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Former Hebron resident Tyler Hinman, center, will compete for his fifth consecutive National Crossword Championship title next week in Brooklyn. He is pictured above with Patrick Creadon, left, director of *Wordplay*, a full-length documentary on crossword puzzle culture and Merl Reagle, a crossword constructor.

## Former Hebron Resident Seeks to Defend Crossword Crown

by Sarah McCoy

What's an eleven letter won for undeniable champion?

T-Y-L-E-R-H-I-N-M-A-N.

The former Hebron resident is the four-time reigning National Crossword champion and will defend his crown next weekend.

Hinman, now 24, became the youngest champion at age 20. He's also the only person to ever win four tournaments in a row. But don't expect Hinman to rest on his laurels. He's hungry as ever for his fifth win. "I could never win again and I would still have accomplished more than I ever wanted," Hinman said. "But as soon as I have that first puzzle in front of me, I'm sweating and going for broke."

This year's championship will be held next weekend, Feb. 28 and March 1, in Brooklyn, NY.

Hinman is admittedly a numbers guy. Math was always his favorite subject and he went on to major in information technology at Rennsalaer Polytechnic Institute. He currently lives in California and works for [Google.com](http://Google.com) doing computer programming.

His success with letters seems to come when they're written in individual boxes.

Hinman was born in Hartford and spent his early childhood in Avon, Burlington and Simsbury. In seventh grade the Hinman family moved to England. This experience opened Hinman's eyes to many realizations common to those living in a

foreign country but, perhaps, his greatest realization was the discovery of crossword puzzles.

"I was sitting in study hall and my proctor was working on a printed out copy of a *New York Times* puzzle," Hinman remembered. "She had a backlog of puzzles she hadn't gotten to so she handed me one."

The *New York Times* crossword puzzle is the premier puzzle for those in the know. Beginning with the easiest on Monday, the puzzles get more difficult as the week progresses. Hinman said a typical Sunday puzzle takes him anywhere from five to seven minutes to complete.

Hinman's first puzzle was a Friday one and, he said, "it kicked my butt."

Not discouraged, Hinman practiced, a lot. At times, he said, he would do dozens of puzzles a day. "I'm down to about five a day now," he said.

The *New York Times* is his favorite crossword (as was the *New York Sun* crossword, although that paper folded last fall). Hinman said he also has received various crossword puzzle books and similar items, so much so that "I had to put a moratorium on crossword-related gifts," he said. "I have thousands of puzzles that haven't been touched."

With every puzzle, no matter the level of difficulty, Hinman said satisfaction comes when you fill in that last bubble. "Bringing things to order, putting letters in their place, I love it," he said. "It

stretches my brain."

Hinman went on to finish school in England before returning to the states in 2001. His family settled in Hebron, where they continue to live. Hinman's sister, Lindsay, graduated from RHAM High School in 2004, and his father, Lewis, currently serves on the town's Planning and Zoning Commission.

In 2001, the same year he moved back to Connecticut, Hinman decided to try his hand at competitive crosswording, and signed up for the National Crossword Championship. Being a solitary hobby, he wasn't sure what to expect that first year.

He finished 101st that year and loved every part of the tournament.

Hinman missed the following year but in 2003 he won the tournament's 'B' division – a shock to everyone, including Hinman.

In 2004, he finished 13th and still kicks himself over his mistake. "I should've had it. Albany crossed Ryan. I went to school there, but I put an 'o' instead of an 'a.'"

That was the last mistake Hinman has made at the tournament.

He was the youngest winner in 2005 and then became the only person to win four in a row with last year's win.

That first win coincided with another big moment in Hinman's life. He was featured in the full-length documentary *Wordplay*.

*Wordplay* is the brainchild of Patrick

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Creadon, a crossword puzzle enthusiast himself. Creadon intended on making a documentary on the hobby's most famous name, Will Shortz, who edits the *New York Times* puzzle. However, the more he got into the movie, the more Creadon came to understand the crossword puzzle culture and how pervasive the hobby truly is.

He interviewed everyone from former New York Yankees pitcher Mike Mussina to former President Bill Clinton. Creadon also interviewed about a dozen individuals who, Shortz felt, had a chance at winning the tournament that year.

Hinman was one of those 12.

He was interviewed in his fraternity house before class one day and jokes that winning the tournament was his ticket to making the final cut of the movie. He even missed the first week of classes his senior year to premier the movie at the Sundance Film Festival in Park City, UT. *Wordplay* was nominated for the Grand Jury Prize that year.

Because of the movie, Hinman said, he gets recognized every now and then. "Certainly not enough to be annoying," he said.

While *Wordplay* elevated Hinman's status, it's also elevated the status of crossword puzzles as a whole. A year after the movie premiered attendance at the National Crossword Cham-

ionships jumped by 40 percent.

Next weekend, over 700 contestants are expected to head to Brooklyn to compete for the title. On Saturday each participant completes six puzzles. They are scored based on a combination of speed and accuracy.

On Sunday there is one more puzzle for everyone to complete before the scores are tallied for the final puzzle. In the final round only the top three contestants in each of the five divisions participate, using giant grids to fill in the answers with everyone else looking on.

In preparation for the big day Hinman has abandoned his traditional ritual of completing puzzles online in favor of the classic pencil and paper. "I have to train my hand to write fast," he explained.

And, while he's certainly looking forward to the competition itself, Hinman is also eager to connect with his fellow crossworders. "It's a definite social scene," he said. "It's a nice atmosphere with plenty of fun stuff to take the pressure off."

Come Saturday, though, Hinman will be all business as he tries to ignore the target on his back that comes from winning the last four tournaments. "We'll see how it plays out," he said. "I could screw up the first puzzle and my fate will be sealed."

*From the Editor's Desk***Observations & Ruminations**

by Mike Thompson

As some of you may know, the cable channel C-SPAN this week released the results of its 2009 Historians' Presidential Survey. In the survey, 65 Presidential historians ranked the 42 former Presidents in 10 different categories, including "public persuasion," "crisis leadership," "economic management" and "international relations." The Presidents were graded in each of these categories on a scale of 1-10.

Abraham Lincoln, not surprisingly, came out on top, as he did in 2000, the only other year C-SPAN did this survey. It's hard to quibble with choosing the guy who freed the slaves and guided this country through its only Civil War. The category Lincoln fared the best in was, of course, "crisis leadership," and he also scored very high marks in the "moral authority," "vision/setting an agenda" and "pursued equal justice for all" categories. His lowest marks — though overall still high — came in the "relations with Congress" category.

George Washington came in at No. 2, followed by Franklin D. Roosevelt at No. 3. The high score for Washington, who is after all known as the father of our country, was no shocker, nor was the score for Roosevelt. I wouldn't have been surprised, in fact, to see FDR get second place and Washington get third (indeed, that was the way the two finished in the 2000 survey). Roosevelt was elected with a truly daunting task ahead of him — getting the country out of the Great Depression. He not only did that, but he guided us through most of our involvement in World War II (Truman, the guy who finished the job by dropping the atomic bomb on Japan, came in fifth in the survey).

As for our most recent ex-President, George W. Bush, he didn't do so well, coming in 36th of the 42 former Presidents. I'm actually a little surprised he scored as high as he did, considering his super-low approval rating the last couple of years and the comments many made that he was perhaps the worst President in history after Nixon. (Interestingly, Nixon didn't even crack the bottom 10 in the survey; he finished in 27th place overall — although he scored next-to-last in the "moral authority" category.)

Given the ongoing mess in Iraq and the current disastrous state of the economy, it should surprise no one that the categories Bush fared the worst in were "international relations" (coming in 41st out of the 42 Presidents) and "economic management" (coming in 40th). Nor did he do well in the "administrative skills" (37th place), "relations with Congress" (36th) or "public persuasion" (also 36th) categories. Bush scored better in the "crisis leadership" category, coming in 25th. That's still not great, but better than a lot of his other scores, and I think you can attribute a lot of it to 9/11. (I still maintain that, in the immediate aftermath of the terrorist attacks, Bush said and did a lot of right things. It's what he did later, mainly his unnecessary invasion of Iraq, that soured things, big time.) In case anyone's wondering, Bush's highest placement was in the "Pursued Equal Justice for All" category, where he came in 24th.

Bush of course has indicated in the past he doesn't care about how history remembers him — "We'll all be dead," he once told Bob Woodward — but in case he changes his mind, he can always hope he scores higher in the next survey. It's possible. Bush's predecessor, Bill Clinton, climbed from 21st in the 2000 survey to 15th in this year's survey (and actually came in third among all Presidents in the "economic management" category — although 37th in the "moral authority" category. Monica Lewinsky, d'oh!). And the low opinion of Bush apparently didn't tarnish his

father any, as George H.W. Bush actually saw his ranking rise a bit, from 20th to 18th. On the flipside, though, Bush could actually do worse in the next survey too: Jimmy Carter, for example, fell from 22nd to 25th place, while Rutherford B. Hayes dropped from 26th to 33rd.

After all these names have been thrown about, I know what you're wondering: who came in dead last? The same guy who came in dead last in the 2000 survey, James Buchanan. The 15th President of the United States — and the only President from Pennsylvania — Buchanan immediately preceded Lincoln, and has been soundly criticized over the years for not being able to prevent the Civil War from starting.

\* \* \*

Speaking of Presidents, here's some interesting trivia I learned recently by watching *Jeopardy!*: It was James K. Polk's wife, Sarah, who first had the idea to have "Hail to the Chief" performed for Presidential entrances. Sarah wanted to make sure that her husband did not go unnoticed when he entered crowded rooms, and she felt some type of announcement was necessary.

By the way, there are actually words to the song, although you wouldn't know it as they're almost never sung. But the first part of it goes like this: "Hail to the Chief we have chosen for the nation/Hail to the Chief! We salute him one and all/Hail to the Chief, as we pledge co-operation/In proud fulfillment of a great, noble call."

\* \* \*

Finally, a brief entertainment note: The Academy Awards are this Sunday. Unfortunately, of the five Best Picture nominees, I have only seen one, *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*. (Every year I tell myself I should see more of the Best Picture nominees before Oscar time, and every year for one reason or another I wind up seeing one or two, at most. There was only one year where I wound up seeing all five of the Best Picture nominees, and that was when *Titanic*, *As Good as It Gets*, *Good Will Hunting*, *L.A. Confidential* and *The Full Monty* competed against each other in 1997.) So while I can't say that *Benjamin Button* really is the best of the five, as I haven't seen the other four, if it does win, I won't be disappointed. It was a very good movie, very well-made and well-acted, and while the movie was nearly three hours in length, it didn't feel it. That is a true sign of a good movie.

That being said, there were some flaws, the biggest one being a slight feeling of *deja vu* I had while watching the film. The man who wrote the screenplay for *Benjamin Button* is the same guy who wrote the screenplay for *Forrest Gump*. I knew that going in — but what I didn't know is just how reminiscent the movie would be of *Forrest Gump*. For one, the title characters in both films are similar: born with handicaps, they possess a somewhat naive, yet wise in its own way, approach to life. (They're both Southern, and narrate their own stories, too.) Benjamin Button's relationship with Daisy, the female lead in the movie, is very similar to Forrest's relationship with Jenny. There's even a Lt. Dan-type character in *Benjamin Button*, who goes by the name of Capt. Mike.

Don't get me wrong: I love *Forrest Gump*. Fifteen years after it came out, it still holds up very well. So there are definitely worse movies to be similar to. But, while I did thoroughly enjoy *Benjamin Button*, and will likely cheer if it wins the Oscar on Sunday, I just can't shake the notion that I've seen it all before.

\* \* \*

See you next week.

**Very Small Growth for Andover's Grand List**

by Sarah McCoy

Many area towns saw much lower growth than usual on their Grand Lists last year — and Andover is no exception.

For the year ending Oct. 1, 2008, Andover's assessed property totaled \$275,961,430. This is an increase of \$363,120, or .13 percent, over last year's totals.

Of the three categories of assessments on the Grand List, only the real estate and personal property line items saw increases. Motor vehicle assessments in town shrunk by \$2 million. "We can only speculate that it is a combination of people keeping their older cars longer and not purchasing new," Tax Assessor John Chaponis said. "Also, as a result of nearly \$5 per gallon gas last summer, people have been trading down from those large gas guzzling SUV's to economy and/or hybrids that are much less expensive."

Chaponis, who is also the assessor in Colchester, said the decrease in motor vehicle assessments is a trend throughout the area.

Real estate property assessments grew from \$243.1 million to \$245.7 million. Chaponis attributed this increase to a small number of new homes and a larger number of home renovations such as finished basements, additions, garages and decks.

This number could have been slightly higher; the property at 23 Route 6 was sold last year to Network, Inc., a nonprofit organization. Since nonprofit organizations are tax-

exempt, the \$525,000 assessment came off Andover's books.

Personal property in town saw a modest increase of \$79,520 to \$5.3 million.

Chaponis noted that the Andover Board of Assessment Appeals will not complete their hearings and judgments until the end of March. Until then, the Grand List numbers are apt to shift.

The Grand List is used by the Board of Finance to set the mill rate. Once the town has an overall budget, that number is divided by the grand list to calculate the mill rate. Assessments are, then, multiplied by the mill rate to determine the tax bills for the coming year.

A small Grand List increase means that the tax burden will continue to be shouldered by the same residents. "We don't have an increase in assessments that will lessen the load for everybody," BOF Chair Bob Carrara said.

Carrara said he felt Andover is a reflection of every other town in the country in terms of the economic slowdown. "Growth in the Grand List means there's economic development and prosperity," he said. "We don't have that right now."

The Board of Finance will meet next Wednesday, Feb. 25, at 7 p.m. in the Community Room at Town Hall, 17 School Rd., for its regularly scheduled meeting. Budget discussions will begin in March.

# Marlborough Grand List Growth Barely There

by Adam Benson

The increase on the town's Grand List was barely an increase at all – and that could be bad news for taxpayers.

The list of assessable properties for the year ending Oct. 1, 2008 totaled \$622 million, an increase of \$412,000, or .06 percent, over the 2007 list, First Selectman Bill Black said. That low growth, which is expected to generate just \$10,000 in new tax revenue for the municipality, means residents are going to see some sort of tax increase when the new fiscal year starts July 1, Board of Finance chair Catherine Gaudinski said.

"It's inevitable," Gaudinski said. "We're all in the same boat, so we'll get through it together, but I don't know how we're going to make the numbers meet."

Real estate on the Grand List was appraised at \$566.8 million, personal property at \$9.71 million and motor vehicles at \$45.4 million.

The Grand List represents the net value of taxable real estate, motor vehicles and personal property in towns. The figure is used to calculate the tax rate for the upcoming fiscal year.

"We're not going to have many new tax dollars to offset cost increases, so unless we are very frugal with capital expenditures, there's going to have to be a tax increase," Gaudinski said. "I'm looking at one as minimal as possible."

This is the second year Grand List growth has been less than one percent. Gaudinski said the 2007 list came in at just a .77 percent increase over the previous year's. The low growth is a cause of concern for town leaders as they try to plan for additional tax revenue to offset operational costs and price of providing contracted services for employees.

Still, Black said there is some positive information to be culled from the Grand List. Although personal property was assessed at

\$36.7 million – more than \$596,000 less than the 2007 list – he said Marlborough officials are seeing "modest growth" in new housing and upkeep on existing parcels.

But the economic downturn that has forced people out of their homes and put a near-virtual freeze on the purchase of new vehicles has taken a heavy toll locally.

"The downturn is reflected in the fact that people have stopped buying new vehicles, and that was not a surprise," Black said. "People are just contracting. Discretionary spending has basically collapsed."

Initially, Marlborough's 2008 Grand List actually showed a sub-zero growth margin, but Assessor Marie Hall was able to dig deeper into the numbers and show gains in dollars earned through the registration of classic cars that brought the town at least some progress.

Gaudinski said it's "too early in the process" to know just how big any tax increase might be, and the hope is to have the town's business park up and running by the time the economy turns around.

"We're trying to do as much as possible to have it ready so when things start turning around a little bit, we'll be able to get some new tax dollars," she said.

The top 10 tax assessments in Marlborough for 2008 was led by Both LLC, with a total net value of \$3.5 million, followed by Connecticut Light & Power at \$3.272 million. Rounding out the list is Marlborough Health Care Realty Co. at \$3.12 million; Elliott Enterprises LLC at \$2.8 million; Country Barn Properties LLC at \$1.985 million; the Robert H. and Mary C. Soleau property at \$1.93 million; the Robert M. Elliott property at \$1.669 million; C & B Marlborough Assoc. LLC at \$1.637 million; 369 N. Main St. LLC at \$1.185 million; and the Richard P. Meduski property at \$996,520.

# Hebron Officials Look to Restrict Spending in Light of Snow Costs

by Sarah McCoy

Snow and ice removal costs have prompted town officials to restrict spending in other areas. The aim of the limitation is to cover the overexpended snow and ice removal budget without forcing the town to dip into its undesignated fund balance.

"The Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance have made it very clear that they want to cover those costs within the current year's budget," Town Manager Jared Clark said earlier this week.

At a special meeting of the Board of Selectmen (BOS) last Saturday, Clark informed the board that the town is currently \$30,000 over its snow and ice removal budget, with that number projected to hit \$50,000 by the end of the winter.

At the start of the month, Clark installed a soft spending freeze on town departments. While employees could purchase routine supplies and those items necessary to doing business, any expenses that could be put off were put off. To assist town department heads with their purchasing, Clark has opened his door to suggestions and questions on the matter – and that was the point of last Saturday's special meeting with the selectmen.

"What we're looking at is a more restrictive review process," BOS chair Jeff Watt explained. "It seemed like each department head had some area where savings could be realized, the Board of Selectmen just wants to ensure we're doing everything possible to cover our costs."

Clark said one example of spending that will be deferred is new police uniforms. While the

town desires to have their law enforcement look professional and dressed appropriately, Clark said, now is not the time to replace entire uniforms. Instead specific articles will be replaced as they're needed.

Another example comes from the Public Works department. Typically the department purchases 10 snow plow blades at a time. This time around, the department will only purchase the two that are immediately needed.

"The hope is that these small savings add up," Clark said.

So far, Clark has identified \$30-\$35,000 worth of items the town can hold back on purchasing until it has more sure footing. "This kind of belt tightening is mild compared to what we will be facing," Clark said of the overall economic condition.

The high frequency of the storms, combined with the sharp increase in salt prices, are to blame for the overspending for snow and ice removal. Salt prices jumped by an unexpected 61 percent over the last year, meaning Hebron had to pay \$90 a ton instead of \$56 a ton just a year before.

Clark said an average storm costs the town between \$5-\$6,000 but that number could shoot up to \$10,000 depending on when the storm hits, how long it lasts, and the total accumulation.

Watt said the BOS expects to have a better handle on final numbers at the close of the month. At that point, he said, town officials will have a better idea of how much savings has to occur.

# Colchester Grand List Grows 1.5 Percent

by Adam Benson

Colchester's 2008 Grand List grew 1.5 percent over the previous year's list – which is actually a fairly impressive increase, compared to other area towns.

The town's Grand List of assessable properties, as of Oct. 1, 2008, totaled \$1.28 billion, an increase of \$19.2 million over the 2007 list, which totaled \$1.268 billion. The increase is expected to generate \$442,500 in tax revenue, although that amount is based on the 2007-08 mill rate of 23.01. (The 2009-10 mill rate has not yet been determined.)

"The increase is attributed to the real estate portion of the Grand List going up \$26.6 million," Assessor John Chaponis said. "Motor vehicles dropped significantly [from \$108.7 million on the 2007 list to \$101.9 million on the 2008 list], which we can only assume is a sign of residents not purchasing new cars, getting rid of third cars and as a result of almost \$5 per gallon gas last summer, trading in expensive gas guzzling SUVs for less expensive models."

While the real estate increase might seem impressive, the growth is not as great as it used to be.

"About three years ago, we had about 100 or more new construction starts per year for the last 10 years, but they have regularly declined over the last three years and we had about 55 last year," he said.

Revenues generated through the Grand List help pay down contractual services and other operational costs for municipalities. Chaponis said Colchester could have seen double the growth this year had motor vehicle appraisals come in at historical averages.

"We are proud of all our hard work and if we had experienced a typical motor vehicle increase of \$6 million to \$7 million instead of a \$6.2 million decline in motor vehicles, it would have been a three percent increase," Chaponis said.

Personal property assessments in the 2008 Grand List came in at \$36.731 million, a \$596,000 drop from 2007. But real property jumped from \$1.103 billion in 2007 to \$1.130 billion in 2008.

Town leaders are just beginning the process of compiling the 2009-10 budget, and Chaponis and First Selectwoman Linda Hodge said it's too early to tell what the Grand List rate will mean on the tax rate – although some type of tax increase is likely, Hodge said.

"I know that it's way too early to propose a mill rate because they have not even begun the budget cutting process yet," Chaponis said.

Hodge said Wednesday residents should expect to see "deep cuts" to departmental services because revenues for the year have lagged behind expenditures.

Country Place of Colchester Limited Partners led the list of the top 10 taxpayers in town, at \$10.5 million. Rounding out the top 10 are SS1 Colchester LLC at \$7.83 million; White Oak Development LLC at \$5.45 million; Genesis Health Ventures of Bloomfield Inc. at \$4.26 million; Keystone Shoppes LLC at \$3.89 million; S & S Worldwide Inc. at \$3.83 million; Balaban Road Associates LLC at \$3.76 million; Sharr Realty LLC at \$3.32 million; the City of Norwich at \$3.15 million; and Colchester Realty Inc. at \$2.97 million.

# East Hampton Grand List Growth Slows

by Michael McCoy

Like other towns throughout the region, East Hampton saw a low increase on its 2008 Grand List.

The Grand List of assessable properties, as of Oct. 1, 2008, totaled \$1.14 billion, about \$17.29 million, or 1.54 percent, more than the 2007 total. This is down from the 2.67 percent increase the 2007 Grand List had over the 2006 list.

The assessments on the Grand List are broken into three categories – real estate, motor vehicle and personal property. Real estate came to \$1.03 billion, an increase of \$14.74 million, or 1.46 percent, over the 2007 list. Motor vehicle assessments came in at \$91.62 million, \$1.77 million, or 1.97 percent, more than '07, and personal property assessments totaled \$24.66 million, an increase of \$773,000, or 3.24 percent.

Assessor Donna Ralston chalked up the relatively high rate of personal property growth to brand new commercial properties Savings Institute Bank & Trust, CVS and all the businesses in the new Theater Square strip mall. Newer businesses pay higher taxes on personal property.

Of the overall document, Ralston said, "It's not a good trend." She said she was not surprised, though, and offered two reasons for the low growth. "A lot less people bought new cars last year," she said, and added that automobile values have depreciated well more than the standard 5-8 percent.

The other reason is the dearth of subdivisions last year, a number Ralston said totaled zero. Not too long ago, the town experienced a housing boom, which climaxed with a 5.57 percent increase from 2003's grand list to 2004's. When the 2007 grand list came out, Ralston said the number reflected the end of that boom, and expected the 2008 figures to follow suit. She was right.

Along the same line, Ralston, who has been assessor since 1988, said Town Hall has issued an incredibly low amount of building permits, which means that few people are upgrading their property or constructing additions. Thus, she did not expect to see next year's increase to

be any higher. In fact, she commented, "I wouldn't be surprised if it remains stagnant for a couple years."

The good news is the 2008 number is not as low as some other meager increases, including a .94 percent increase from 1996 to 1997 and a 0.32 percent growth from 1990-91.

The Grand List is used by the Board of Finance to set the mill rate. Once the town has an overall budget, that number is divided by the Grand List to calculate the mill rate. An individual's assessments multiplied by the mill rate will determine their portion of taxes for the coming year. (A mill is \$1 tax per \$1,000 of assessed property value.)

In East Hampton, residents are set to vote on the 2009-10 budget in May.

Fairly little changed from the 2007 list of top 10 taxpayers to the 2008 table. Connecticut Light & Power and Landmark East Hampton retained the top two positions, respectively, with \$11.92 million and \$7.39 million. (The latter accounts for the plaza where Shaw's is located.)

The rest of the top 10 consists of: Easthampton NE Development, with \$3.57 million; Skyline Estates, \$3.17 million; Ed Jackowitz/American Distilling, \$3.02 million; Rechovos, \$2.48 million; Shaw's Supermarkets (Personal property only), \$2.08 million; Paul's & Sandy's Too, \$1.95 million; Global Self Storage, \$1.87 million; and Z Inc., \$1.82 million. This final entry, one of only two not on last year's list, refers to the 87-year-old Cobalt Lodge Health Care & Rehabilitation Center, who constructed an elegant courtyard last summer.

The other fresh name is East Hampton NE Development, which owns the property occupied by the new Savings Institute and CVS on East High Street. Names that were on the 2007 top 10 taxpayers' list but not on the 2008 version were Royal Oaks and Dream Developers (who own over-55 community Laurel Ridge), who came in sixth and eighth, respectively in 2007. Ralston said their drop-off was simply a result of the developments selling the last of their homes.

# Public Offers Budget Thoughts in Colchester

by Adam Benson

More than 70 people flocked to Bacon Academy Wednesday night, armed with ideas for town and school district officials who are faced with some difficult budget choices.

At the public forum, held in the high school's auditorium, residents expressed ideas ranging from staff furloughs to the creation of charitable accounts to help pay for capital purchases and equipment.

"You folks want to be heard and you have something to say," resident and forum moderator Michael Puscas told the crowd Wednesday, "and these officials need to take into consideration all of these thoughts and ideas and feelings."

With deep cuts expected to be made on both the town and school budgets, leaders from both sectors are seeking more public input than ever before to help guide the process.

"We've got really tough times, and it's the public's budget," First Selectwoman Linda Hodge said. "This input helps a whole lot, because I'm still working on cuts to my budget."

Hodge will unveil her proposed budget to the town later this month, but she said Wednesday night dramatic cuts are going to be included in the financial plan.

"The problem is we don't have the revenues coming in," Hodge said. The Board of Finance is set to receive the 2009-10 proposed budget March 2 and will workshop through March 11 to drill down requests and cut fat from departments.

On March 16, the Board of Finance will meet with the Board of Education, and a final review of both budgets is slated for March 17. The budgets will be presented publicly April 6 and 7, and voters will ratify the plans at Town Meeting May 5.

But for now, board members and administrators are focused on compiling as much front-end input from residents as they can.

"It gives us another voice," Superintendent of Schools Karen Loiselle said. "I'm thrilled to see the level of passion we've had at recent school board meetings."

In late January, Loiselle unveiled a proposed \$35.4 million budget for fiscal year 2009-10 that if approved in its current form by the Board of Education would result in the district's first round of layoffs in 17 years and leave hundreds of William J. Johnson Middle School and Bacon Academy student-athletes without teams.

Those two areas emerged Wednesday as the biggest points of concern for residents, reflected in their unsigned responses to a survey question about what advice town and school officials should heed before passing their budgets on to the public.

"If education is cut and Town Hall does not make its own cuts, even if they're symbolic, that would be a travesty," one person wrote.

Some of the suggestions were off-beat – one woman recommended hooking physical education equipment to generators to let students power schools themselves – while others focused on what current budget reductions mean for the community's long-term viability.

"Don't micromanage people's homes, lives and freedom to live," one respondent wrote. "Make knowledgeable and thoughtful decisions not based on feelings."

Others in attendance pushed for preservation of school psychologists, liberal arts teachers and extracurricular activities.

"Education is less expensive than ignorance," one participant wrote. "Our children and grandchildren deserve the best education we can give them."

Student athletes pitched a familiar refrain Wednesday, saying cuts to programs like indoor track and golf could keep some kids out of college who are relying on athletic scholarships.

Suggestions for town leaders were just as diverse. Some residents said they wanted to see salary freezes in the upcoming budget year along with clearly explained expenditures broken down by priority.

Officials plan to host a similar forum sometime next week, due to weather conditions that they said kept some people away from Wednesday's forum. Copies of the survey are also available at [www.surveymonkey.com](http://www.surveymonkey.com) and paper versions will be placed at various businesses, schools and Town Hall.

Puscas said the results of the survey – along with residents' suggestions about what direction budget planners should take – will be posted on the town's website, [www.colchesterct.gov](http://www.colchesterct.gov), in about 10 days.

"It's going to be very clear when we play the numbers where the priorities are for the people sitting here," he said. "It's going to help our elected officials with the work they have to do and the decisions they have to make."

# Like Other Towns, Portland Shows Low Grand List Growth

by Michael McCoy

Portland's 2008 Grand List, like that of other surrounding towns, failed to live up to its name, showing just a .93 percent increase over the previous year.

The Grand List of assessable properties in town for the year ending Oct. 1, 2008, totaled \$843,149,470, up \$7.75 million from the 2007 list.

Assessments on the list are broken into three categories – real estate, personal property and motor vehicle. Real estate assessments totaled \$751,225,660, an increase of .71 percent over the 2007 numbers. Personal property came in at \$29,484,830, which accounted for a 16.52 percent increase. At the other end of the spectrum, though, is the \$62,438,980 total for motor vehicle assessments, a decrease of 2.69 percent over 2007 motor vehicle figures.

"I'm just glad it went up," First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield said of the Grand List. Her comment was an allusion to fact that some towns' Grand Lists have actually shrunk, including East Hartford's, which decreased by 1.37 percent.

The fact that the list was as high as it was, Bransfield said, due in part to 2008 being the first full year the town had a full-time assessor. Assessor Nicole Lintereur started in November 2007, and before that assessors had worked part-time. Bransfield said the benefit of the full-time assessor was especially evident in the large increase in personal property tax. According to Bransfield, Lintereur was able, through the use of her GPS, to track down over 250 businesses that previously had not reported personal property. Of that number, about half paid the tax they were said to owe.

"She can do that because she's full-time," Bransfield said. She added that the personal

property increase is "sort of a little bit of catch up," and said no one should expect that number to increase so dramatically next year.

The drop-off in motor vehicle tax requires less explanation. "No one's buying new cars," Bransfield said, which she admitted was not exactly news.

When asked if she was caught off-guard by the small overall Grand List increase, she responded, "No. In fact, I was a little concerned that it might have gone down." She commented further, "I don't think it's anything to be too terribly concerned about. We know development is down." However, she later added, "These are difficult times."

The mill rate will not be set until the public passes a budget. The next step in that process will come on Feb. 27, when Bransfield will submit her budget. The town budget referendum is set for May 11.

The top 10 taxpayers on the 2008 list were: Connecticut Light & Power, with \$10.18 million; St. Clement's Foundation, with \$4.5 million; Perry Portland Associates (owner of the Elmcrest property), \$4.2 million; Buckeye Cattle Company (better known as Quarry Ridge Golf Course), \$3.91 million; Stone Container Corporation, \$2.86 million; Jarvis Airfoil, \$2.82 million; Chatham Ridge Associates, \$2.31 million; Portland Care and Rehabilitation, \$2.15 million; Fairways Fivesome (or Portland Golf Course), \$2.14 million; and Woodgreen Portland Limited Partnership, \$2.11 million. Of the top 10 taxpayers, Woodgreen is the only name that wasn't also on the 2007 list. Falling out of the top 10 is Pharmagraphics, which placed eighth in 2007. Pharmagraphics manufactures folding cartons for healthcare packaging outfit Keller Crescent.

# Town Discusses Downtown Sidewalk Plan in Portland

by Michael McCoy

The town held an informational session Wednesday night for a project Public Works Director Rick Kelsey said has been 16 years in the making.

The subject was a streetscape improvement project, the first part of which will stretch along Main Street from the end of the Arrigoni Bridge, a length of somewhere between 700 and 800 feet. According to a handout at the meeting, the project aimed to enhance public safety and quality of life, accommodate a variety of users, including those with disabilities, provide connectivity to the downtown area, all while minimizing environmental disruptions and long-term maintenance issues, as well as using cost-effective and durable materials.

The project calls for the west sidewalk to be widened from five feet to 10 feet, while the shoulder will be narrowed from 14 feet to seven feet. On the east side, the width will remain five feet, but the sidewalk itself will be replaced, with the exception of the area in front of Exxon, which will be left alone.

Other features include trees, planter boxes, benches, solar lighting, trash cans, bicycle racks, and a brick inset strip and new signage.

At Wednesday's information meeting, Kelsey said the project was the work "of many people," including the Board of Selectmen, Planning and Zoning Commission, town staff and various consultants.

He said that the selectmen said in 1993 that the sidewalks needed to be addressed, and, two years later created a committee to gather input and address the issue. In 1997, a nonprofit group, PRIDE, was formed to work toward making the downtown more attractive.

In 2001, a master plan known as the "Carol R. Johnson Report" was submitted. (The name came from the firm that composed it.) The plan was submitted to the Midstate Regional Plan-

ning Agency the following year. But 2005, Kelsey said, "is when things really started to happen." He said the town began looking at pursuing a Federal Transportation Enhancement Fund, and "that really got the ball rolling." And in 2006, the town was notified it would receive \$250,000 for the project from the state, in the form Small Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP) grant. That money, along with \$800,000 in the federal money, became available in 2007, and design began last year.

Kelsey said this effort has been quite impressive, "whether you agree or don't agree with the specifics of it." He acknowledged that the current project only addresses a small portion of Main Street, but figured, "It's a start."

The next speaker was Chuck Corson, senior engineer for United International. He was responsible for the preliminary design, and said the project actually spanned 900 feet. Corson said "this stretch of roadway is unusual in the state," in that it has "maintained a steady amount of traffic over the years" while most roads have seen decided increases.

Corson described some of the changes that would be made on the road. These included the islands on either side up crossing the bridge into Portland. He said that, currently, trucks often run over part of those islands. The project will include curbing of those islands as well as the addition of rumble strips to prevent this. In this same area, he said the crosswalks will be defined, which is not currently the case. These crosswalks will actually start on one side of the street, cross the island and end up on the other side. Corson said the islands will create "something of a safe haven," temporarily for pedestrians.

As for the sidewalks, he said they will not only be new, but they will meet the current handicapped standards, which the sidewalks

currently fall short of.

Corson noted that a more defined no left turn sign would be included for southbound traffic onto lower Main Street just before the bridge. Corson said he watched traffic during rush hour one day and reported that he observed a man wait to make the exact illegal left turn for five minutes, while traffic struggled to avoid him.

Project landscape architect Stephanie Fuss spoke next, and said her part of the project broke down into three elements: sidewalks and curbing, streetscape elements, and landscaping. One of the more notable features was a sign on the island at the intersection of Main and Marlborough streets. One side reads "Welcome to Historic Portland," while the other reads, "Leaving Historic Portland."

She also explained that the trees to be used will be Chanticleer Pear, which grow to about 20 feet in height and 10-15 feet in width. One reason for their suitability is their "tolerance to pollution and drought," Fuss said, adding that they also boast a "three-season interest," as they have a "lovely fall color," are green in summer and showcase white flowers in spring. Corson later explained that these trees are not only aesthetic, but provide "traffic calming" as they "bring you into an area that feels smaller."

Rob Tierney, of Middletown-based Apex Lighting Solutions, and spoke about the solar light blocks that would provide an elegant "glow." These lights would be flush with the ground and would be located in the brick section of the walk. He said the lights would incorporate "two cutting edge technologies," LEDs and solar-powered arrays (a solar-powered array absorbs sunlight during the day and thus are able to function at night), and added they would be "very green."

Perhaps due to inclement weather Wednes-

day evening, only about 10 members of the public attended the information session. One of these was Roger Guild, who runs a business within the confines of this project's scope, on the west side of Main Street. Guild said the widening of the sidewalk will cost him street parking. "I don't see how that's a gain to me," and added, "I certainly don't need more trees." He later compared the project to "putting lipstick on a pig."

Guild added, "I think you should leave us alone," and promised that, if any easements were needed for his property, "You'll never get one from me, I guarantee that."

Guild also complained about design guidelines in the town's historic district, which would require him to meet specific standards if he made alterations to his building. He complained this would hurt his business.

Frank Magnotta said he has been a Main Street resident for 30 years and expressed disappointment with the project, saying, "I don't see anything that's going to address the horrendous traffic problem." He specified that he thought an exclusive center lane was appropriate.

Gary Colby, owner of Bud's Café, located at 158 Main St., expressed a bit of concern over the sidewalk widening, saying, "You're losing some options." However, overall, he seemed quite upbeat and said, "I think it looks great." Other nearby business owners seemed equally pleased by the project.

Construction is expected to begin in the spring of 2010 and last about eight months. Kelsey and First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield said another public information meeting would be held later this year, when design is almost completed.

# East Hampton Family Seeks Resolution in Tear Gas Problem

by Michael McCoy

One East Hampton family has been left stymied in the aftermath of a fatal tragedy last fall.

On Nov. 12, 2008, East Hampton Police responded to a report that a suicidal 44-year-old man had holed himself up in his bedroom with a gun. This man, his roommate, and her daughter lived in the upstairs of 41 Main St. Upon arriving on the scene, police evacuated the roommate and her daughter, as well as Kimberly Trahan, who lived in the downstairs unit at the house.

Police, along with the Capitol Region Response Team out of West Hartford and the Middletown Police Emergency Response Team, spent the rest of the day trying to talk the man down, and even fired tear gas into his apartment. Around 12:15 a.m. the next morning, police forced entry into the upstairs home to find the man dead from a self-inflicted gunshot wound.

After the incident, East Hampton Police Chief Matthew Reimondo estimated that the standoff called for about 35 law personnel to be on the scene over the course of the saga. Also, during that time, Main Street was closed from Route 66 to Barton Hill Road, except for those who could exclusively access their homes from that section.

Robert Trahan, Kimberly's husband, became aware of the situation just after it began. He was stopped about 300 feet from his home after picking his two sons up from Memorial School. Trahan said the situation at that time looked like it would not be resolved anytime soon, so he took his family to the home of a relative in Willimantic.

Trahan heard from his landlord around 5 a.m. the next morning and said the long and short of that call was that, "the place was trashed." By 6 a.m., Trahan was at his home, only to find "every window was smashed out on our level." Furthermore, he reported broken glass everywhere and the lawn, as well as the inside, was littered with discarded tear gas canister casings. (A photograph Trahan later took revealed 20 canisters in the yard alone. He said the East Hampton Fire Department later told him 49 were shot off.) In short, the home was left uninhabitable, Trahan said.

Trahan said he was "totally flabbergasted."

He said virtually the entire interior of the home had been infected with the tear gas. For instance, one of the first things Trahan retrieved was his boys' Playstation. "As soon as they started to play it," remembered Trahan, "my kids started to cough."

Unfortunately, the Trahans did not have renters' insurance. "That was our mistake," Trahan said, but added, "This was no act of God," but rather the work of people, specifically municipal employees.

Trahan said he and his wife met with various attorneys, but "none of them really wanted to get involved," he said.

Trahan went to Town Manager Jeffery O'Keefe. He was unable to see them, but they scheduled an appointment for a later date.

In the meantime, they spoke to social services coordinator Jane Leary, who, Trahan said, "really seemed concerned." Leary gave them some food and other necessary items, and even set them up at Portland's Riverside Motel.

Later that same day, O'Keefe called wanting to hear the story. So, Trahan sent him a detailed e-mail, and Trahan and his wife met with O'Keefe in person the following Monday. Of that meeting, Trahan remembered, "He seemed genuinely concerned. He seemed at a loss as to why they would even do anything to our unit."

The Trahans eventually filed a claim with the town's insurance provider, but that was denied last week.

With no one willing to take responsibility for the family's damaged belongings, "now we're looking at a possible total loss of our personal property in the house," Trahan said. Though the building itself will be covered by the landlord's insurance, the Trahans had an estimate performed to see how much it would cost to clean any salvageable belongings. That estimate came to \$6,000.

Trahan gave the estimate to O'Keefe. "He took his time reviewing it," Trahan said. "Ultimately, he said he couldn't pay it."

So, they moved up the governmental ladder, and contacted State Representative Gail Hamm. "She was all fired up," Trahan said of Hamm, after she had a two-hour phone conversation with Kimberly. "Somewhere along the line, she

hit the wall," said Trahan, figuring she was genuinely interested in helping, but was stonewalled at some point, though he was not sure how.

Trahan also contacted Chatham Health District director Thad King, who "had nothing to say."

When asked if the town's response has pretty much been that the Trahans' distress is simply unfortunate but unavoidable collateral damage from the incident, Trahan responded, "In so many words, yes."

The Trahans also contacted such state agencies as the Department of Environmental Protection, the Department of Public Health and the Attorney General's office. However, he sighed, "Everything just kind of ran out of gas."

On the other hand, Trahan said the public has responded rather compassionately. "A lot of people from the community have done nice acts of charity for us," Trahan said. There have been donations of used furniture, cash and a computer built by someone in the community. He also said various people at Memorial School have been "very supportive."

"It's an unfortunate situation," Trahan said, who acknowledged that he does not know what it's like to be a law enforcement official dealing with an extreme situation like the one last November. He understood quick decisions must be made, sometimes mistakenly so, but he said responsibility needs to be taken nonetheless.

While Trahan seems perplexed why such a large amount of tear gas was used – and why any of it was launched into his apartment – he said, "Even if it was justified, you still have to clean up after yourself."

As it happens, this was not exactly a warm welcome to New England for the Trahans. They moved to East Hampton from Colorado last March, and had only lived at 41 Main St. since September.

The family has since moved to a new home in town and "we've kind of moved on with our lives," Trahan explained. As for the belongings in the home, they took the most important items, put them in safe containers and placed them in storage.

Trahan said he and his wife are considering

filing a lawsuit, though he said it would not be a matter of revenge, but simply to recoup their losses. "I was hoping all that could be avoided," Trahan lamented, but said, "We're still sorting out what our options are."

Any potential lawsuit would not account for less tangible things like the extra gas spent driving to and from Willimantic, money on necessary meals out or punitive damages. "My wife has been distraught for months," Trahan said. In addition, Trahan said it was hard for he and his family to deal with what happened to the deceased, whom they knew fairly well. "We liked [him] and I'm sad things ended up the way they did," Trahan said.

O'Keefe said he could not comment on the matter as "there's potential litigation tied to it." Similarly, East Hampton Police Chief Matthew Reimondo replied, "I can't speak to that case."

Town Council chair Melissa Engel said she "was concerned about it," when she heard of the Trahans' plight. She said O'Keefe called for an executive session with the Town Council and law enforcement officials from East Hampton and Middletown, within a couple weeks after it happened. Engel said the police, which included Reimondo, told the council they responded to the situation appropriately. When asked if she shared their opinion, Engel responded, "I'm not in a position to agree or disagree." Nor would Engel weigh in on the town's response to the situation thus far.

Bob Dean, the town's insurance consultant, said he would not address the Trahans' situation directly "because it's still up in the air." He said, though, that it was standard for municipalities' policies to exempt law enforcement from their coverage, although he wouldn't specify if that was the case in this situation. He declined to comment at length, saying, "I hate being evasive, but I can't say much else."

Reached this week, Blumenthal said, "I don't know that I can comment," figuring that if the state, particularly, state police, was not involved with the incident, then his office would have no authority over the matter. Instead, he said it would have to be pursued through litigation.

Town attorney Jean D'Aquila failed to respond to multiple phone calls for this article.

## Very Low Increase on Hebron Grand List

by Sarah McCoy

The Grand List showed just a miniscule increase this year, as both building projects and new car purchases have all but stopped.

The net taxable Grand List for Oct. 1, 2008, totaled \$885,742,310 in Hebron. That is an increase of just \$1.4 million, or .164 percent, over last year.

In a report, Tax Assessor Robert Musson said the growth is largely due to the new construction of subdivisions in town. The two projects, one on Jones Street and one on Marjorie Circle, account for the bulk of the 20 new homes built in Hebron last year.

Real estate grew by just .561 percent from October 2007 to October 2008.

Motor vehicle assessments actually saw a significant decrease. The town saw a \$3.1 million, or a 4.7 percent, decrease in this account. Musson attributed this to the fact that Hebron residents aren't purchasing new cars, opting to keep their older vehicles a little longer.

In terms of Personal Property, the line item saw a modest increase of 1.26 percent, or \$159,543.

The Grand List is used by the Board of Finance to set the mill rate. Once the town has an overall budget, that number is divided by the Grand List total to calculate the mill rate. An individual's assessments multiplied by the mill rate will determine their portion of taxes for the coming year. (A mill is \$1 tax per \$1,000 of assessed property value.)

Town Manager Jared Clark said that "in a

normal year" Hebron sees a 2-2.5 percent Grand List increase. This growth, he said, gives the town increased revenue without raising taxes. This year's scant increase means that town departments will have to work even harder to control costs, he said.

"Because of the economic depression we are not anticipating voters to support much, if any, budget increases," Clark said. "We're looking at coming up with appropriately \$1 million more in the budget. The only way you're going to do that is by cutting existing programs."

The Board of Assessment Appeals (BAA) has yet to hear any appeals on the 2008 assessments, therefore the \$885.64 million number is most likely not the final number the Board of Finance will use. The BAA convenes in March.

There wasn't much of a shift in the top 10 tax assessments in Hebron for 2007. Leading the way was Connecticut Light and Power at \$5.26 million, Blackledge Country Club Inc. at \$3.6 million, Foothills Farms Inc at \$2.2 million, Village Shoppes LLC at \$2.12 million, Hebron Properties LLC with a tax assessment of \$1.54 million, B.I.S.S. Inc. at \$1.49 million, The Connecticut Water Company at \$1.44 million, Loveland Farms LLC at \$1.33 million, Hebron Country Manor LLC at \$1.19 million and Blackledge East LLC at \$1.01 million.

The only newcomer on the top 10 list was the Connecticut Water Company, which purchased Birmingham Utilities in 2008.

## Colchester Police News

1/31-Edward Thompson, 42, of East Haddam, was charged with failure to appear and violation of probation, State Police said.

2/2-Theodore Klotas, 45, of East Hartford, was charged with driving under the influence, operating a motor vehicle with a suspended license and failure to have insurance, State Police said.

2/5-Jeremy Brunner, 25, of 116 Mill St., was charged with fourth-degree larceny and illegal use of a credit card, State Police said.

2/5-Tracey Moyer, 36, of Uncasville, was charged with second-degree larceny, second-degree forgery and conspiracy, State Police said.

2/5-Marion Nastalczyk, 22, of Lebanon, was charged with three counts of violation of probation, State Police said.

2/9-Harvey Leonard, 21, of 761 Middletown Rd., was charged with second-degree assault and breach of peace, State Police said.

2/11-Miguel Caballero, 28, of 16 Eleanor Drive, was charged Feb. 11 with driving while intoxicated, traveling too fast for conditions and

failure to have insurance, State Police said.

2/11-Benjamin Adams, 18, of Marlborough, was charged with third-degree burglary and sixth-degree larceny, State Police said.

2/12-Kimberley Benevides, 39, of Columbia, was charged with sixth-degree larceny and shoplifting, State Police said.

2/12-Emma Winarski, 23, of 66 Reservoir Rd., was charged Feb. 12 with possession of marijuana and possession of drug paraphernalia, State Police said.

2/15-Joshua Ganole, 19, of 120 Crestview Drive, with possession of marijuana and possession of drug paraphernalia, State Police said.

2/15-Dalton Ford, 19, of 462 Westchester Rd., was charged with sixth-degree larceny, State Police said.

2/17-Tyler Wilson, 19, of 44 Jan Dr., was charged with possession of drug paraphernalia and disorderly conduct, State Police said.

2/17-Robert Rutchick, 34, of Middletown, was charged Feb. 17 with three counts of failure to appear, State Police said.

## East Hampton Police News

2/8 — Matthew Bailey, 20, of 116 Chestnut Hill Rd., was arrested pursuant to three warrants for three counts of probation violation, East Hampton Police said.

2/8 — Scott E. Evans, 24, of 12 Mohican Tr., was arrested for criminal trespass, police said.

2/9 — Robert T. Rudnick, 53, of 10 Forest St., was arrested pursuant to a court-ordered warrant for operating under the influence of alcohol, failure to drive right, making an improper turn, operating without a license, and second-degree failure to appear, police said.

2/11 — Peter Ereshena Jr., 39, of 467 Moodus Rd., was issued a ticket for operating an unregistered motor vehicle, police said.

2/12 — Troy T. McIntosh, 26, of 83 Middletown Ave., was arrested on two court-ordered warrants for two counts of violation of probation, police said.

## Obituaries

### Andover

#### Walter Ray Carter

Walter Ray Carter, 81, of Niantic and formerly of Andover and Ft. Pierce, FL, beloved husband of Lorraine, passed away at the home of his daughter, Susan on Wednesday, Feb. 11, surrounded by his loving family. The youngest of 14 children, he was born on March 12, 1927 in Wethersfield, a son of the late Walter Roswell and Ethel (Schildge) Carter.



Mr. Carter proudly served our country with the U.S. Army during WWII. He was a very patriotic man and also belonged to the VFW in Manchester. He was married to the former Lorraine Mosher on March 4, 1950, in Hartford. Walter and Lorraine raised their family in Andover for 20 years and then made their home in Niantic. They had a winter home in Ft. Pierce, FL, for 19 years.

Walter worked as a diesel mechanic foreman for Mashkin Freight Lines and for Ron Cari in Windsor Locks. He was a member of the Teamsters Union Local 559 in East Hartford. His joy in life was working with his hands, creating and building. He loved simple pleasures, watching the birds, feeling the sun and a gentle breeze on his face. Most importantly he will be remembered by his family as being a devoted and loving husband, father and grandfather. He was everyone's friend.

Including his loving wife of 58 years, he is survived by three children, Linda Carter of Niantic, Susan and husband, Willie Bell of Hebron and Brian Walter and wife, Deanne Carter of Tolland; two sisters, Ethelyn Sands and Viola Couch, both of Vernon; a brother, Clinton Carter of Ellington; 13 grandchildren, Carolyn and Max Carter, Jessica and husband, Dan Hamill, Kyleigh and husband, Tim Baumher, Zachary and wife, Autumn Bell, Kendra-Grace Bell, Isaiah, Sabrina, Sara, Olivia and Sam Bell; Melissa and Morgan Carter; three great-grandchildren, Emma Hamill, Ava Baumher and Grayson Bell; and numerous extended family and friends.

Committal services with full military honors will be observed in March at the Arlington National Cemetery. Care of arrangements has been entrusted to the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home of Colchester.

Donations in his memory may be made to the Lewy Body Dementia Assn., P.O. Box 451429, Atlanta, GA 31145.

For online condolences, visit [www.auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com](http://www.auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com).

### Colchester

#### Anna Moroch

Anna Moroch, 89, of Norwich Avenue, Colchester, widow of the late Edward G. Moroch, passed away Friday, Feb. 13, at the Village at South Farms in Middletown. In 1936, she and Ed were married and shared 62 years of marriage before he predeceased her on Dec. 31, 1998.

Mrs. Moroch worked alongside her husband in the operation of their family business, E.G. Moroch Tree Experts of Colchester, for many years. In her spare time, she loved gardening and tending to her blueberry patch for many years.

She is survived by two sons, Ronald and wife, Barbara of Colchester and Gary of Providence; two grandchildren, Jeff and Craig; four great-grandchildren, Amber, Jessie, Kyle and Katerina; and numerous extended family members and friends.

In addition to her husband, she was predeceased by a son, Danny; and two sisters, Olga Kendzior and Helen Zemko.

Friends called Monday morning, Feb. 16, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. The celebration of the Funeral Liturgy followed at 11 a.m. at St. Andrew Church, 128 Norwich Ave., Colchester, with Fr. Michael Giannitelli, officiating. Interment followed in the Linwood Cemetery, Colchester.

In lieu of flowers, donations in her memory may be made to her Church or to the Village at South Farms, 645 Saybrook Road, Middletown 06457.

For online condolences, visit [www.auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com](http://www.auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com).

### Colchester

#### Clifton Albert Graichen

Clifton Albert Graichen, 76, of Colchester, beloved husband of Gertrude Ellen (Moore) Graichen, passed away Saturday morning, Feb. 14, at the Harrington Court GHC Center in Colchester. Born July 1, 1932 in Pawcatuck, he was a son of the late Alfred and Alma (Fortin) Graichen.

Mr. Graichen proudly served with the U.S. Army during the Korean War. He worked as a sheet metal engineer for Pratt & Whitney in East Hartford for 11 years and went on to work for M&L Products in Killingworth for 36 years before his retirement.

In addition to his loving wife of 56 years, he is survived by three children, Clifton "Alfred" Graichen and his partner, John Lane of Manchester; Kathleen Hofmann and her husband, Steven of Marshfield, WI and Daniel Graichen and his wife, Gloria of Clinton; four grandchildren; four siblings, Shirley Fell of Middletown and Lonnie Parrish and Doreen and Kurt Graichen, all of Canada; and numerous extended family and friends.

He was predeceased by a brother, Richard.

Care of private arrangements has been entrusted to the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home of Colchester. For online condolences, visit [www.auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com](http://www.auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com).

### East Hampton

#### Patricia Anne Henschke

Patricia Anne (Harris) Henschke, 65, of East Hampton, beloved wife of Robert W. Henschke, died Thursday, Feb. 12, at Middlesex Hospital. Born Jan. 3, 1944, in Chiswick, England, she was the daughter of the late Arthur and Dorothy (Shoring) Harris. Patricia had lived in East Hampton for more than 37 years. She was a member of the Order of the Eastern Star and had been an E.M.T. for the East Hampton Volunteer Ambulance Association.

Besides her husband Robert, she is survived by a son, Alan Henschke of Fairfield, and a daughter, Amy Henschke of Middletown. A memorial service will be held at Lakeview Cemetery in East Hampton at the convenience of the family.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the American Breast Cancer Foundation at [www.abcf.org](http://www.abcf.org), The Special Olympics at [www.specialolympics.org](http://www.specialolympics.org) or Animal Friends of Connecticut at P.O. Box 370306, West Hartford, CT 06137-0306.

To leave online condolences, visit [www.spencerfuneralhomeinc.com](http://www.spencerfuneralhomeinc.com). The Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton, has care of arrangements.

### Colchester

#### John C. Wells

John C. Wells, "Jack," 79, of Lake Hayward, Colchester, beloved husband of Margaret "Peggy" Wells, passed away Monday evening, Feb. 16, after a courageous battle with Lymphoma at the Memorial Sloan-Kettering Hospital in New York City, surrounded by his loving family. Born Feb. 11, 1930, in New London, he was a son of the late Clarence and Gertrude (Courtney) Wells.

In 1948, he enlisted in the US Coast Guard and proudly served during the Korean War before his Honorable Discharge in 1952. On June 19, 1954, he wed the former Margaret Pugsley at St. Joseph Church in New London. Jack earned his bachelor's degree in electrical engineering from UConn in 1957 and went on to work for Hamilton Standard for over 30 years as a design engineer. Following his retirement as chief engineer of electrical design in 1992, he and Peggy would spend their winters in Hobe Sound, FL. While in Florida, he was a national shuffleboard champion, and had always enjoyed participating in many sports throughout his life. Jack also loved to tend to his gardens.

In addition to his loving wife of 54 years, he is survived by four children and their spouses, Patricia and Thomas Spitzer of Hebron; Pamela and Thomas Bousquet of Windsor; Michael and Kathryn Wells of Vermont and Beth Wells-Mackay and Andrew Mackay of Hebron; seven grandchildren, Joshua and wife, Gwen Spitzer, Megan Spitzer, Marissa and Alexandra Wells and Anna, Jack and Molly Mackay; his sister, Nancy Pearce of Enfield, IL; and numerous extended family members and friends.

He was predeceased by a brother, Robert.

Friends may call 5-7 p.m. today, Friday, Feb. 20, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester.

The funeral liturgy will be celebrated at 10:30 a.m. Saturday, Feb. 21, directly at St. Andrew Church, 128 Norwich Ave., Colchester. Committal with military honors will follow in the New St. Andrew Cemetery. There are no calling hours Saturday morning.

In lieu of flowers, donations in his memory may be made to Leukemia and Lymphoma Society of America, 300 Research Pkwy., Ste. 310, Meriden 06450.

For online condolences, visit [www.auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com](http://www.auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com).

### Colchester

#### Edward S. Suroviak

Edward S. Suroviak, 83, husband of the late Patricia Ann Webster Suroviak of Amston and Colchester passed away Saturday morning, Feb. 14, at the Harrington Court Genesis Elder Care center in Colchester. He was born Oct. 12, 1925, in Colchester, son of John and Mary Sczerba Suroviak.

He was a veteran of World War II serving in the U.S. Navy, was a master electrician, plumber and heating contractor. Along with his late brother, Frank they operated the Suroviak Electric, which was the second longest business in Colchester. Ed retired from the business three years ago. He was a member of the American Legion Post No. 54 and was a life member of the 100 Club of Connecticut.

He is survived by his two sons, William and wife Maureen of Lebanon and Paul Suroviak of Colchester; one sister, Wanda Glemboski of Colchester; grandchildren Nicole, Taylor, Laura, Luke and wife Mary, Joseph and wife Jo-el, great grandson Brendan and great granddaughter Emily, several nieces and nephews.

He was predeceased by two brothers Frank and William Suroviak and four sisters Midred Joskiewich, Agnes Brown, Stella Berthlaume and Anna Kornosewicz.

Funeral services were held Tuesday, Feb. 17, from Belmont Funeral Home, 144 South Main St., Colchester, followed by a Mass of Christian Burial at St. Andrew's Catholic Church. Burial followed in Linwood cemetery with full military honors. Calling hours were Monday, Feb. 16, at the funeral home.

Memorial donations may be made to the Colchester Haywood fire Company or to VITAS Innovative Hospice Care 255 Pitkins St. East Hartford, CT 06108 in his memory.

### East Hampton

#### Dorothy B. Larsen

Dorothy B. (Bachman) Larsen, 88, wife of the late Harold R. Larsen, passed away peacefully surrounded by her family on Saturday, Feb. 14, at Glastonbury Health Care Center. She was born April 18, 1920 in Newington, the daughter of the late Bertha and Arthur Bachman.

Dorothy grew up in Newington, attended and graduated from New Britain High School in 1937. Prior to moving to the Glastonbury Health Care Center she resided on Robbins Road in Kensington for 58 years. She was secretary of the Kensington Congregational Church for more than 20 years. She was also a secretary at the Berlin/Kensington branch of the New Britain YMCA during the 1960s. She was a member of the Kensington Congregational Church for more than 65 years.

Dorothy enjoyed spending many summers with friends and family at Lake Pocotopaug in East Hampton, and she loved traveling around the United States with her family to visit National Parks and attractions in more than 40 states and Canada. She was an avid knitter, and enjoyed biking on the local trails with her husband until the age of 83. A special joy to her was playing with her three grandchildren and watching them grow, and meeting her new great-granddaughter in August of last year.

She is survived by her sons, Gary Larsen and his wife Ann, Donald Larsen and his wife Laurie; three grandchildren, Ryan and his wife Trisha, Lindsay, Melissa, and a great-granddaughter, Kylie. She also is survived by a sister-in-law, Edna Beach, and three nephews.

The funeral service was Tuesday, Feb. 17, at Rose Hill Funeral Home, 580 Elm St., Rt. 160, Rocky Hill, with the Reverend Denise Esslinger officiating. Burial followed in Rose Hill Memorial Park. Her family received friends Tuesday, Feb. 17, prior to the service.

Those wishing to make a donation in her memory may do so to the Kensington Congregational Church Memorial Fund, 312 Percival Avenue, Kensington, CT 06037, or to the Gilead Congregational Church Memorial Fund, 672 Gilead Street, Hebron, CT 06248.

### Portland

#### Rose Boutin

Rose (Richer) Boutin, 77, of Newington, beloved wife of the late Maurice E. Boutin, died Tuesday, Feb. 17. She was born in Burlington, VT, the daughter of the late Arthur and Mary Exilia (Girard) Richer and resided in Portland for over 40 years before moving to Newington seven years ago.

Rose is survived by her children: Andrew Boutin of Wethersfield, David Boutin and his wife Carolyn of Middletown, Jeannine Boutin of Newington, William Boutin and his wife Pamela of Portland and Joyce Boutin of Wolcott; her daughter-in-law Katherine Boutin of Newington; 18 grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren; her brother Clement Richer and his wife Elizabeth of North Ferrisburg, VT; and many nieces and nephews.

She was predeceased by her son Michael Boutin; her brothers, Rodolphe and Leonard Richer; and her sisters, Cecile Belval and Margaret Manor.

Her funeral service was held today, Friday, Feb. 20, at 9 a.m. from the Fiset-Batzner Funeral Home, 20 Bonair Ave., Newington, followed by a Mass of Christian Burial at 10 a.m. at St. Mary's Church, Newington. Interment will be in West Meadow Cemetery, Newington. Relatives and friends called Thursday, Feb. 19, from 6-8 p.m., at Fiset-Batzner.

Memorial donations may be made to St. Mary's Church, 626 Willard Ave., Newington, CT 06111.

To share a memory, visit [www.newingtonmemorial.com](http://www.newingtonmemorial.com).

### East Hampton

#### Andrew J. Pyne Jr.

Andrew J. "Pynie" Pyne Jr., of Depot Hill Road, Cobalt, died Sunday, Feb. 15, at Hartford Hospital. He was the husband of Rosalie Wallace Pyne. Born in Portland July 15, 1928, the son of the late Andrew J. Pyne Sr. and the late Alma Bengston Pyne, he was a Cobalt resident for many years.

He had been employed by the Town of Portland as the wastewater plant chief operator for 28 years until his retirement. He was the deputy chief of the East Hampton Volunteer Fire Department and had been a member of the Portland Volunteer Fire Department. He was a veteran of the U.S. Navy and a member of the USS Hyman Association and a member of the East Hampton VFW. He also was a member of the County Chiefs Association and a parishioner of the Church of Saint Mary, in Portland.

Besides his wife Rosalie, he is survived by his daughters Ellen Anderson and her husband Joseph of Newark, DE, Kathleen Kearney of Cobalt, and Anne Labagh and her husband James of Middletown; his son James Pyne and his wife Teresa of West Point, VA; his grandchildren Phoenix Kearney of Cobalt, Christine Pyne, and Michael Pyne, both of West Point, VA, Katie Anderson, Christopher Anderson and Kate Karpe, of Newark, DE and several nieces and nephews.

His family received relatives and friends in the Portland Memorial Funeral Home 231 Main St., Portland, Wednesday, Feb. 18. Funeral services were held Thursday, Feb. 19, from the Portland Memorial Funeral Home and later that morning in the Church of Saint Mary for a Mass of Christian Burial. Interment, with military honors, in the Swedish Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, gifts in his memory may be sent to the East Hampton Fire Department, Company No. 2, 366 West High St., East Hampton, CT 06424 or the Church of Saint Mary, 51 Freestone Ave., Portland, CT 06480.

For directions, or to leave an online expression of sympathy, visit [www.portlandmemorialfh.net](http://www.portlandmemorialfh.net).

### East Hampton

#### George M. Szilagyi III

George M. Szilagyi III, 70, of Gov. Bill O'Neil Drive, East Hampton died unexpectedly on Monday at his residence. Beloved husband of Rose (Milardo) Szilagyi. Born on September 10, 1938 in Berlin son of Anna (Lowchy) Szilagyi and the late George M. Szilagyi II.

George was a graduate of Berlin High school and resided in Newington for 36 years before moving to East Hampton five years ago. He had been employed by Hartford Hospital, retiring in 1999. A veteran serving in the U.S. Army. George also volunteered numerous times for several years for the MS Society CT Chapter.

Besides his wife and mother he is survived by three daughters and sons-in-law; Sandra and Adolfo Carchia of Meriden, Lisa Szilagyi and Curtis Eza of Columbia, Sue and Frank Woodbury of East Hampton, a sister Linda Carbone of Bristol, four grandchildren; Crystal Manuele of Waterbury, Brandon, Brianna, Marissa Woodbury of East Hampton, and also two nieces.

Funeral services will be held today, Friday, Feb. 20, at 10 a.m. in the Coughlin-Lastrina Funeral Home, 491 High St., Middletown. Burial will be in the family plot in West Meadow Cemetery, Newington. Friends called at the funeral home Thursday, Feb. 19.

Those who wish may make memorial donations to the National M.S. Society Conn. Chapter, 659 Tower Ave., Hartford, CT 06112.