

RIVEREAST

News Bulletin

Serving Amston, Andover, Cobalt, East Hampton, Hebron, Marlborough, Middle Haddam, Portland, Colchester and Salem

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Stars and Stripes Forever...Second-grader Robert Luoma took part in a Flag Day ceremony at Memorial School in East Hampton last month. Kids learned about the history of the flag, participated in flag-coloring activities and each got their very own flag as they exited the school auditorium.

Police Chief Fighting for Job

by Claire Michalewicz

East Hampton's police chief is fighting to get his job back after the town manager abruptly eliminated his position last Tuesday.

Matthew Reimondo, the town's police chief for nearly 12 years, has hired a lawyer to represent him in a hearing about his dismissal. Reimondo said Town Manager Jeffery O'Keefe's move was retaliatory, but O'Keefe said he only did it to save the town money.

The hearing was slated for today at 10 a.m. at East Hampton High School.

O'Keefe said he eliminated Reimondo's position because he was anticipating a \$1.5 million budget shortfall in the fiscal year beginning in July 2011. By eliminating the police chief, two other officers, a secretary and two police cruisers, O'Keefe said, he could save about \$429,000.

O'Keefe said he was offering Reimondo the hearing about his layoff, which was open to the public (although public comment was not expected to be allowed). The hearing, O'Keefe said, was required by state statute for police chiefs dismissed for cause, but he was extending the opportunity to Reimondo in case the law also covered dismissals for financial reasons.

Reimondo has hired West Hartford attorney Leon Rosenblatt to represent him at the hearing and in any possible further legal action. Rosenblatt has experience in this type of matter — he represented Cromwell's chief of po-

lice, Anthony Salvatore, when he was fired in 2008. (Rosenblatt negotiated with the Cromwell town attorney to reinstate Salvatore to his position; Salvatore ended up getting his job back a week after he was fired.)

Mark Sommaruga was due to represent the town at the hearing. Sommaruga recently investigated harassment complaints filed by three town employees against a "senior town official." After that investigation, Sommaruga recommended the town council take no action on the matter. The identity of the official was never publicly revealed by the town, but Reimondo and Town Council member Sue Weintraub said last week that it was O'Keefe.

Rosenblatt said O'Keefe eliminated Reimondo because of the latter's involvement in the harassment allegations. In April, Rosenblatt said, Reimondo received complaints about O'Keefe from three town employees, and passed them on to the town attorney, Jean D'Aquila, to be investigated. Shortly afterward,

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**The Rivereast
News Bulletin
will be open on
Monday, July 5th.**

Andover Native Tells Saga of Bill of Rights Copy

by Lindsay Fetzner

More than seven years in the making, Andover native David Howard's book on the 138-year journey of one of the original copies of the Bill of Rights has hit the shelves. Today, July 2, *Lost Rights: The Misadventures of a Stolen American Relic*, becomes available.

"It's been such a long ride," Howard, now a Pennsylvania resident, said. "It's hard to even have it sink in that it's actually, finally here."

What originally started as a freelancing assignment in April 2003, covering the seizure of North Carolina's Bill of Rights by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), became a pursuit to piece together the history of the well-traveled document.

"I was pretty struck by the story from the start," Howard said. "It is not something you hear about every day."

Howard's book concludes with the FBI seizure and in the over 300-page non-fiction narrative, details the journey of the document back to North Carolina's government.

The fast-moving account begins during the Civil War in 1865, when General Sherman's army entered the city of Raleigh, NC. While rummaging through the state house, a soldier from Ohio discovered one of the original 14 copies of the Bill of Rights. Taking it with him back to an Ohio residence, the Civil War sol-

dier sold the document to an Indiana grain broker, Charles Shotwell, for a mere \$5. The document stayed with Shotwell's family for 134 years.

From there, the document journeyed from city to city, traversing many miles, and residing in various auction houses along the way. The document went from the hands of Wayne Pratt, a Connecticut man who bought and sold furniture, to Peter Tillou, a Litchfield antique and art seller, to Bill Reese, a New Haven-based book and manuscript dealer, among others.

Then in 2003, in an undercover operation by the FBI, the copy was recovered in a conference room in a Philadelphia office building, according to the book. An FBI agent, acting as a millionaire philanthropist offering to purchase it on behalf of the National Constitution Center, lured the sellers to Pennsylvania for a \$4 million "sale" of the document.

A special agent referred to the sting as "one of the greatest recoveries of historic information and intellectual property the FBI has ever made," according to the book.

Howard writes in the book, "The Bill of Rights takes the idea on which this country is built — liberty for all — and inventories that concept. It is freedom's laundry list. The document has served the country remarkably. When our

flaws became exposed — during the fight for women's suffrage and the Red scare and the civil rights movement — the Bill of Rights has been there to remind everyone what the United States is about."

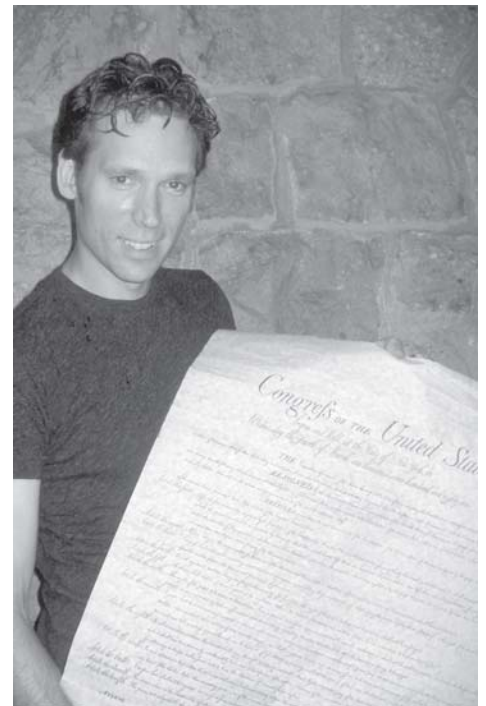
After finishing the freelance assignment, Howard put the story "in his back pocket" for over two years. Then, in late 2005, Howard began working on a proposal for the book, and in the spring of 2006, "the book really got off the ground," when Howard connected with the publisher Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.

"It was one of those things that really stuck with me," Howard said of the document's history, which seemed to "always take up real estate" in his head while away from it. "I knew I would circle back," he said. And that he did, telling the story of the list of amendments to the Constitution in his non-fiction piece.

Looking back over the seven years, Howard said he is extremely excited to have his work finally hit the books shelves, comparing it to a bottle of wine that "needed to age a bit" from that 2003 freelance assignment.

Writing and juggling both work and family, Howard said it took about a year for the first draft to be completed and another nine months for revisions and cutting. It was after Pratt

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David Howard stands beside a replica of the Bill of Rights, which hung in the basement of an old farmhouse where Howard worked on *Lost Rights*.

Police Chief cont. from Front Page

in late April or early May, Rosenblatt said, O'Keefe started making plans to terminate Reimondo's position.

O'Keefe said he did ask Director of Finance Jeff Jylkka about the police budget at that time, but stressed he did so in anticipation of the town budget referendum on May 5. O'Keefe said he thought the budget would fail, and was looking for places to make cuts.

"That will all come out in the hearing," O'Keefe said. The harassment complaints, O'Keefe has repeatedly said, are not in any way related to his decision to cut the police department.

When the Town Council received the complaints, they hired Sommaruga to investigate. In his report, Sommaruga recommended that the town take no action, which the Town Council voted to do. After Reimondo was fired last week, both he and Town Council member Sue Weintraub said it was O'Keefe who had been accused of harassment, and that O'Keefe eliminated Reimondo's position as retaliation for his involvement in the accusations.

Earlier this week, media reports said that one of the three female town employees who accused O'Keefe of harassment is a secretary in the police department. O'Keefe said Wednesday he was still uncertain whether this woman or another administrative worker in the police department would be losing her job in July.

Rosenblatt said there was a connection between the complaints against O'Keefe and O'Keefe's decision to remove Reimondo. Rosenblatt questioned O'Keefe's promotion of Sergeant Michael Green to acting lieutenant, and if it was legal for the Town Council to appoint O'Keefe as acting police chief until the town's ordinances could be amended to remove the chief's position.

"How does laying off a chief and appointing someone in his place save money?" Rosenblatt asked. He said that by promoting Green to acting lieutenant, the town would have to pay him overtime for any extra work he did. Meanwhile, Rosenblatt said, Reimondo had been paid a flat salary, without overtime pay.

"Come on, that's not a savings of anything," Rosenblatt said. "It's a ruse."

O'Keefe said Green did not receive a raise when he was promoted, explaining that the promotion was only temporary. The town would start recruiting for another lieutenant soon, he said. O'Keefe added that he was not sure if Green would be incurring any overtime costs. O'Keefe said he chose Green out of the police force's five sergeants because he's had a good working relationship with Green in the two years O'Keefe has been with the town.

Police chiefs, Rosenblatt explained, are protected by just clause provision in state law. Under this provision, Rosenblatt said, "there needs to be a good reason. It can't just be on somebody's whim." In addition, Rosenblatt said, the way O'Keefe had laid off Reimondo — in a private meeting and having himself appointed chief — was illegal.

Speaking at his home on Monday, Reimondo said he was still stunned by last week's events, and hopes he can return to his job soon.

"My family, my friends and I were in complete shock about it happening," Reimondo said. He said he couldn't comment much on his case, preferring to let Rosenblatt speak about the details. But Reimondo said he was grateful for the support he has in the town.

"It's been a difficult time for me and my family," Reimondo said. "But the support I've received from the community of East Hampton has been overwhelming."

the end result," he said. Asked if he would pen another book, Howard said he would definitely "jump at the chance" if the "circumstances presented themselves."

Throughout the month of July, Howard will return to Connecticut to discuss *Lost Rights* at various locations. On Saturday, July 24, he will stop at the Manchester Historical Society. Other local discussions will take place in Madison on July 22 and in Washington on July 25. For more information, visit Howard's website, davidhowardonline.com.

Howard is currently the executive editor of *Bicycling* magazine, and lives in Emmaus, PA, with his wife and son. He grew up in Andover, attending both Andover Elementary and RHAM schools, living in the "classic small-town America" for 18 years.

Part of that support is a petition that resident Barbara Suprono is circulating, asking for Reimondo to be reinstated to his position, and for O'Keefe to resign. Suprono said O'Keefe's decision to terminate Reimondo's position was due to a vendetta, because of Reimondo's involvement in the harassment allegations against O'Keefe.

"We'll go further if we have to," Suprono said, explaining that if the petition didn't work, she would band together with other residents to rally in front of town hall, or boycott paying their motor vehicle taxes.

"Let's exercise our freedoms here," Suprono said. "[O'Keefe] needs to go."

Suprono is part of a group of residents who launched a website, www.takebackourtown.org, to spread the word about the petition. The site is also selling T-shirts printed with the words "Bring Back The Chief/Fire O'Keefe." Mary Ann Dostaler said on Wednesday afternoon that the first order of shirts was already sold out. She said she hoped residents would show their support for Reimondo by attending the hearing on Friday.

In a press release about the website, her husband, Kyle Dostaler, said East Hampton residents had been "blindsided" by O'Keefe and the Town Council's actions.

"Not only was the Chief treated with a total lack of professionalism by the Town Manager, he was heartlessly dismissed by self-absorbed politicians," he said.

Av Harris, a spokesman for the secretary of state's office, said a petition asking the town manager to resign would have no legal bearing, regardless of how many residents signed. But Town Council Chairwoman Melissa Engel said that if a petition circulated and garnered

many signatures, the Town Council would consider the issue.

"If we got a huge number of signatures on anything, we'd have to look at it," Engel said, adding that that wouldn't necessarily mean the Town Council would fire O'Keefe.

In another show of support for Reimondo, the East Hampton police officers' union, the International Brotherhood of Police Officers Local 524, unanimously registered a vote of no confidence in O'Keefe's leadership on Monday. A statement from the local union said O'Keefe's decision to reduce their department was retaliatory, explaining that laying off Reimondo and one of the complainants in the sexual harassment investigation was "just too much of a coincidence to believe that the events were not related."

"We are united 100 percent in support of Chief Reimondo and believe he was wrongly terminated, in violation of state law, town ordinance, and town charter," the statement said. East Hampton Police Sgt. Garritt Kelly said police officers issued the statement collectively, to avoid reprisals against any individual who spoke out.

In addition, the union statement said, O'Keefe's attempt to bring East Hampton's police spending in line with other towns was misguided, since other police departments are organized differently and do not provide the same level of service. Removing Reimondo, they said, could have a negative effect on public safety.

O'Keefe said Reimondo "technically" remained in his position as police chief until today's hearing, but is on an administrative leave of absence pending the outcome of the hearing.

Bill of Rights cont. from Front Page

agreed to sit down with Howard that he started writing during 2007.

Howard did a lot of his writing in the basement of an old farmhouse, complete with a replica of the Bill of Rights hanging on the wall that he said set "the mood." "It was a pretty unbelievable process," he said.

Crediting support from family and friends for coming to this point, Howard said although he was "the guy in the basement doing the writing," it was "in a lot of ways a team effort."

As a first-time author, he said it was "a really exciting experience to feel the story coming together." Although there were bumps along the way and times when Howard said the process was quite "nerve-racking," authoring *Lost Rights* was "the most electrifying experience in [his] 20 years of being a journalist."

"I can't think of how I could be happier with

Portland Man Charged with Sexual Assault of 10-Year-Old

by Claire Michalewicz

A former Portland resident has been charged with the sexual assault of a 10-year-old girl in town several years ago, Portland Police said.

Andrew Prucha, 34, of Middletown, was arrested June 15 and was charged with first-degree sexual assault and risk of injury to a child, police said.

According to an affidavit on file at Middletown Superior Court, Prucha was arrested after his ex-wife, Dawn Johnson, went to the police to tell them about events that happened in 2002, before she and Prucha divorced. Johnson said she had found child pornography on their computer, and a diary entry of Prucha's that mentioned pornography, the affidavit said.

According to the affidavit, when Johnson confronted Prucha about the pornography, Johnson said Prucha said told her "So what, I look at pictures." When she confronted him another time, Johnson said Prucha told her he "made some mistakes back then but was no longer the same person," the affidavit said. Another time that same year, according to the affidavit, Johnson said she found Prucha inappropriately touching a 10-year-old daughter of a family friend, and found her in bed with him the next morning.

According to the affidavit, in March of this year, Johnson told the girl, who is now 17, about finding Prucha with pornography. At this time, the alleged victim told Johnson that Prucha had molested her on two occasions, the affidavit said.

Police then interviewed the girl, who said Prucha had molested her twice in 2002, once in Middletown and once at Prucha's home in Portland, the affidavit said. The Portland event, she said, took place on her 10th birthday. The alleged victim said she had been at Prucha's house, playing with his son. After

Prucha's son and daughter went to bed, the girl said, Prucha told her to change into shorts and a tank top, and began touching her chest.

The girl said she started crying and telling Prucha to stop, the affidavit said. At point, the affidavit said, the alleged victim said she bit Prucha's hand, after which he pushed or grabbed her arm. The girl said Prucha also touched her under her shorts, according to court documents.

The alleged victim said Prucha told her to come to bed with him, and she was afraid he would rape her. Nothing else happened that night, the girl said, and added that she believes this was because Prucha's son was home. The girl said Johnson found them in bed together the next morning, and started yelling at Prucha, court documents said.

According to the affidavit, the girl never told anyone about this incident until December 2009, when she told her boyfriend and mother.

When police interviewed Prucha, who now lives in Middletown, the affidavit said, he denied molesting the girl. According to the affidavit, Prucha insisted he had innocently hugged the alleged victim, and at one point reached over to brush some popcorn off her lap but that was also innocent. According to the court documents, Prucha said he had been taking Valium that night, and did not remember much of what happened. Prucha said that when he awoke in the morning, he did not know why the alleged victim was in his bed wearing his clothes, the affidavit said.

Prucha was arraigned at Middletown Superior Court and released on a \$75,000 bond. On Tuesday, June 29, his case was transferred to the part A division, which handles more serious crimes. Prucha will be arraigned there on July 20, according to the court clerk's office.

Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

The deal with General Stanley McChrystal's shooting his mouth off to *Rolling Stone*, and his subsequent firing/resignation, has been reported, analyzed, debated, etc., ad nauseam over the past week and a half. But there's one element of the story I just learned about this week, and it's one that, particularly from a media standpoint, is intriguing.

Rolling Stone got scooped on its own story.

Oh, *Rolling Stone* did the interviews, the research, wrote the story and got all the credit, don't get me wrong. But when it came to actually publishing the story, it got beat.

According to the *New York Times*, word started to spread last Monday, June 20, that *Rolling Stone* had this bombshell interview with McChrystal. The issue that contained the interview had not yet hit newsstands, but *Rolling Stone* itself had provided a copy of the story to the Associated Press, so that it could write an article about the interview, thus, promoting the magazine.

The AP in its story on the piece did what it should have done; it included highlights and excerpts from the *Rolling Stone* article. However, once the AP story hit, according to the *Times*, other news outlets, including newspapers and TV networks, asked for a copy. Before long, the *Times* said, the *Rolling Stone* had become a piece of "electronic samizdat." (Yes, I had to look that up too; samizdat was a system, employed by the USSR, by which government-suppressed literature was clandestinely printed and distributed, according to Webster's.)

By Tuesday morning, *Time* and *Politico*, two news organizations that frankly should have known better, had gone ahead and posted PDFs of the article, in its entirety, right on their websites. There was no need to go to rollingstone.com (and indeed, the magazine hadn't posted the article yet) and give the magazine that *had actually published the article* any web traffic.

Now, to be fair, according to the *Times*, at around 11 a.m. Tuesday morning, *Rolling Stone* published the article on its own website, and *Time* and *Politico* started offering links to rollingstone.com. But that doesn't mean what the two outlets had done was alright; they had basically stolen the article.

Rolling Stone was angry about the whole thing, and understandably so, telling the *Times* that what *Time* and *Politico* had done was "completely inappropriate." A spokeswoman for *Time* has since said what her company's website did was a mistake, and that if they had it to do all over again, they'd just publish a headline an abstract of the piece.

Politico, meanwhile, seemed to make no such promises. The organization's executive editor, Jim VandeHei, told the *Times* the *Rolling Stone* article "was being circulated and widely discussed among insiders, and our team felt readers should see what insiders were reading and reacting to." VandeHei noted that *Rolling Stone* "raised a reasonable ob-

jection" after posting the story on its own site, at which point *Politico* began offering links on its own site.

You can go and offer links to rollingstone.com, but you can't undo what you did, and what you did was steal. Some of you may remember last year when I railed against the *Hartford Courant* for shamelessly swiping articles published in the *Journal Inquirer*. It's interesting – and also disheartening – to see big names like *Time* and *Politico* get caught doing basically the same thing.

* * *

The Republican Party of Texas last week released a new policy platform, and some of what the Republicans down there are calling for is pretty eye-popping. I know, I should consider the source; it's not like it's the platform of Republicans in, say, Massachusetts. But some of it is pretty amazing. Among the "highlights:"

— the Minimum Wage Law should be repealed (because you can get by on three bucks an hour, right?);

— there should be a national sales tax to replace all federal taxes once the IRS is abolished and the Sixteenth Amendment (giving Congress the power to collect income tax) is repealed;

— the state's hate crimes law should be repealed (this despite the Republicans saying, just two lines earlier, they "deplore all discrimination");

— Congress is urged to repeal government-sponsored programs that deal with early childhood development (because the Texas GOP says it believes parents are best suited to train their children in their early development, and it opposes mandatory preschool and kindergarten);

— the U.S. should limit citizenship by birth to those born to a citizen of the United States, with no exceptions;

— it is in the "best interest of the citizens of the United States" that we immediately rescind our membership in the United Nations;

and then there's my personal favorite:

— Congress is urged to withhold Supreme Court jurisdiction in cases involving abortion, religious freedom and the Bill of Rights (because who needs the Supreme Court in minor little issues like those?).

Yikes. Like I said, I know this is Texas and everything, but the fact enough people down there are united enough on all those matters to make them the platform of a major political party is kinda scary.

* * *

Finally, don't forget, photos from all four high school graduation ceremonies in *Rivereast*-land are up on our website. Go to www.glcitizen.com and click on 'Event Photos' to check them out.

* * *

See you next week.

Hebron Board of Education Reinstates Most Positions

by Lindsay Fetzner

The Board of Education (BOE) voted Tuesday evening to reinstate most of the non-certified positions slated for elimination, a move that drew applause from many in attendance.

The board voted 5-0 to use the savings from a combination of areas to offset previously-approved non-certified reductions. The only reductions retained were the elimination of a custodian and cutting two and a half hours each week from a Gilead Hill School secretary. Drawing from a recent retirement, the creation of an elementary behavior program and surplus money, a total of 2.5 paraprofessionals and one secretary were restored.

BOE Chairwoman Jane Dube referred to the motion to reinstate positions as "the best motion we've had in months."

At the start of the special meeting, Gail Gonydyke, a Hebron Elementary School secretary, spoke during public comment as both a 10-year non-certified employee of the BOE and as the President of the Chapter in Connecticut State Employees Association (CSEA)/Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 2001.

Gonydyke said "Parents and taxpayers joined us [at the June 15 BOE meeting] and urged you not to layoff non-certified education support staff." She added that the "schools' non-certified support staff provide services that directly impact the quality of the education experience for our children," and referred to the staff as "the engine that keeps Hebron's schools running."

"That's why we appreciate the superintendent's efforts to redirect resources in order to retain most of the jobs of education support personnel cut in the budget package for next

year," Gonydyke said.

Superintendent of Schools Ellie Cruz discussed the total surplus of \$38,437. Out of that figure, \$19,562 came from frozen accounts from the beginning of the year, including items such as advertising, printing and binding, library books and textbooks. The remainder of the surplus was from the pre-purchase of the technology lease for computer equipment, approved at the June 15 meeting, in the amount of \$18,875.

In the budget for the 2010-11 fiscal year, which began yesterday, July 1, roughly \$20,000 was budgeted for the purchase of new computer equipment, due to the five-year lease expiring. Due to the fact that the board pre-purchased the lease with the surplus from the budget ending June 30, the funds were able to be directed toward line items such as salaries, and inevitably help to restore positions that were going to be eliminated.

"This money, along with the lease money and retirement, will take us a long way toward reinstating positions," Cruz said Tuesday.

The exact savings from the retirement of Gina Dolan, a special education teacher at Gilead Hill School, is unknown at this time. The figure depends on the insurance package the teacher replacing Dolan will choose, but Cruz estimated it to be between \$14,000 and \$25,000.

The board voted unanimously for Cruz to spend the \$38,437 surplus. (BOE members Brian O'Reilly and William Moorcraft were not present at the meeting.)

Also discussed Tuesday was the proposal of an elementary behavior program in the district. Cruz said in addition to the two students that

were outplaced this year, she is "fully anticipating" a third student in the district will need specialized instruction.

"We had to step back and look at taking some [money to] create a program in the district," Cruz said, adding that first and foremost, she is a "firm believer in the least restrictive environment." "The highest priority is for the children to be successful academically and behaviorally."

If the three students were not housed in the district, Cruz said they would be faced with being "close to \$100,000 in the hole" from costs associated with tuition and transportation. Although Cruz said there will still be a \$43,000 deficit going into the new fiscal year beginning July 1, she recommended applying for an excess cost grant to offset some of the costs, as well as "look[ing] at other ways to cut corners."

With the creation of the program, one teacher and two paraprofessionals would need to be hired.

"It is certainly a move in the right direction," Cruz said. She added that she would not only "like the children to come back home" but a huge priority was "taking care of our own with our own." "[We're] building a foundation for these children to be successful."

The board voted unanimously to approve the elementary behavior program.

In response to the board's decision to restore positions, Matt O'Connor, Communications Director of CSEA/SEIU Local 2001, said Thursday his union's reaction "was very positive." He added that members are pleased that their efforts to reach out to school officials and "make the case that the non-certified support

staff in Hebron schools play a vital role" were heard.

However, O'Connor said there was still disappointment that the custodian position was not restored. He said he is "hopeful that we will be able to work with the superintendent and board to find the savings so the position can be preserved," as the position is important in keeping the schools "clean, safe and healthy," which are "critical to the education experience."

At the close of Tuesday's meeting, during public comment, union staff representative of CSEA/SEIU Local 2001 George Gould thanked the BOE and Cruz for restoring the positions. However, he added, "We still think that that one position that you guys are going to cut is a very important position." Gould said there are "things we might be able to share in terms of saving the board money" in order to reinstate the custodian position. One of the options Gould gave was moving the district into the state's prescription drug plan.

In response to Gould's suggestion, O'Connor said Thursday that it is "one way savings can be achieved" and "one way the position can be preserved."

Resident Donna McCalla also thanked the board "on behalf of a lot of residents" for reinstating positions.

"This is a large step toward building confidence in the board," McCalla said.

McCalla went on to say that "creatively" averting the layoffs means "a lot to the people in the community."

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the BOE is on Thursday, July 8, at 7 p.m. at Gilead Hill School.

Hebron Fire Department Marks 75 Years

by Lindsay Fetzner

While the Hebron Volunteer Fire Department (HVFD) actually turned 75 on May 5, the fire department has planned activities throughout the year to celebrate the monumental commemoration.

Fire Chief Fred Speno said the HVFD will be celebrating all year long, in the hopes of both "acknowledging membership" and highlighting the duties of the firefighters. In addition, Speno said he hopes to bring "awareness of the things we do" to the community at large, letting the "townspeople know that we've been around for a long time."

Including active, inactive and auxiliary members, Speno estimated there are over 90 members in the department.

During the summer months, members of the fire department will be at the Air Line Trail, handing out water and refreshments for those enjoying the outdoors, said Matt Troy, a six-year firefighter and emergency medical technician (EMT). The "trail days" will take place on July 10 and Aug. 14, offering people the opportunity to "meet members of the fire department and ask questions."

At the annual Memorial Day parade on May 31, the HVFD showcased an antique fire truck, along with a truck from each of the three stations. The rescue truck displayed a banner highlighting the celebratory anniversary for all onlookers to see.

On Saturday, Aug. 28, an anniversary parade will travel down Main Street through the center of town. Troy said the parade will not only celebrate the fire department here in town, but other departments from across the state will hopefully be invited to the celebration as well. Troy said the invitation will also be extended to other Hebron towns in other states. Troy said he hopes to also have musical entertainment, including bagpipers.

Following the parade, the next scheduled event is on Saturday, Sept. 11, when the fourth annual firefighter's muster will be held. Open

to departments across the state, the muster will take place during the Hebron Harvest Fair and consist of several fire-related competitions between the different fire departments.

"It is definitely something we want to get members of the community to come out and cheer for," Troy said.

In addition to Hebron, Troy said East Hampton, Glastonbury, Columbia and Marlborough will among those returning and taking part in the competition. Marlborough is the currently reigning champion, Troy said.

In honor of National Fire Prevention Week, the HVFD will host an open house at the department headquarters (44 Main St.) on Oct. 9, the last day of the theme week. A Life Star demonstration in addition to fire safety demonstrations are slated to take place.

Troy said many of the events will be "kid-friendly," but the majority will be geared toward "educating the public about home fire safety tips and public safety" in general. Some of the demonstrations will include the proper way to use a fire extinguisher, a display of the equipment on the fire trucks and ways to learn more about the department. For the younger generations, a smokehouse will be on the premises for kids to learn about crawling underneath the smoke in the event of a fire, Troy said.

Troy is hopeful that the culminating event, still in the planning phase, will be a fireman's ball in spring 2011. Open to the public, Troy said the old-fashioned dance will cap off a year of celebrations. Much of the fundraising, Troy said, will go toward the larger events, such as the parade and open house, with the hopes that the department can host the ball.

The HVFD will also be selling T-shirts and pint glasses with the 75th anniversary insignia, available to the public.

Troy said the fire department is still in the process of collecting evidence or relics of the department's heritage, including photos, newspaper clippings and/or documents. "We are try-



The fire department's rescue truck showcased a banner in celebration of the 75th anniversary during the Memorial Day Parade.

ing to put together a museum display and time capsule," Troy said. If anyone has department-related materials and would like to lend them to the department, e-mail hvfdanniversary@gmail.com. Troy said items will be returned.

"Back in 1935, it was just a handful of citizens who bought a fire truck," Troy said. And today, it isn't much different, because the concept is the same, Troy said. "We are still your neighbors in the department," Troy said. "It's just the technology and times have changed."

Troy hopes that throughout all of the events, the department is able to "reach back out to the community and get people involved," all the

while educating the public on the history of the department.

The HVFD will also host a special recognition night on July 6 at 7 p.m. where three scholarships will be awarded. The three recipients are all pursuing "helping or community service professions," according to Cindy Fagan of the fire department. Fagan said the department received five applications; all applicants had to either be a member of the department or have family members involved with the company.

The awards will be handed out at the department headquarters on Main Street.

Business Going Strongly at New Hebron Flower Shop

by Lindsay Fetzner

It has been four months since floral designer Huong Nguyen opened the doors of Victorian Rose Florist and Gift Shop, and business has been “blooming” ever since.

Nguyen, a Columbia resident, said she her love of flowers sparked during her younger years. “Since I was little, I loved playing with flowers,” she said, adding that her mother always had flowers in the family’s home growing up. In addition to having her own garden, Nguyen said she tried to educate herself as much as possible through books, television and lessons on the art of flowers. Since that time, Nguyen said the hobby has transformed into the business she has today.

Prior to being in Hebron, Nguyen worked in a floral shop in Columbia, which she eventually purchased and operated for about five years. For four years, after Nguyen left the location in Columbia, she operated her business out of her garage. Nguyen lightheartedly said her friends and family referred to the location as a “sweatshop” during the summer months and an “igloo” during the winter. The move to Hebron, she said, is a very welcome transition.

“The people are very nice and supportive of the business,” Nguyen said of the Hebron community. “It is nice to see that.” Working in Columbia over the years, Nguyen said she often heard how welcoming and supportive Hebron was to its businesses.

One of the other positive changes with the new store is meeting both new and old customers. While operating out of her garage, Nguyen said most of the purchases were over the telephone, limiting in-person contact. Now, with the store, Nguyen said she has the opportunity to meet old and new faces when they come in to “see the shop.”

Business overall, Nguyen said, has “been good” given the state of the economy. Some

people have even become regulars in the shop, she said. Although many orders are placed either online or over the phone, Nguyen said she has been “pretty pleased” with the walk-ins.

Although the store is much the same as the one in Columbia, the Hebron store boasts one new addition, a gift shop. Nguyen said she tries to find items to sell in the shop that are both different and things that people “don’t see too often.”

With prom season behind her and the wedding season in full swing, Nguyen said she has been “really busy” with arrangements. In the shop, Nguyen hired one other employee, Columbia resident Betty Breyette, right before Mother’s Day to assist her with deliveries and design. Breyette said she likes “crafty things” and used to dry flowers, so the fit was a good one.

“I like it,” Breyette said of working alongside Nguyen. “It’s creative and fun.” Breyette agreed with Nguyen on the welcoming community in Hebron, and said that many visitors have come in and commented on how nice the shop is.

Despite the long hours and bit of guesswork in trying to determine what people in the community will like, Nguyen is happy with her decision to move the shop to Hebron.

The creative aspect of the floral arrangement is also a plus for Nguyen. The store offers a wide variety of arrangements for all occasions and holidays. One of the popular arrangements for the college-aged audience has been the “floral margaritas” and similarly, mugs of flowers for the males, in celebration of 21st birthdays. “It’s something that is different,” she said. Nguyen also sells birthday cakes made out of flowers, complete with candles. “We can do all types of flowers for all seasons,” Nguyen added.

Nguyen orders flowers available in the shop and online weekly from wholesalers in Hart-



It has been four months since Huong Nguyen, right, opened up Victorian Rose Florist and Gift Shop in the center of town. Pictured left is Betty Breyette, who assists Nguyen with delivery and design.

ford, Massachusetts and Delaware.

In addition to floral arrangements, the store also offers gourmet fruit baskets, snack baskets, balloons and stuffed animals, among many other unique collectibles.

Victorian Rose Florist and Gift Shop is located at 17 Main St. and can be reached at 860-228-2955 or at www.victorianrose-ct.com. Hours are Monday-Friday 9 a.m.- 5:30 p.m. and Saturdays from 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

Town Officials Looking at Changes to Colchester Police Department

by Katy Nally

At a meeting Wednesday night, Police Commission members agreed to present the town with a plan as to what direction the police department should take in the short and long term by the end of July.

The joint meeting between the Police Commission and the boards of selectmen, finance and police retirement was called after three officers from the local police department left within a month’s time. First Selectman Gregg Schuster said Wednesday the situation “rings some alarm bells.”

One of the officers who left the Colchester force was present Wednesday night and said the main reason he switched to the Middletown police force was because of job security. “We have responsibilities, we have families,” Officer Brian Owens said. “We need job security.”

He added that there are still “a lot of advantages to working here,” but those reasons are “potentially outweighed” with a lack of job security.

Town officials also mentioned there’s little room for advancement in a small police department like Colchester’s. Currently there are three positions: officer, officer first class and sergeant. However, no one is sergeant right now, Schuster said.

After working in town for seven years, Owens said a turning point for him was realizing his seventh year would look just like his 20th.

“These guys are golden and we’re not giving them a chance to expand,” Police Commission member John Jones said.

Since the three officers left, there are seven left on the Colchester force, but one is out injured, Police Commissioner Glenn Morron said Wednesday. Those on duty have been working extensive overtime to fill in the gaps. “The calls aren’t going unanswered,” Morron said.

The 2010-11 budget, which took effect Thursday, July 1, included funding for 10 officers and a police cruiser, and the elimination of one of two resident state troopers. However, this trooper never really left, and was kept on temporarily to provide coverage. Her position is funded through the salaries slated for the officers who left.

Morron said at 12 officers, the police department could institute its midnight shift.

As town officials debated about what the future of the police force should be, several board/commission members cited a four-year-old task force study, that Police Commission member Rob Parlee said showed the town

should have an independent police force. Currently, Colchester has its own police department and is also part of the resident state trooper program, with a resident state trooper supervisor. The program provides Colchester with lockup, dispatch and record-keeping, Morron said.

Part of the threat to job security has to do with the town’s “rumor mill,” Morron said. When local police officers hear rumors about the town switching over to the resident state trooper program completely, they foresee their jobs on the chopping block.

However, town officials said it was their job to look at all the options in town, and ultimately let the taxpayer decide. Selectman Stan Soby said it came down to, “How can we manage to get the most number of officers with money from the taxpayers?”

Morron maintained that it was also important to “foster a good relationship” with the local officers.

If the decision is ultimately up to the taxpayers, Officer Rob Suchecki said they should be informed as to what the local police department does. One idea was to separate out Colchester Police and State Police in the *Rivereast*’s police news. Board of Education Chairman Ron Goldstein agreed about informing the public.

“We’ve got to get everyone on board,” Goldstein said. “We have to go out and make the case.”

However, deciding what “case” that might be is the next step. Options discussed Wednesday included bulking up the town’s force while remaining in the resident state trooper program, eventually opting out of the resident state trooper program and having only a town police force and regionalization. Jones said one possible department Colchester could regionalize with was East Hampton; however, that suggestion did not go over well with those in attendance. (In a highly controversial move, the East Hampton town manager last week removed the town’s police chief from office; see “Police Chief Fighting for Job” on the cover of this week’s *Rivereast*.)

Either way, town officials and officers said it was important to find a direction, commit to it (both on the town and police department sides) and rally public support.

The loose “end of July” date is the timeframe for the first step in this process. All three boards and the Police Commission agreed to meet again to discuss a plan, although a meeting date was not set.

Jessica's Garden in Marlborough Offering Cool Summer Treats

by Katy Nally

Reminiscent of the song "Love Shack," Jessica's Garden now has a "little old (actually new) place where we can get together." But there's one scrumptious difference between the garden center's shack and the one from the 1989 B-52's song.

Surrounded by petunias, geraniums and hydrangeas, this bright pink shack sells 29 flavors of ice cream from Robb's Farm in South Glastonbury, as well as other tasty eats like lobster rolls.

In fact, late Tuesday afternoon after the lunch rush, two friends, Patty Ballou and Kayrn Chete, met at the pink shack to get together and eat ice cream – mint chocolate chip and coffee-flavored. Ballou's girls, Haily, 8, and Madeline, 5, and Chete's boy Tyler, 5, all played on the rope swing next to the pond at Jessica's Garden, after downing their own treats.

Tyler exclaimed he and Haily had "chocolate and white," which is actually listed as cookies and cream.

Jessica Carroll, owner of Jessica's Garden, said she regularly samples the ice cream. Her personal favorite is coconut chocolate chip, "so it's probably not here very often," she said jokingly. And to get a dose of fruit, Jessica said she also goes for a milkshake with coconut ice cream and bananas.

The most popular flavor with kids though, has been goat tracks, which has a vanilla base with chocolate chips, peanut butter and peanut butter cups.

But the ice cream, as delicious as patrons tell Jessica it is, might take a back seat to the lobster rolls. "They've been a big hit," she said. The lobster rolls come with hot butter, instead of mayo, on a toasted bun.

Jessica's husband Matt Carroll is a food salesman who orders the lobsters from Maine. The garden center also sells other food like hot dogs

made from beef and pork, and the soup of the day. When fall comes around, Jessica said, apple fritters might be on the menu.

The ice cream shack was set up during the end of April, just in time for Mother's Day. Jessica said the new addition was a way to "bring in business for the summer" and to highlight the three acres Jessica's Garden sits on.

"We just wanted people to see how pretty this place is," she said.

Besides curious plants sneaking out of every planter and pot, on the three-acre site there's a lagoon, a bass pond and enough picnic space to tempt Yogi Bear.

The bass and trout are fed so regularly by young patrons that Jessica said the fish will probably come to shore at the sight of a worm. The lagoon, she added, is one of her daughter's favorite places at the center.

Although the path is somewhat hidden, strolling around the lake is a favorite activity for many who come to Jessica's Garden.

"People are more than welcome to come and walk around the pond and get garden ideas," Jessica said. The center sells a variety of vegetable plants, fruit trees, annuals, perennials, mulch, organic lawn care, organic fertilizers, trees and shrubs.

Bonfires, which occur Friday and Saturday nights from 8:30-10 p.m., is another event offered at Jessica's Garden.

But for those who want to experience the quintessential "summertime when the livin's easy," they can lounge and picnic anywhere on the grounds – on benches, Adirondack chairs and, of course, the grass. Jessica said the senior center and the Marlborough Moms Offering Moms Support (MOMS) Club have already used the garden center as a meeting and picnic spot.

Jessica said she also plans to create meeting



Peaking out behind potted petunias and hanging baskets is the new ice cream shack at Jessica's Garden, off Route 66. The store offers plants, fertilizers and now ice cream made by Robb's Farm in South Glastonbury.

spots for kids. One idea is an *Alice in Wonderland*-themed garden. Along with Alice, the garden would have a tea party set up accompanied by a chronically late rabbit.

There is already a garden on the grounds dedicated to Jessica's late Rhodesian Ridgeback, Ridge, that is dotted with hydrangeas.

Other plans for the garden center include adding lights to encourage nighttime strolls, landscaping around the pond and creating more

paths, Jessica said.

But for now, ice cream eaters seem content to spend a summer day at Jessica's Garden, enjoying two summer staples – cold cream and sunny spots.

Jessica's Garden is located at 198 East Hampton Rd. (Route 66), and is open Monday through Thursday from 8 a.m.-9 p.m., Friday and Saturday from 8 a.m.-10 p.m. and Sunday from 9 a.m.-8 p.m.

Marlborough Building Inspector Sues Town, First Selectman

by Katy Nally

Building Inspector Patrick Looney filed a lawsuit against Marlborough and First Selectman Bill Black Friday, June 11, alleging his employment contract was breached and his civil rights were violated.

Wednesday night, the Board of Selectmen (BOS) unanimously agreed to advertise for the building inspector position and to create a search committee to find potential candidates. Black said Looney "has choices," and can apply for the position, decline the job offer or take no action.

Since Looney's hiring in 1994, his position was never advertised when it came up for renewal, Looney said this week.

Like Looney's current position, the job would remain part-time, at about 20 hours per week, Black said.

In January, Looney's hours at Town Hall were cut from 36 to 20 per week. Looney's intent to sue, filed April 9, claimed his union was told the slashed hours were due to a "sharp reduction in building activity" and it was "part of a cost saving reduction plan." Other Town Hall employees, like the tax clerk and tax assessor, had their hours reduced, and one position, the coordinator of planning and development, was eliminated.

According to the suit on file at Town Hall, Looney also alleges his reduction of hours was in retaliation for a grievance he filed in October 2009. The grievance claimed Looney's First Amendment right of free speech was violated when Town Planner Peter Hughes asked him not to "engage in discussions of substantive matters outside his job duties..." Specifically, the suit says, Looney was talking with citizens

about wood burning boilers/stoves and smoke discharge.

In addition to a trial by jury, the lawsuit states Looney is asking for more than \$15,000, plus interest and the cost of the suit. He has also asked for an injunction that would prevent the town from firing him and reducing his hours to part-time.

The monetary award, which Looney's lawyer Jacques Parenteau said has not yet been calculated, covers compensatory and punitive damages. According to the suit, the compensatory damages stem from "lost wages, lost employment benefits, emotional distress, loss of enjoyment of life and harm to reputation." The punitive damages cite Connecticut General Statutes (CGS) 37-3a, which allows for recoverable debt from hospital services.

In addition to the retaliation claim, the suit alleges Looney's contract with the town will not expire July 31, 2010, instead, he claims his term will finish November 2011.

Looney was first appointed in August 1994, and then reappointed in November 1995 to align with elections. According to the town charter, section 5.8 allows the selectmen to set an effective date for appointed "Administrative Officers."

In November 1999, Looney was reappointed, and again in February 2004. The latter term was set to expire on July 31, 2006, and not in November 2007, which would have aligned with the state statute that sets building officials' terms, the lawsuit says. Section a of § 29-260 states a municipal building official must be appointed for a four-year term by the "chief executive officer" of the town.

At the time of his February 2004 reappointment, the suit claims the town's first selectman "inappropriately attempted to shorten the term" by setting it from February 2004 to July 31, 2006. Looney's attorney said the town might have "missed reappointing" him as building inspector in November 2003, so his term began in February of 2004.

Parenteau said the July 31 end date was probably selected to align Looney's terms with his original appointment in August 1994. "In our view, they couldn't do that," he said. "They have to live with the action of the Board of Selectmen when they appointed him in [November] 1995" and should have set his end date as November 2007.

However, Looney was instead reappointed to a four-year term effective August 2006, set to expire this coming August.

The suit also notes section b of CGS § 29-260 that states the building official can be fired if he doesn't perform the "duties of his office," but, before the dismissal, he is given an "opportunity to be heard in his own defense at a public hearing..."

Although he was not dismissed, the suit states the reduction of Looney's hours was "contrary" to § 29-260b, because he became a part-time employee with no benefits.

"He made a deal; he was hired as a full-time building inspector with benefits," Parenteau said. "You can't unilaterally change that agreement."

Looney also cites CGS § 31-51q, which states an employer who disciplines or fires an employee for exercising her/his First Amendment rights, is liable to pay damages to that

employee.

Looney claims his reduction of hours was retaliatory because he filed his grievance in October 2009 and was switched to part time three months later.

Since he began working 20 hours per week, the suit says, Looney has suffered "unwarranted and extreme stress" from performing the building inspector duties in a condensed amount of time, and from "the demands of the public." According to the suit, these demands have led him to take a 30-day medical leave of absence due to stress.

When he lost his medical benefits, Looney also had to pay for replacement medical coverage for him and his disabled spouse, the suit says.

Looney has since returned to work at Town Hall.

The Board of Selectmen held an executive session to discuss the lawsuit last Tuesday, June 22, but no action was taken after the session. Selectman Joe La Bella said Monday he couldn't comment on pending litigation.

At Wednesday's BOS meeting, selectmen decided the building inspector search committee would be headed by La Bella, with selectwoman Riva Clark as a member. It would include at least two members and a maximum of five. The committee's charge was to recommend someone for the position.

Reached Monday, town attorney Andrew Houlding would not comment on the case. The town was served with a summons June 11, to appear in New London Superior Court. The summons has a return date of July 13.

Old Home Days Return to East Hampton Next Week

by Claire Michalewicz

It's already July, which means it's almost time for an East Hampton annual tradition – Old Home Days. This year's 32nd annual event runs from Thursday, July 8, through Saturday, July 10.

The main focus of the celebration will be the parade, which kicks off at 11 a.m. on Saturday. Parade co-organizer Russell Oakes said the theme for this year's parade is "Once Upon A Time," which means entrants can decorate their floats with elements of fairy tales, folk tales or the "fractured fairy tales" like the ones on *Rocky and Bullwinkle*.

Old Home Days Association President Jim Vick said the theme came about almost by accident. Originally, he said, the theme was supposed to celebrate East Hampton's history, but it was changed because people who heard it immediately thought of fairy tales.

So far, Oakes said, there are 40 floats signed up for the parade, as well as 18 bands, including some from out of state. Oakes is also hoping to have some notable dignitaries, like the governor, marching. He is leaving some spaces open in the parade, as he does every year, to accommodate anyone who decides to enter at the last minute. People can enter their floats in the parade as late as an hour before step-off time.

Fitting with the fairy tale theme, Vick said Old Home Days always "magically comes together" at the last minute. This is Vick's seventh year as president, but he said he still sometimes worries about his organizational abilities.

Still, Vick said, he's confident that the event will be a success. "Ultimately, I think it's gonna come together as well as it always has," he said.

One of the highlights of the festival, the raffle, will be a bit better this year, Vick said. There will be 12 prizes instead of the usual 10, giving people a better chance of winning when they buy one of the \$10 tickets. In addition, Vick said 60 bicycles will be given away to

children 12 and under in the bicycle giveaway, an increase from previous years.

Sheila Oakes is running one of Old Home Days' other main attractions – the Glorious Gallop, a five-kilometer road race on Friday morning. The race starts at 7:15 a.m. at Seven Hills Crossing, circles the lake, and finishes at Center School. The fee for the race is \$10 in advance and \$15 on Friday. Oakes said the race will offer prizes to the first three finishers of each gender in each age group, free T-shirts while supplies lasted, and medals for all finishers under 13, along with random awards given to participants.

Carnival organizer Melissa Engel said she had hired a different company, Bowdoin Amusements, to run this year's event. Bowdoin, Engel said, offered some different rides from the ones the carnival has had in the past, including bumper boats and a Ferris wheel. "I'm really excited about it," she said, adding that Old Home Days hadn't had a Ferris wheel in years.

Along with the new rides, there's another change to the carnival this year – lower admission prices. In previous years, Engel said, a wristband for the carnival rides cost \$20 a day. This year, they'll cost \$15 for an evening on the rides (or for a half-day session on Saturday, when the carnival is open longer).

Engel said the Old Home Days Association decided to lower the ticket prices this year to help out local residents who might be struggling with tough economic times.

"We decided to give back to the community and make it easier for people to come and bring their families," Engel said.

Vick said he was looking forward to the entertainment at the festival, which includes several bands, playing musical styles ranging from calypso to Southern rock to jazz and swing.

Another attraction Vick said he was excited about is the bubble tent, which is filled with



As always, there will be a carnival at Old Home Days. Shown here, in a scene from last year's three-day event, are kids having a smashing good time on the bumper cars.

bubble machines. "It's a lot of fun," Vick said. "Kids get a real kick out of it."

Vick said he also wanted to assure residents that the man who sells Thai chicken on a stick would be back this year. The chicken was always a highlight of the festival, Vick said, and many residents had been upset that it wasn't available at last year's event.

The most impressive thing about Old Home Days, Vick said, was that only a small group of volunteers managed to put together such a large,

successful event.

"It's put together by eight, nine, 10 or 12 people who really put their heart and soul into it," Vick said. "Through their efforts, this big thing comes together."

Old Home Days Glorious Celebration kicks off on Thursday at 6 p.m. and runs through Saturday night. Except for the carnival, all events are free. Visit www.easthamptonoldhomedays.org for more information and a full schedule of events.

Portland Police News

6/21: Cody Caron, 18, of 11 Middlesex Ave. Ext., was charged with reckless driving, Portland Police said.

Andover Police News

6/24: At 9:45 a.m., there was a two-car accident at the intersection of Private Drive and Route 6, State Police said. Tammy Balon, 48, of Enfield was stopped in her 2007 Chevy Uplander when Joseph Rountree, 33, of Waterbury, struck Balon's car from behind. Rountree sustained lacerations to his left arm and was transported to Windham Hospital via Andover EMS, State Police said. Balon was not injured.

6/28: Two single-seat Old Town Otter kayaks were stolen from a yard on Lake Road sometime between Saturday, June 26 at 3 p.m. and Sunday, June 27 at noon, State Police said. One kayak was red and the other grey. Both had 2009 ALPOA stickers. Anyone with more information is asked to call Troop K at 860-537-7500.

Marlborough Police News

6/28: Eric Schaus, 20, of 78 Jerry Daniels Rd., was charged with sixth-degree larceny, State Police said.

S

Salem Police News

6/21: At about 9 p.m., a motorcycle crashed on Witch Meadow Road and the passenger was hospitalized, State Police said. Leonard Nelson, 36, of Colchester was traveling westbound on his 2009 Yamaha when a "large branch" dropped directly in front of his path of travel. Nelson hit the branch and lost control of the vehicle. Nelson, his passenger, Tammy Lee, 30, of Colchester, and his bike did not hit anything else. Lee was transported to Backus Hospital for non-life threatening injuries. As of press time, Lee was no longer listed at the hospital.

Colchester Police News

6/19: Joseph French, 56, of 1234 Prospect St., Hartford, was charged with failure to appear, State Police said.

6/21: Dawn Marie Lepage, 39, of 89 Shadbush Dr., turned herself in for disorderly conduct and second-degree harassment, State Police said.

6/21: Kenneth Soboleski, 45, of 19 Miller Rd., Apt. R, turned himself in on charges of second-degree unlawful restraint and disorderly conduct, State Police said.

6/22: Michael Maynard, 18, of 503 Tobacco St., Lebanon, was charged with third-degree burglary and third-degree larceny, State Police said.

6/24: Todd Pugh, 42, of 203 Amston Rd., was charged with two counts of third-degree assault and two counts of disorderly conduct, State Police said.

6/25: Tyler Andrew Poole, 18, of 92 Parum Rd., was charged with third-degree assault and disorderly conduct, State Police said.

6/25: A 17-year-old was charged with possession of less than four ounces of marijuana, third-degree assault and disorderly conduct, State Police said.

6/26: Michael Fromme, 25, of 156 Amston Rd., Apt. B, was charged with failure to drive right and DUI, State Police said.

6/26: Alexander Tripoda, 20, of 70 Windham Ave., was charged with disorderly conduct, second-degree strangulation and second-degree unlawful restraint, State Police said.

6/27: Ricky Kauffman, 29, of 1 School Rd., Apt. A4, was charged with operating while license is suspended, misuse of plates, operating an unregistered motor vehicle and operating without insurance, State Police said.

6/28: Unknown persons entered into unlocked cars parked in the Valleyview neighborhood and stole personal property, State Police said. Anyone with more information is asked to call Officer Rob Sucheky at 860-537-7270.

Obituaries

East Hampton

Rita Urban

Rita Urban, 85, of East Hampton and Essex, passed away peacefully Tuesday, June 15, at Middlesex Hospital. She was born in New Britain, daughter of Raymond F. Leonard and Agnes Schussler Leonard. She was predeceased by her husband of 47 years, Rudolph J. Urban Jr. and a brother, Raymond E. Leonard.

She is survived by her sister, Rhoda Clynes and husband James of East Hampton and St. Petersburg, FL; sister-in-law, Marguerite Leonard of East Hampton; three children, Rudy Urban and wife Shirley of Chester, Susan Hart and husband Robert of East Hampton, Marie Wolff and husband Brad of Ivoryton; and five grandchildren, Dana, Matt and Jake Urban, Kevin Wolff and wife Tiffany, and Karen Wolff.

Rita graduated from New Britain High School, Class of 1942, and was married Feb. 15, 1947 at St. Mary's Church in New Britain. She worked at Atlantic Machine Tool in New Britain, Toolin's in Old Saybrook, as a bookkeeper for Greenberg's Department store in Essex and Old Saybrook and finally as a volunteer at Middlesex Hospital for several years.

Rita and Rudy began raising their family in New Britain and Old Saybrook, later moving to Essex where they spent the better part of their years. After Rudy's death, Rita lived in East Hampton on Lake Pocotopaug for 15 years before moving to the Village at South Farms in Middletown. She was very active in St. Patrick's Church and with the East Hampton Seniors for many years.

A funeral liturgy was celebrated Monday, June 21, in St. Patrick Church in East Hampton. Burial followed in the family plot in Resurrection Cemetery in Westbrook. Friends called at the Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton, on Monday morning before the Mass.

To leave online condolences or for directions, visit www.spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

Marlborough

Corrine Bysko

It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of Corrine (Chaplin) Bysko, 81, of Glastonbury, our devoted mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, and beloved wife of the late Walter Bysko. She passed on peacefully Monday, June 14, at Marlborough Healthcare Center.

Born in Hartford Aug. 15, 1928, Corrine was the daughter of the late Dennis "Denny" and Lena (Dandurand) Chaplin; she resided in Hartford prior to moving to Glastonbury in 1959. She was a communicant of St. Paul Church Glastonbury for many years. She was employed as an assembler, working in several Hartford area manufacturing companies, most recently for the Velvet Stable Co. of Glastonbury, producing stuffed animals.

Corrine will be fondly remembered by her family: her son and daughter-in-law, Donald and Frances Bysko of Colchester; daughter-in-law, Arlene Bysko of New Hampshire; three cherished grandchildren, Melissa Elliott and her husband Scott, Thomas Bysko and his wife Emily, and Kaleena Bysko; three adoring great grandchildren, Olivia, Arianna, and Bailey Elliott.

In addition to her husband and parents, Corrine was predeceased by a son, Walter M. Bysko; brother, Paul Chaplin, and her sister, Doris R. (Chaplin) Sanzo.

Corrine's family would like to extend a most heartfelt thanks to the staff at Marlborough Healthcare Center for their kindness and compassion during these last few weeks.

Funeral procession was held Friday, June 18, from the Farley-Sullivan Funeral Home, 50 Naubuc Ave., Glastonbury, followed by a Mass of Christian Burial in St. Paul Church, 2577 Main St., Glastonbury. Interment followed in Cedar Hill Cemetery, (Section 26), 453 Fairfield Ave. Hartford. Relatives and friends called on the family Thursday, June 17, at the funeral home.

The Bysko family requests in lieu of flowers, that memorial donations be made in Corrine's name to Masonicare Home Health and Hospice, 111 Founders Plaza, Suite 200, East Hartford, CT 06108.

To extend online expressions of sympathy to the Bysko family or for further information, visit farleysullivan.com.

Colchester

Liris Peters

Liris Peters, of Colchester, and formerly Manhattan, NY, passed away Saturday, June 26 at home, surrounded by her loving family after a long, courageous battle against debilitating heart-lung disease and cancer. Liris was born in Franklin, NH, a daughter of the late Nicholas and Frosina (Nuam) Peters. Her parents immigrated to the United States from Trebeska, Albania, during the early 1900s seeking a better life for their children. Always proud of her heritage, she delighted in her name, which meant "liberty" in Albanian.

Liris was an engagingly adventurous person who traveled alone to New York City in her early 20's to seek her fortune in fashion. She delighted in the "hustle and bustle," blossoming into a stunningly beautiful, gracious woman of great wit and charm. Liris had a great sense of style and continued to further her knowledge through constant attendance at couture exhibits at the Fashion Institute of Technology and frequent strolls down Eighth Avenue. Liris was an avid sports fan, especially for her beloved Yankees and UConn women's basketball. She loved museums, dance, theater, opera and art. She was a daring and innovative artist, known for her unique, elegant fashion sense and bold use of color. Liris made her career as a legal secretary, most recently employed by Edward Moldover, Esq., in Manhattan.

Though she was a certified Manhattanite, she never lost her small-town ability to quickly put people at ease and make new friends. With her quick wit, she effortlessly and humorously monikered everyone and anyone who came across her path. She exhibited a curious and powerful intellect, learning computer skills late in life, delighting in Internet research and e-mailing her friends around the world. She maintained her cheerful outlook, even as she struggled with debilitating illness and retirement far from her cherished city and friends.

Liris is survived by her four siblings, Tefta Norton of Somers, Alexander and Daniel Peters of Dudley, MA, and John Peters and his wife, Olympia, of Lemon Grove, CA; five nieces and nephews, Jane Ledford and her husband, Larry, Andrea Bazer and her partner, Jim Leamons, Christopher Peters and his partner, Nan Jorgenson, Blyse Soby and her husband, Stanley, of Colchester (with whom she made her home in recent years), and Karl Norton and his wife, Laura of Glastonbury; five grand-nieces and a grand-nephew, Stefanie, Marie, Karen, Alyssa, Matthew, and Kimberly. She was predeceased by a niece, Karen, and a great nephew, John.

She leaves behind her second family in Manhattan and Long Island, dear friends Marlana, Gertrude, Jean, Liz, Eleni, and Mr. Moldover, and, in Germany, Monika, Michael, and Helmut and others.

Among the many who provided encouragement and support for Liris in Connecticut were Connecticut Multispecialty Group, especially Dr. Cappelluti and her medical assistant, Wanda, Dr. Menon, Dr. Ellner, and Dr. Nagarkati, and Rita Ring, from Companions and Homemakers. Additional thanks and gratitude to Dr. Lou Ando for making it possible for her family to continue caring for Liris at home until her passing.

Liris was a truly amazing woman who will never be forgotten, even now as she has reached "The End of a Perfect Day."

There will be no calling hours. Burial will be at the convenience of the family in Oak Ridge Cemetery, Southbridge, MA. Donations may be made in her memory to the charity of the donor's choice.

Care of private arrangements has been entrusted to the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home of Colchester. For online condolences, visit www.auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

Colchester

George W. Avery

George W. Avery, 92, of Colchester and formerly of Meriden, beloved husband of Betty (Clark) Avery, passed away Saturday, June 26, at the Harrington Court GHC Center in Colchester. Born Nov. 27, 1917, in Middletown, he was the son of the late Harley and Lena (Starr) Avery.

Mr. Avery was a proud Army veteran of World War II. An accomplished pianist, he studied at Julliard and Yale and taught piano on the side for many years. In his spare time, he was also a self-taught artist and enjoyed painting. Mr. Avery was a union representative for General Motors for many years before his retirement.

In addition to his loving wife of 67 years, he is survived by three children and their spouses, June and Michael Banack and Robert and Dorothy Avery, all of Meriden, and Lynn and Arnold Miller of Lebanon; seven grandchildren; 12 great-grandchildren; and numerous extended family members and friends.

Per George's request, services will be private as he has donated his remains to the Yale School of Medicine.

The family would like to thank the staff of both Harrington Court and VITAS Hospice for their care and compassion.

Care of arrangements has been entrusted to the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home of Colchester. For online condolences, visit www.auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.