Energy Funding and Federal tax incentives for completing the project. The district would benefit by agreeing to purchase electricity at a fixed low rate for 15-20 years, Menzo said.

"Once you get solar on the roof, the sun doesn't stop shining," school board member John O'Toole said, strongly advocating for the PPA. He felt that it should be looked into, not only for the competitive benefits and savings on costs, but in order to start looking out for the future generations. "Everyone is talking about what our country and state should do [about the energy crisis]," he said, "and if we can jump in and if it can make sense, we should pursue it."

Menzo used New Britain High School as an example for board members, as that school uses solar power, and, according to the web site, newbritain.rem-systems.com, "solar electric

power is a 100 percent renewable energy source, using the sun's free energy. It is a clean, reliable and cost-effective source of power for a growing number of businesses and government agencies. Solar power is generated by photovoltaic (PV) cells, which convert the sunlight directly into electricity."

Solar power would produce electricity without any moving parts, noise, pollution, radiation or maintenance, the web site said. It would provide clean air for the community, reduce CO2 emissions, protect the environment and secure a better energy future.

Menzo said he sees numerous educational benefits to having solar as well, especially in classes like science, environmental conservation, math and creative writing. He also thinks it would be necessary for a "green" subcommittee to form out of the BOE to continuously discuss the project.

"I say go for it," Vice Chair Betty O'Brien said she is an environmentalist and renewable energy supporter. "I think it's great. I'm very excited and glad [Menzo] pursued it."

School Board Chair Maria Grove also echoed the other BOE members' enthusiasm, and said she was proud that Marlborough was a leader in the community, "or at least within the three towns" [Andover, Hebron and Marlborough] to look into solar electricity. "It's a wonderful opportunity," she said.

Currently, as recommended by Janelle, Menzo and BOE members are in the preliminary stages of the project, by having solar companies submit bids on a PPA with the school, in order to get competitive and have options to choose from.

"The whole purpose of a PPA is you don't spend capital," Janelle said, "and you save money."

Hebron PZC Chair Moves On To Board of Selectmen

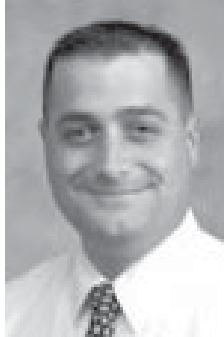
by Sarah McCoy

With no controversy and no competition, resident Will Moorcroft was appointed to the town's Board of Selectmen last week.

Moorcroft was unanimously appointed last Thursday, July 17, to fill the seat vacated by David Schoolcraft. Schoolcraft was forced to step down from the BOS after his appointment as a Workers' Compensation Commissioner for the State of Connecticut in early May.

Moorcroft's term runs until November 2009. For the past eight years, Moorcroft has served on the town's Planning and Zoning Commission, the last four as chair. He also serves as chair of the Peters House Use Committee and is a member of the town's Republican Town Committee, who endorsed him for the BOS vacancy.

Moorcroft said at last Thursday's meeting



he has specific interest in seeing the town develop the Village Green parcel of land along Route 66 across from Ted's Market. "My real goal is to help make sure the town can operate smoothly and within budget," he said.

His appointment was met with no objections as all four members of the BOS voted for his appointment. "I've known Will for a number of years," BOS Acting Chair Gayle Mulligan said. "He's done a great job, in the past, organizing, focusing, and keeping everyone on task."

"I think he's very knowledgeable and would make a great asset to the board," she continued.

Selectman Jeff Watt agreed. "I believe that prior experience serving the town is very valuable on this board," he said. "And I appreciate all of those who commit their time to making this town better."

Originally from Glastonbury, Moorcroft has lived in Hebron for the past 10 years. He graduated from the University of Vermont with degrees in political science and environmental science. Moorcroft is currently employed as a manager for corporate ethics and compliance at Traveler's Life and Annuity.

He is married and has three children.

Hebron Police News

7/20-Jack Lee, 22, of 151 Lebanon Ave., Colchester, was charged with operating under the influence of alcohol, State Police said.

Colchester Police News

7/15-Louis Card, 20, of 19 Elliott St., Hartford, was charged with second-degree failure to appear, State Police said.

7/19-Michael Desantis, 35, of 7 Christy Ln. Ext. 1C, was charged with DUI, State Police said.

7/22-Nicholas Romano, of 71 Briarwood Dr., was charged with possession of marijuana and possession of drug paraphernalia, State Police said.

7/23-John Lane, 70, of 141 Westchester Rd., was charged with breach of peace, second-degree harassment and third-degree stalking, State Police said.

Andover Police News

7/15-Dennis Carroll, 46, of 135 Shoddy Mill Rd., was charged with breach of peace and criminal violation of restraining order, State Police said.

Colchester Selectmen Nix Idea of Four-Day Work Week

by Kristina Histen

Towns throughout Connecticut have opted for a four-day work week to save money. But, after extensive research, the Board of Selectmen has decided Colchester won't be one of them.

During the Board of Selectmen (BOS) meeting last Thursday, it was unanimously agreed upon that the Town Hall would continue with a five-day work week.

Last month, First Selectman Linda Hodge explored the possibility of a four-day work week to save the town money. But, she said at last week's meeting, her findings indicated that because of the multiple unions that use the Town Hall, the building would never be able to entirely shut down. Many of the boards and commissions, including the Police Commission and the Board of Education (BOE), make use of the building, and there are some groups that even meet on the weekends.

Hodge said the BOE was very much opposed to a four-day work schedule, because of its need to be available to the community.

"Every municipality in the state is looking at a four-day work week for cost savings," Hodge said, "and they are saving money because they can close down Town Hall. There will not be huge cost savings for us because we would have to run things all the time anyway."

Selectman John Malsbenden worried about the impact on the service to the public, which he said is "reason we're here," if the town went with a four-day work week. Hodge explained that even if they were open fewer days, the hours would remain at 40. Therefore, the Town Hall would have to open up earlier and close later, causing longer days for the employees.

"Based on the preliminary evidence, it doesn't make sense to go forward," selectman Greg Cordova said. "It doesn't seem necessary because we won't benefit."

Selectman Rosemary Coyle added, "It really would not save the town money."

"This is just not good for Colchester," Coyle continued. "Maybe for some other places, but not here."

Marlborough Police News

7/17-Timothy Cordova, 23, of 32 Edgewood Dr., Colchester, was charged with failure to drive in proper lane and DWI, State Police said.

Obituaries

Colchester

Robert Corcoran

Robert Lawrence Michael Corcoran, 80, beloved husband of Patricia (Howland) Corcoran of Colchester and formerly of Salem, passed away Saturday, July 19, at the Harrington Court Genesis Care Center in Colchester. Born September 19, 1927 in New Rochelle, NY, he was a son of the late Charles and Frances (Clark) Corcoran.

Mr. Corcoran was proud of his service to our country with the US Army during WWII. Following his military service, Mr. Corcoran worked as a branch manager for Beneficial Finance Co. and retired in 1965. Most recently, he worked as a security officer for the Mohegan Sun Casino. He was active in the Salem community, serving for more than 20 years with the Salem Volunteer Fire Department, as well as the Salem Seniors.

In addition to his beloved wife of 53 years, he is survived by his cousins, Edward Corcoran of South Windsor and Alice and Tom Sharkey of Colchester.

Funeral services will be private. Burial will be at the convenience of the family in the Salem Green Cemetery. Donations in his memory may be made to the Protectors of Animals, 144 Main St., East Hartford, CT 06118. The Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home of Colchester has been entrusted with arrangements. For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

Andover

Ronald Easton

Ronald "Lou" Easton, 42, of Andover, formerly of Manchester, died Wednesday, July 16, at home. The Boston Red Sox have just lost one of their biggest fans and the family and friends of Ronald "Louie" Easton are left with an empty space in their hearts. Louie died peacefully at home after a long battle with ALS. At his bedside was Lori, his loving wife, his best friend and his dedicated caregiver.

He is also survived by his stepsons, Mike Talaga and his wife, Jessica and Ryan Talaga. He also leaves a brother, David and his wife Kris and Joe Baran who has always been a father to Louie. He also leaves his two grandchildren, Justin and Olivia Louise Talaga along with many, many wonderful friends.

Louie was a vibrant and caring person who would put a smile on the face of anyone in his presence. One of his favorite pastimes was playing softball with his friends. He will be so sadly missed by all. His family wishes to extend a special "thank you" to Helen Dumond of Hospice for her continuous guidance, support and kindness throughout Louie's illness.

Calling hours were Sunday, July 20, at Potter Funeral Home, 456 Jackson St., Rte. 195, in Willimantic. A service celebrating Louie's life followed. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the ALS Association (Lou Gehrig's disease) Development Dept. at www.alsa.org or 27001 Agoura Rd., Suite 250, Calabasas Hills, CA 91301-5104. Visit www.potterfuneralhome.com for online memorial guestbook.

East Hampton

John Dainiak

John Dainiak, 85, of East Hampton, beloved husband of Grete Ellen (Hansen) Dainiak, died Friday, July 18, at Middlesex Hospital. Born May 28, 1923 in Preston City, CT, he was the son of the late Nikita and Sophia (Shostak) Dainiak. He had lived in Newtown for more than 45 years before moving to East Hampton 4½ years ago.

John was a retired mechanical engineer having worked for Avco Lycoming Textron for most of his career. He had proudly served his country during WWII in the Army Air Corps. He was a member of the VFW in Newtown, the American Legion in Newtown, a member of the Lions Club in Newtown, and was a long-time member of the United Fire Company of Botsford.

Besides his wife Grete, he is survived by his two sons and their wives, John and Michele Dainiak of Merrian, KS, and Greg and Darlene Dainiak of East Hampton; a brother, Michael Dainiak of Ansonia; four grandchildren, Allyson, Kristin, Stephanie and Samantha. He was predeceased by a brother, Nicholas Dainiak and two sisters, Helen Cure and Anna Fuller.

Funeral services were Wednesday, July 23, in the Congregational Church of East Hampton. Burial followed in Lakeview Cemetery in East Hampton. Friends called at the Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton, on Tuesday, July 22. To leave online condolences or for directions, visit www.spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

East Hampton

Joyce Beverly Rittman

Joyce Beverly Rittman, 83, of East Hampton, widow of Herbert J. Rittman, died Wednesday, July 16, at Middlesex Hospital, surrounded by her loving family. Born May 8, 1925 in East Hampton, she was the daughter of the late Harry and Eva (LaPiene) Cook. She was a lifelong resident of East Hampton, and a communicant of St. Patrick Church in East Hampton.

Joyce was the heart and soul of her family for more than 65 years. She loved dining out and socializing with her family and friends. She enjoyed camping and vacationing with her grandchildren and family. She always looked forward to spending time with her former classmates and would get together with them often.

She is survived by her two sons, Daniel J. Rittman of East Hampton, Douglas P. Rittman and his wife Linda of East Hampton; two daughters and their spouses, Diane R. and Robert Merrill of Colchester, Jacquelyn and James Abbott of Colchester; six grandchildren, Bobby Merrill, Brenda Carroll, Steven Abbott, Denise Abbott, Jamie Godwin, and Keith Rittman; six great grandchildren, Heather, Buck, Lisa, Kelly, Dylan, and Madison; many nieces and nephews. She was predeceased by her three brothers, Richard, Harry and Gerald Cook.

A Funeral Liturgy was celebrated on Monday, July 21, in St. Patrick Church, East Hampton. Burial followed in the family plot in St. Patrick Cemetery. Friends may call at the Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton Monday morning. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions can be made to St. Patrick Church Renovation Fund, P.O. Box 177, East Hampton, CT 06424. To leave online condolences, visit www.spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

Portland

Edward F. Pinunsky Sr.

Edward F. Pinunsky, Sr., 70, of Portland, died peacefully at home, surrounded by his loving family. Husband of Christine, father of son Edward Jr. and daughter Janelle. Born in Cromwell, July 20, 1937, son of the late Edward Pinunsky and the late Evelyn (Pinunsky) Binezewski.

He is survived by three sisters, Claire Narus of Portland, Lucille Dralle and husband Al of Cromwell, and Joan Bankowski of Portland. He is also survived by many nieces, nephews and friends.

Ed retired from New Britain Candy Company, where he worked as a truck driver for over 20 years. He loved all sports but his favorite was golf which he played for over 50 years. Ed was a member of the men's club at Goodwin Park in Hartford and won the club championship two years in a row; past treasurer for the Portland Lions Club and was honored as the Knight of the Blind for the Lions; Grand Knight of the Portland Council for seven years as well as a Fourth Degree Knight of Columbus; Eucharistic Minister for St. Mary's in Portland and for Greystone Manor.

His family would like to thank Dr. Weis, his hospice nurses, home health aide, physical therapist, friends Dee Barry, Joe Micale, Ray and Donna Bankoski, his "golfing buddies" and his many caring neighbors for all their support during this time. His family received relatives and friends at the Portland Memorial Funeral Home, 231 Main Street, Portland, on Sunday, July 20. Funeral services were held Monday from the Portland Memorial Funeral Home, and at the Church of Saint Mary for a Mass of Christian Burial. Internment will be private.

In lieu of flowers, donations should be sent to the Church of Saint Mary, 51 Freestone Ave., Portland, CT 06480 or Middlesex Hospital Weiss Hospice, 28 Crescent St., Middletown, CT 06457. For directions or to leave an online expression of sympathy, visit www.portlandmemorialfh.net.

Andover

Earl C. Roberts

Earl C. Roberts, 74, of Andover and husband of the late Algene (Tibbetts) Roberts, passed away, Sunday, July 20. He was born April 2, 1934, in Portland, ME, to the late Raymond Wallace and Evelyn (Candler) Roberts.

He was a veteran of the Korean Conflict, serving in the U.S. Marine Corps. as a sergeant and was stationed in Japan where he was a tank mechanic. After 30 years he retired from Pratt & Whitney Aircraft as an engine assembler. Earl was an excellent mechanic, hunter, fisherman and farmer. When he was a boy he worked as a farmer at Round Top Farm in Damariscotta, ME. Earl also had a love for animals.

He is survived by his daughter, Robin L. Roberts of Andover; his granddaughter, Ashley R. Roberts of Andover; his brother, Raymond Wallace Roberts Jr. and his wife "Dot" of Maine. He was predeceased by a brother, William K. Roberts; his two sisters, Nancy M. Davis and Louise M. Mize.

Relatives and friends are welcome to join the family from 9:30-10:30 a.m., Friday, July 25, at the Coventry-Pietras Funeral Home, 2665 Boston Turnpike (Route 44), Coventry. A funeral procession will form by 10:30 a.m. Friday, at the funeral home to the First Congregational Church of Andover, 359 Route 6, Andover, for a funeral service to be held at 11 a.m. Burial with military honors will follow at Townsend Cemetery in Andover. Memorial contributions may be made to the Andover Fire Department, 11 School Road, PO Box 11, Andover, CT 06232. For online condolences or directions, visit www.pietrasfuneralhome.com.

East Hampton

Dorothy Cavanaugh

Dorothy F. Cavanaugh, 88, widow of Robert M. Cavanaugh, died Monday, July 21, at Cobalt Lodge in the Cobalt section of East Hampton. Born Sept. 15, 1919 in Cromwell, she was the daughter of the late John and Myrtle (Waters) Frazer. She was a communicant of St. Patrick Church, East Hampton, and had worked for many years as a CAN for both Cobalt Lodge and Rest Haven Nursing Homes.

She is survived by her two sons, Thomas M. and his wife Kathy Cavanaugh, Timothy P. Cavanaugh and Lori Wasilewski; two daughters, Catherine E. and her husband Thomas McLean, and Janice M. Cavanaugh, all of East Hampton; nine grandchildren, Marty, Randy, Michael and Meghan Cavanaugh, Jason Cavanaugh, John Bair, Haylie Cavanaugh Fuhrmann, and Amelia and Caleb Cavanaugh. She also leaves her travel and lunch buddies, Ceil, Heidi and Margaret, and several nieces and nephews.

A Funeral Liturgy will be celebrated on Friday, Aug. 1, at 11 a.m. in St. Patrick Church in East Hampton. Burial will be private. As it was Dorothy's request there will be no calling hours. The Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton, has care of the arrangements.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions can be made to the East Hampton Ambulance Association, P.O. Box 144, East Hampton, CT 06424. To leave online condolences, visit www.spencerfuneralhomeinc.com

East Hampton

Mark Raymond Royce Jr.

Mark Raymond Royce Jr., 21, of East Hampton, beloved son of Mark R. Royce of Portland and Debra Komoroski of Texas, died Monday, July 21, at Hartford Hospital. Born Oct. 30, 1986, in Arlington, TX, Mark had lived in East Hampton for most of his life.

Besides his parents he is survived by his "Auntie" and Uncle, Charlene and John Cushman of East Hampton; grandfather William Royce of East Hampton; grandmother Honey Taylor of Hebron; step-mother Kim Royce of Portland; his son Mark Aidyn Royce of Colchester; a brother, Michael Komoroski; sisters Ashley, Amber, Samantha Royce, and Crystal Evans; the mother of his son, Erica Birmingham, and many aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces and nephews.

Funeral services will be held Saturday, July 26, at 10 a.m. in the Spencer Funeral Home, 1112 Main St., East Hampton, with the Rev. Todd Willard officiating. Burial will be at the convenience of the family. Friends may call at the Spencer Funeral Home tonight, Friday evening, July 25, from 6-9 p.m.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions can be made to The Mark Aidyn Royce Trust Fund, c/o Liberty Bank, East Hampton, CT 06424. To leave online condolences, visit www.spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

Hebron

Michael Geoffrey Thompson

Michael Geoffrey Thompson, 52, born and raised in Hebron, left this earth to be with the Lord on July 9.

Michael is survived by his son Clint and daughter Natalie Thompson, residents of Hebron. Also, he leaves his loving mother Dorothy Thompson, sister Amanda and her husband Andy Dion, sister Laura and brother Brian Thompson all of whom reside in Florida. Besides his family, he leaves a special friend Delores "Dee" Hamilton of Lebanon, who was there for him through thick and thin.

A skilled carpenter and craftsman, Mike was an artist in many ways. He enjoyed fishing, golfing, playing pool, music and spending time with his children. His blue eyes, friendly smile and warm heart will be remembered forever.

A celebration of Mike's life will be held on Sunday, July 27, at noon. The ceremony will be held at the home of John and Heidi Tarquinio, 44 East St., Hebron, with a reception immediately following. In memory of Mike, donations can be made to support his son and daughter.