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A man with a paper bag over his head expressed his opinion on the current state of affairs in East Hampton outside the high school last Friday. He was one of many residents holding signs showing support for the town's police chief, whom the town manager abruptly laid off last month.

Support Shown For Police Chief

by Claire Michalewicz

Hundreds of residents came out to show their support for laid-off East Hampton Police Chief Matthew Reimondo at a hearing about his termination last Friday morning, but the hearing was over before Reimondo could make his case.

Undeterred, Reimondo and his lawyer said they will continue fighting to get Reimondo back to work.

The hearing was held at the East Hampton High School auditorium, which was filled to near-capacity with angry and concerned residents. However, shortly after it began, Town Manager Jeffery O'Keefe's attorney, Mark Sommaruga, explained that Reimondo had no legal right to a hearing, since he was not fired for cause. Reimondo's attorney, Leon Rosenblatt, has until July 15 to submit a motion to O'Keefe explaining why Reimondo should have a hearing, and O'Keefe, with the assistance of legal advisor Nick Grello, will decide whether Reimondo should have one.

The widespread support for Reimondo was obvious even before the hearing, as protestors held signs along Route 66 on Friday morning. Their signs, with messages like "We Want Matt" and "Don't Believe Their Lies," elicited honks, cheers and waves from passing drivers.

"I think the town manager needs to go," said resident Ruth Tegge, who was standing beside the high school driveway before the hearing with a sign that read "We Want Our Chief."

"There have been too many lies in the past few weeks," Tegge explained. "There's some-

thing fishy."

Standing near Tegge was a man with a paper bag over his head, holding up a sign encouraging residents to honk their horns if they were also ashamed of Town Hall. Many of those entering the parking lot honked in agreement.

Since public comment wasn't allowed in the hearing, many of the 400 residents in the high school auditorium brought signs. Others were wearing black T-shirts with the message "Bring Back The Chief/Fire O'Keefe." Town Council member Sue Weintraub said the organizers of www.takebackourtown.org had sold nearly 200 of the shirts in two days.

Most of East Hampton's police force stood guard along either side of the high school's main door as people entered the school. During the hearing, they lined up along the side walls of the auditorium. The audience gave Reimondo a standing ovation as he entered the auditorium, accompanied by his wife and their four children. Reimondo stopped in the aisles to hug and shake hands with his supporters, including the East Hampton police officers standing at the sides of the auditorium. O'Keefe, meanwhile, sat silently at his table for most of the hearing.

"It's an honor and a pleasure to represent the town manager," said O'Keefe's attorney, Mark Sommaruga, as the hearing began. Sommaruga was met with laughter and booing from the au-

See Support on Page 2

Colchester Library Connection Up and Running

by Katy Nally

As the library director puts it, Cragin Library patrons can now download and renew materials in their pajamas.

Last Thursday, July 1, the library joined the consortium Library Connection INC that links Cragin with 36 other libraries statewide, throughout 26 different towns. Colchester residents can access items from these other libraries and can set up an online account to renew materials and track what's been checked out.

Patrons can place reserves on books outside of Cragin's local catalog and the item will be transported to Colchester. Library Director Kate Byroade said mostly all the materials in the shared database will be sent, unless the item is a very new release.

In addition to having online access to the catalog, patrons can also download e-books and audiobooks for iPods and MP3 players through Overdrive, by going to libraryconnection.lib.overdrive.com. This program, Byroade said, has been up and running since April 30 and so far, people have been taking advantage of it.

"There's a lot of things they can do on their own now," Byroade added.

Several people who visited Cragin Wednesday said they were excited about the new services. Laura Pennella came out of the library

with a stack of children's books for her first grader and said she planned to utilize the online system during the school year. "I would definitely use it," she said.

David Wheeler was unaware of the new consortium, but added he liked the idea of it.

"I'm really hoping people will enjoy using the library 24 hours a day," Byroade said.

Despite the online at-home system, Kelly Hahm said she would still regularly visit Cragin because "I like to putz around" in the library.

Several patrons told Byroade they were happy an e-mail would be sent to them just before a book is due, reminding them to return or renew it.

Joining the consortium was a replacement for the library's antiquated database that crashed on a monthly basis. Byroade said much staff time was spent fixing the old system and trying to bring it back online. In fact, the employee who spent time maintaining the broken system is on vacation this week and "nobody's worried," she said. With the new consortium, Byroade said "all of the in-house system maintenance responsibilities are not our problem anymore."

The \$30,000 annual membership fee for Library Connection INC came out of Cragin's existing budget. Byroade said she knew the

See Library on Page 2



Cragin Memorial Library joined a consortium last week that provides residents with an online catalog and access to materials in 36 other libraries statewide.

Support cont. from Front Page

dience. His decision to address Reimondo as “Mr. Reimondo” also drew criticism, with audience members loudly demanding Sommaruga call him “Chief Reimondo.”

The repeated boos and attacks prompted Sommaruga to later joke that he should have brought his family to the hearing, so at least someone would cheer for him.

The audience cheered and applauded when Reimondo’s attorney, Leon Rosenblatt, introduced himself. All three lawyers had to shout to make themselves heard, as no microphones were provided for them. (East Hampton High School Principal Dr. Linda Berry explained that when the town booked the auditorium, they had not requested the use of the sound system.)

Sommaruga explained that O’Keefe had been waiting for this hearing so he could defend himself against some of what Sommaruga called “lies and outrageous half-truths” that had been spreading through the town. But, Sommaruga continued, Reimondo had no legal right to a hearing, because he had not been fired for cause.

It was his professional duty, Sommaruga said, to file a motion to dismiss the hearing. (In a press release last week, O’Keefe explained that under state statute, police chiefs laid off for cause have a right to a hearing, but since that statute “possibly might apply to an elimination of a position, I must first offer a hearing to the Chief of Police before the proposed dismissal becomes final.”)

Grello explained that Rosenblatt had until July 15 to file a written response to Sommaruga’s motion, explaining why he felt Reimondo was entitled to a hearing. O’Keefe, with Grello’s help, will decide whether to continue with the hearing process.

Rosenblatt agreed to do so, but urged Grello to continue with the hearing “so Mr. O’Keefe can at least articulate his reasons for terminating the chief, so I will know how to respond.

“And so that these good people can also know,” Rosenblatt added, gesturing at the audience.

Rosenblatt also proposed another solution. “If you bring him back to work, then we’ve solved the problem,” he pointed out.

Grello declined, explaining that Rosenblatt would have two weeks to write a motion to continue the hearing. After the hearing adjourned, Rosenblatt said he worried Sommaruga had moved to end the proceedings because the town manager realized he had violated the town’s ordinances by laying Reimondo off. The town, Rosenblatt said, might rush to have the ordinances about the police chief changed to remove the police chief position before the hear-

ing resumed.

“I would say they have a tiger by the tail,” Rosenblatt said. “They can’t hang on and they can’t let go.”

Rosenblatt said the hearing process was unusual, since O’Keefe was serving as the judge, even though he was involved in the dispute. “Everything in the deck is totally stacked,” Rosenblatt said.

He added that while it was unlikely O’Keefe would rule in Reimondo’s favor, “the reaction of the people in town has indicated that that actually is a little bit probable.”

Rosenblatt said he expected the case to end up in court.

“I would hope that I don’t need to do that, because I don’t want to spend the town’s money, but I’m afraid that I don’t have the choice,” Rosenblatt said.

After Reimondo was laid off on June 22, Weintraub was the only Town Council member who voted against offering him a severance package and appointing O’Keefe chief. O’Keefe’s decision, she claimed, was retaliation for harassment complaints against O’Keefe that Reimondo had handled. Four of Weintraub’s colleagues on the Town Council were also at Friday’s hearing, but made a quick exit after it finished. O’Keefe also left shortly after the hearing ended, though he made a quick statement to the gathered media, explaining that he was anticipating a budget shortfall and needed to cut the police department.

A press release dated this Tuesday from the six other Town Council members – Melissa Engel, John Tuttle, Thom Cordeiro, Bill Devine, Chris Goff and Barbara Moore – criticized Weintraub for breaking confidentiality rules by revealing that O’Keefe had been the subject of the sexual harassment investigation in April and May.

The statement said Weintraub, the only Chatham Party member on the Town Council, “chose to straddle the line of confidentiality and use that very private information to perpetrate mistruths on the pages of blogs, in front of news cameras, and to create mayhem at a public hearing.”

The criticism of the harassment investigation was a political attempt by the Chatham Party to remove O’Keefe from his position, their statement said.

The six council members defended O’Keefe’s decision to lay off Reimondo (who earned \$99,578 during the 2009-10 fiscal year), explaining that the town pays more in police costs than surrounding towns, money which they said would be better spent on public works projects.

“In East Hampton, we’re facing major challenges with needs for facilities, roads, water, and our lake. If our day-today [sic] operations are not run as efficiently as possible, we cannot afford to provide the educational and community infrastructure we so badly need,” their statement said.

The Town Council also denied that they were trying to protect O’Keefe by deciding to take no action with the harassment complaints. “We will not protect ANY town staff member who is behaving inappropriately; never, never, never. Nor would we ever violate your trust,” their statement concluded.

“I’m flattered,” Weintraub responded. “I am flattered that the council thinks that I had the power to create mayhem at the public hearing last Friday. They are the ones using smoke and mirrors to deflect the blame from themselves.”

Weintraub added that she was proud of the citizens of East Hampton who stood up against what she said was a corrupt attempt to hide O’Keefe’s reasons for laying Reimondo off. Weintraub reiterated that she thought Reimondo had been laid off as retaliation for handling the harassment complaints against O’Keefe.

Weintraub also denied the allegations that she revealed confidential information, explaining that there was no executive privilege that prevented her from revealing that O’Keefe had been accused of harassment.

East Hampton’s state representative, Gail Hamm, attended the hearing, and said O’Keefe had “probably behaved in a premature way” in laying off Reimondo and the other employees. Hamm said economic issues were a top priority for the legislature, and she wasn’t sure how O’Keefe had calculated that the town would be facing a \$1.5 million shortfall.

“Matt’s been here for 25 years,” said Hamm. “He’s part of the community.” She added that the way O’Keefe had told Reimondo about the layoff, by making him hand in his gun and badge and having him driven home, was a concern. “It wasn’t respectful,” she said.

Hamm said she hoped the hearing would continue, to determine exactly why O’Keefe had laid off Reimondo. “That’s what this will help us with, to find out whether it was retaliatory,” she said. Previously, Hamm tried to push Town Council to more thoroughly investigate the harassment allegations, but the council has insisted the investigation is finished.

Also in attendance was Lisa Maruzo-Bolduc, the Willimantic police chief and president of the Connecticut Police Chiefs’ Association (CPCA). She said about 50 current and retired police chiefs from around the state came to the



Matt Reimondo received a standing ovation from East Hampton residents and police officers at last Friday’s brief public hearing.

hearing to support Reimondo.

“It’s wonderful reinforcement,” Maruzo-Bolduc said. She said the CPCA would continue to monitor the situation closely, not only out of concern for Reimondo, but because the situation could have implications for police chiefs and other municipal department heads throughout the state.

Currently, the town’s ordinances still require the town to have a police chief. On June 22, the Town Council voted to appoint O’Keefe acting chief until the ordinances could be changed, but last week, O’Keefe said Reimondo remained in his position, on “administrative leave.” O’Keefe said Wednesday the Town Council would start the process to change the ordinances, possibly at its meeting scheduled for Tuesday, July 13. To change an ordinance, he said, the Town Council must send the proposed changes to a public hearing, after which the council would vote.

After the hearing, Reimondo said he didn’t know he was on administrative leave until O’Keefe said so in a press release. Reimondo called the support from the community “phenomenal,” and said he would continue pushing to get his job back.

“We’re gonna fight for what’s right,” he said.

Deck Collapse Mars Hebron Fourth of July Celebration

by Lindsay Fetzner

Six people, including an infant, were rushed to the hospital last Saturday evening after the deck of an Amston Lake home collapsed.

The deck, which fell between eight and 10 feet, was attached to a residence at 123 Deepwood Dr., Hebron Deputy Fire Chief Nicholas Wallick said. The incident occurred at about 5 p.m. on Saturday.

Kathy Wassell, who owns the property, described the experience as “very traumatic.”

“It was bad,” she said. “But thank God is all I can say.” She said the holiday get-together was a gathering of friends, family and a Golden Retriever at the cottage, built by the Wassell family.

The injuries were “minor to moderate” and “nothing life-threatening,” Wallick said.

“Certainly the injuries could have been more severe if it had been higher in the air,” he said.

Wassell said on Tuesday that one person was still hospitalized and had multiple fractures. The least injured, she said, was her 1-and-a-half-year-old granddaughter. Wassell said the child was “just sitting down to read a book” and sat in the lap of one of the guests when the collapse occurred. “Instead of flying through the air,” Wassell said, “she slid down the side of

the house.”

The wooden deck, Wassell said, is between eight and 10 years old and measures about eight feet-by-12 feet long. Wassell said the family went to the lake home this past weekend to open it up for the season.

The deck’s “lazy fall,” Wallick said, was very close to the house, and compared the collapse to kicking out of one leg of a table. Although Wallick said decks do collapse “in our state from time to time,” they are “not a common occurrence.”

The cause of the collapse was decay of the framing, according to Building Official Joe Summers. Wassell said the deck was “fine” prior to the incident and added, “Obviously I wouldn’t have my family out if there was a problem.”

Wassell said she has not been back to the house, which she uses as a summer cottage, since the incident. After being transported to the emergency room, Wassell returned to her primary Windsor residence.

In addition to the Hebron Volunteer Fire Department, there was assistance from both Colchester and Lebanon fire departments on Saturday evening, Wallick said.

Librarycont. from Front Page

library could afford to join the consortium after a full-time employee left. Joining Library Connection INC actually costs less than employing a full-time staff member, so Byroade said Cragin would see some savings there.

In addition to the full-time vacancy, as part of the budget that passed May 11, a full-time library employee was switched to part time.

Joining a consortium was a big goal for Byroade, and now that it’s here, she already has her sights set on another technology project – printing software. Byroade said she wants to find software to manage how patrons pay for print-outs.

But until then, patrons can enjoy the most recent technology change at Cragin, and virtually check out the library in their pajamas.

From the Editor's Desk

Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

You may have noticed, it's been hot this week. Record-breaking heat. Tuesday saw 102 degrees at Bradley, shattering the previous July 6 record of 99. It was the hottest it's been anytime in Connecticut, regardless of the day, since August 2001.

And I loved it.

Did my love have something to do with the fact I work in an air-conditioned office and live in an air-conditioned apartment? Perhaps. But longtime readers of my column will recall my complaining about the snow and cold during winter. So I couldn't very well not embrace the heat, could I? Plus, there's just something more social about a heat wave than a cold snap. People tend to try to beat the heat by going outside, be it to frolick in sprinklers, hit the local pool or stand in long lines at the Dairy Queen. Nobody beats the cold by going outside. When it's 15 for a high in mid-January, the outside looks like a barren wasteland.

Also, this is Connecticut. It'll be hot like this (okay, maybe not hot like *this*; 102 degrees is rather extreme, but hot like mid- to upper-90s) for a combined total of maybe a week or two the rest of the summer. The rest of the time it'll more likely be in the 70s and 80s; warm, but not overly hot. So if you're a big fan of this heat, enjoy it while you can, and if you're not...well, it'll probably be over soon.

* * *

It's been one of my favorite shows on television for the past five years or so (although it dipped a bit in quality this season), so of course I was bummed last week when I read Steve Carell plans to exit *The Office* at the end of the 2010-11 season.

I was also bummed to read NBC will almost certainly continue the show without him.

While *The Office* is an ensemble show, Steve Carell (and his Michael Scott character) is undoubtedly the star. He's the center of the show, and the idea of continuing it without him seems almost like continuing *Cheers*, another classic ensemble sitcom, without Ted Danson. (Note: They didn't continue *Cheers*. When Ted Danson announced he was hanging up his hat, so did the show.)

I can understand why NBC would want to continue. After all, *The Office* is really the only hit comedy the network has. And I guess I could see why the cast and crew might want

to continue as well; as a blog I was reading last week noted, when the show wraps its 2010-11 season, it will have only been on the air for six and half years. Theoretically, the rest of the cast – which hasn't really had the movie success Carell has had outside the show – and the crew would still feel it has stories left to tell. After all, when Danson left *Cheers*, it was at the end of the show's 11th year. You could definitely argue that anything that could have been said had been said by that point.

But all this doesn't mean it's a great idea, creatively, for *The Office* to continue. Could it be good? Sure, it might. They'd probably make Jim the boss when Michael leaves, and the idea of Jim being boss, with Dwight still remaining as assistant regional manager – or should I say assistant to the regional manager – has comedic potential. But will it be *as good* as it was? Almost certainly not.

Like I said before, the show already dipped a bit in quality this season, due largely I think to the fact Greg Daniels – who helmed the show for its first four years – left the show to run *Parks and Recreation* (a show that, in my mind, has now overtaken *The Office* for the best sitcom on TV). Barring the return of Daniels to *The Office* for the 2011-12 season – which I hope doesn't happen because it would likely mean *Parks and Rec.* had been canceled – I just can't see the show returning to its glory days, or even retaining the quality of this past season (which, when all was said and done, wasn't a bad year, just a little disappointing when compared to prior seasons).

And it might not even happen with Daniels. Michael Scott really is that important. I'd go so far as to call him the emotional center, the heart, of *The Office*. Now, if you've only seen a couple episodes of *The Office*, you probably think I'm nuts. But if you're a regular watcher, you know what I mean. He may be a sad heart, but he is the heart of it, and in some ways is the character you most root for. (Pam and Jim should hold this title, but truth be told, sometimes their "We're so much cooler than all this" attitude gets a little grating, especially this past season.)

Will a Steve Carell-less *Office* survive? Sure; it'll probably still even be NBC's highest-rated comedy. And it'll still probably be entertaining. But it won't be the same *Office*.

* * *

See you next week.

Andover, Hebron Libraries Benefit from Grants

by Lindsay Fetzner

To celebrate "85 Years of Impact," the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving is awarding \$850,000 in technology grants to 29 public libraries in the greater Hartford area. Both Andover Public Library and Douglas Library in Hebron were recipients of technology grants, which will be used to enhance and broaden their services to the public.

"We wanted to support an organization, an entity, that serves each town like the Hartford Foundation does and reflects the current needs of the community," said Donna Jolly, the foundation's vice president for communications and external relations.

Jolly said libraries become particularly important during difficult economic times when residents take advantage of the services and assistance they offer. Whether it is accessing information online or searching for a job, the libraries have become "a true community center," Jolly said. The libraries "started out as a place to borrow books," she said, but are "so much more now."

Each library submitted a digital technology proposal, with a maximum request of \$30,000, according to the foundation.

Andover Public Library was awarded \$23,799, which, according to library director Amy Orloski, will be used to purchase seven computers (four notebook computers for workshops, two public computers and one staff computer) and several pieces of digital media, in an effort to expand computer access.

Orloski said the library received word in the middle of June that the "buying list" of technology items that had been submitted to the foundation was approved.

The library will receive computer software (Microsoft Office and Adobe Photoshop), an LCD projector, a digital camera, wireless printer, portable screen, copier/scanner and computer application books.

Orloski said the library is also the recipient of 30 hours of instructor-led training classes. The classes will be directed toward searching the Internet, using databases, among other topics, she said. The library, which has been wireless for about a year, is a common place for residents to visit with their own computers to utilize the library's services, Orloski said.

"People are using [libraries] more than ever now with the economy being as it is," Orloski said.

Douglas Library will utilize its \$30,000 grant from the foundation to establish a wireless center, in addition to updating other services. Director Mary Ellen Beck said wireless access is a "center stone" for the library, and was a goal in the five-year technology plan for the facility for 2005-10.

Beck said she applied for the grant in late April and heard from the foundation that the library had received the scholarship on June 16.

The idea, Beck said, was to use the historic part of the library to be the hub for the wireless access. From the outside of the building, the historic part Beck referred to looks similar to a Victorian home, and houses a magazine browsing room. In the past, Beck said it was previously used for storing videos and "never had computers or access to technology."

A 2001 addition to the library, which increased space from about 2,400 square feet to over 16,000 square feet, extended the building in the back, which is visible from the parking lot. The original part of the library is only one level, but now the facility has a lower level, the original level and an upper level.

When Beck came to Douglas Library about six years ago, she came up with a technology plan for the facility. One of the items on the plan was a new online catalog, which was accomplished in March, when the library became a partner of the Bibliomation Library Consortium.

Another "key part" was wireless access, but Beck said the library could not fund the startup costs. "It all came down to money," she said. "The past couple of years have been tough budget-wise." The grant, she said, will "really help" the library in covering the associated costs to making the access a reality.

A table will also be put in the center of the now magazine browsing room that residents can use if they bring their own computers and want to take advantage of the Internet.

"There is really no place in the town of Hebron that has free public access," Beck said. Beck said most people have to go out of town to places like fast-food restaurant or cafés "to get free public access in a setting to do work."



The Hartford Foundation for Public Giving recently awarded grants totaling \$850,000 for computer and Internet technologies at each of the 29 public libraries in greater Hartford. Shown here at Andover Public Library (APL) from left are Jordan Nyberg, Hartford Foundation for Public Giving communications assistant; Amy Orloski, librarian/director of APL; Cathleen Desrosiers, chairwoman of the APL Board of Trustees; Donna Jolly, Hartford Foundation for Public Giving vice president for communications and external relations; and Cathy Campen, APL children's programming director.

Beck is hopeful that the access will reach the downstairs portion of the library where the boardroom is located.

Aside from bringing wireless access to the library, Beck said the grant will also allow for some new computers, which are in need of an update, and improving access from the historic part of the building to the outside.

Beck said she was very fortunate to receive the grant from the foundation, which was not a matching grant. The library does not have to "put up any money at all," she said. "If we'd gotten a matching grant, I am not sure if we would have been able to accept it," due to the fact that the resources would not be available,

Beck said.

The timing of the grant, Beck said, was also an added bonus. Like Jolly, Beck said, "A lot of people are using libraries to look for jobs." In addition, residents are utilizing the library's computers for online courses as well in pursuing their education.

"The library is a great place for people to get connected," Jolly said, adding that the foundation wanted to "help libraries increase their technology in any way they felt was necessary."

For more information on the library project and the 29 recipients of technology grants, visit www.hfpg.org/tabid/737/default.aspx.

Morency Honored as Hebron Citizen of the Year

by Lindsay Fetzner

Recognizing years of countless dedication to the town, especially to AHM Youth and Family Services, Pat Morency has been named this year's recipient of the Citizen of the Year award.

Since 1973, the yearly honor from the Hebron Women's Club has been bestowed upon a citizen who has exhibited "significant contribution to the community as a whole," club president Denise Filthaut said. Mary Rose, another club member, added that the designation is for a resident who has "gone above and beyond."

And, it seems Morency has done just that in her over 10 years of dedication to AHM, serving on the board as both a two-time president and vice president. She was honored at a ceremony on May 18 at AHM. Every year, each subsequent winner's name is added to a plaque at the Town Office Building.

"I was thrilled," Morency said when she heard she was named the Citizen of the Year. "I was totally surprised, thrilled and honored."

Morency said she began going to an AHM playgroup when her daughter Lauren, now 13, was only 3 months old. Over the years, the Morency family, who have been Hebron residents for 15 years, has continued to keep those close ties to AHM. "Myself, along with my family, enjoy giving back to the community," she said. "We enjoy paying it forward. It's neighbors helping neighbors."

Joel Rosenberg, executive director of AHM, said he has known Morency for over 20 years and from the start knew she was going to be "an all-star" on the board. "She jumped in from day one," Rosenberg said. "Anytime we needed a volunteer, she either volunteered herself or her husband to help."

Ironically, Morency's brother Norm Dorval was also honored as the Citizen of the Year in 1997, as well as Joleen Yorio, who nominated Morency for the award. The nomination also

contained input from AHM as well.

The impact the family's commitment has on her daughter, Morency said, is a prime reason for her engagement with the organization. Growing up, Morency's mother was heavily involved in volunteering as well, which had a lasting impression on her. "It stood out in my mind," she said. Especially in these tough economic times, Morency said it is very important "to help each other in any way we can" and that by volunteering, it "shows our daughter that these things [such as helping one another] are important to do in life." Lauren has volunteered alongside her mother on numerous occasions, such as at the AHM Teen Center, Morency said.

Rosenberg said Morency has easily donated "thousands of hours" to the organization and completed "so much behind-the-scenes" work. With both her husband and daughter by her side, Rosenberg said "it became a family tradition for the Morencys" to volunteer. "It's been a team of volunteers from the Morency household," he said.

"She is a huge volunteer," Yorio added. "She is the best advocate AHM could ever have." Yorio, who has been on the board for over 10 years, commented on Morency's noteworthy energy and enthusiasm. "She is so enthusiastic," she said. "She bubbles." Rosenberg agreed with Yorio, and said she find "a positive at every corner."

Morency has chaired the AHM telethon, the youth service bureau's largest and most important fundraiser, for close to 10 years. Yorio, who is also involved with the telethon, said Morency "takes it on and does it well."

Morency referred to the operation as a complete "team effort." Even though Morency said she is the "point person" for the telethon, it is only possible due to the volunteer's "tremendous" efforts. Crediting all of the captains in



Mindy Johnston, Citizen of the Year in 2009, and Pat Morency, this year's recipient, were part of the Memorial Day parade procession. Johnston, pictured on the left, and Morency, on the right, were honored by the Hebron Women's Club.

each town, countless volunteers and staff at AHM, Morency said, "We all make each other shine."

As part of the recognition, Morency was part of this year's Memorial Day parade procession, where she rode alongside last year's award recipient, Mindy Johnston, in a convertible. "I thought it was so much fun to be in the parade," Morency said.

A donation of \$100 to Morency's charity of choice, AHM, will also be made in her honor. "That makes it even better," she said. "It makes AHM a winner." Rosenberg said her choice to give the contribution to AHM is "most appreciated" and "a wonderful donation."

"I am so honored and touched to be designated," she said. "But it doesn't go without saying that I have wonderful people around me."

BOE Opts Not to Reimburse Retired Portland Teacher

by Claire Michalewicz

The Board of Education Tuesday declined to reimburse a retired teacher for interest she had had to pay because of a bookkeeping error in her retirement fund over 30 years ago.

Mary Hurlburt, a family and consumer sciences teacher at Portland High School who retired in June, requested reimbursement for interest she said she had to pay after discovering this year that the Teachers' Retirement Board (TRB) had never received part of Hurlburt's retirement contribution for the 1978-79 school year.

This year, Hurlburt said, she had to pay the \$92.32 the BOE neglected to pay in 1979. But since the outstanding sum had been collecting interest for 31 years, Superintendent of Schools Dr. Sally Doyen later explained, the total Hurlburt owed came to \$1,328.

Hurlburt said she just discovered the error this year, when she tried to collect her pension. She said she paid the sum in April so she could start collecting her pension from TRB.

Hurlburt told the BOE she wanted reimbursement because she didn't think it was fair for her to pay interest. "It's not my mistake," she said.

"It's unfortunate that there was a mistake,"

Doyen said, but she said Hurlburt could potentially have caught the error earlier by comparing her pay stubs to her papers from TRB. The BOE reviewed the spreadsheets the bookkeeper had found from 1979, but could not determine how the error had happened, or how TRB had calculated the amount Hurlburt owed.

"It's unintelligible," Doyen said of the calculations. "I think you have an issue with the TRB, Mary." Doyen said she had consulted with the town's finance director, Tom Robinson, who said the current BOE wasn't liable for an error that happened decades earlier. Doyen said the BOE's bookkeeper had found a note about a conversation with the TRB in 1980, which said the situation had been resolved.

While the BOE voted against reimbursing Hurlburt, board chairman Chris Phelps said the situation "infuriates" him. He urged Hurlburt to take up the issue with her state representative, who could speak with the state Department of Education and the TRB. On Wednesday, Doyen said she had called TRB, and was not convinced its calculations had been accurate. The BOE would likely revisit the issue to see how the error was made, she said.

Also Tuesday, the school board accepted a

renegotiated contract for the school system's custodial and maintenance workers, which will save the school board about \$15,000 each year for the next two years.

The negotiation, which the BOE voted on after an executive session at its meeting on Tuesday night, spreads the bargaining unit's expected raise over two years. Doyen explained the 3.25 percent raise had been split into 1.63 percent for the 2010-11 year, and 1.62 for the 2011-12 year.

The BOE reached a similar agreement with the teachers' union last month. Doyen said she was pleased with the custodians' agreement. The savings, she said, had not been calculated into the 2010-11 final school budget, so they were beyond what the board was expecting.

* * *

In other business, the BOE reviewed a proposed change to the facilities booking procedure. Doyen said she still had to review the proposal with Portland Parks and Recreation Director Sean Dwyer. The new policy, Doyen said, would let groups book school gyms or fields for four dates at a time, with a fee of \$60 per use.

BOE member Chris Bongo said he wanted

to make the schools' facilities more difficult for outside groups to book. "I'm an advocate for kids in this town," he said, explaining that while he knew Portland groups had priority in booking facilities, he often found out-of-town groups using the schools' gyms, sometimes unsupervised.

The BOE also reviewed the enrollment reports for the upcoming school year. Ninety-five students had registered for kindergarten so far, Doyen said, though more students usually register closer to the start of school. Doyen said a class of 95 students was about average for the school district.

Twenty-three of these students will participate in a study about early childhood education, as the BOE voted to let the National Center for Education Statistics conduct a study at Valley View School. Valley View is one of 1,000 schools throughout the country participating in the study, in which researchers will visit the children for about an hour. Doyen said participation in the study was voluntary, and teachers would receive a stipend.

The next BOE meeting will be held on Tuesday, Aug. 17, at 7 p.m., in the high school library.

East Hampton BOE Votes to Extend Golden's Contract

by Claire Michalewicz

The Board of Education (BOE) voted to extend Superintendent of Schools Dr. Judith Golden's contract at their meeting last Monday, June 28.

Each year, the BOE extends Golden's contract for another three years. Now, Golden's contract will end at the end of June 2013. Golden has been with the East Hampton school system since 2007.

Golden will earn \$142,359 in the 2010-11 fiscal year, but will take three furlough days to return approximately \$2,000 to the BOE. The pay increase is 4 percent, but after the furlough days are factored in, it actually comes to 2.8 percent. Golden did not receive any salary increase last year.

Golden's salary is comparable to those of other school superintendents in the area — Portland superintendent Sally Doyen earns \$149,590 (but will not be receiving the full amount pending negotiations to help with budget cuts), RHAM superintendent Robert Siminski earns \$138,986 and Colchester superintendent Karen Loiselle earns \$139,229.

BOE member Mark Laraia commended Golden for her work in her three years in East Hampton. Golden, Laraia said, had been instrumental in saving the town money, and helping the school system manage with challenges like the No Child Left Behind Act, and Response to Intervention, a state program that screens students for learning disabilities.

"She's such a great leader that the people who work under her have strived to work harder," Laraia said. In particular, Laraia said, the town was able to bring several special education students from outside facilities back to East Hampton schools.

Fellow BOE member Don Coolican agreed. "On a few issues, Judy and I don't agree," he said. "But overall, she has done just a super job."

Coolican said Golden has been especially effective in revamping the schools' curriculum, to ensure smooth transitions in coursework from one grade level to the next. He also said Golden has been able to save the district money in a difficult economic environment.

In other business at the meeting, the BOE voted to hire Maryssa Reed Edele as the new assistant principal of Memorial School. Edele is leaving a position as director of special programs and curriculum and instruction in the Salem school system. She is replacing Dr. Maureen Ryan, who is leaving East Hampton for a position in Stafford Springs.

The BOE has also filled another position within the district. On Wednesday, Golden announced that the BOE has hired Laurie Gonzalez as director of special education and pupil personnel services. Gonzalez is currently a supervisor of special education in Meriden. She will replace Brian Reas, who is leaving East Hampton to be Assistant Superintendent in East

Lyme.

Gonzalez, who currently works with the Meriden school system, has been living in East Hampton since 2002.

"It's a great community," she said. "Really tight-knit." Gonzalez said that while she likes her neighbors she hasn't been able to get involved in the community because of her job in Meriden.

"I'm grateful for the opportunity to work in East Hampton," she said. "I'm really excited, not only to work with students, but to be a part of the community."

On weekends and evenings, Gonzalez is also working on her law degree at the University of Connecticut. She called her law degree "the hardest thing I've ever done," but said the experience has been rewarding so far. Eventually, Gonzalez said, she hopes to work in educational law, focusing on special education.

Gonzalez said she was drawn to special education because she feels those students' accomplishments are often unfairly overlooked.

"It's a population that does great things," she said. Many people, she added, "forget what wonderful things these kids do."

In another personnel issue at the June 28 meeting, the BOE accepted a memorandum of agreement and amendment to the custodian and cafeteria workers' union's collective bargaining agreement. The union and BOE were set to re-negotiate their contract this year, but the

union agreed to wait until next spring to re-negotiate it, as a way to help the BOE manage their budget cuts.

The BOE also voted to award their contract for leasing 20 new copiers to IKON. The town's Director of Finance Jeff Jylkka said he consulted with five companies and decided on IKON because they gave the second lowest proposal for the copier lease, and because the machines they offer are similar to the ones the school district already has, thus easing the transition.

The BOE also took another step toward replacing the oil tank and roof at Memorial School, a project that voters approved at a town meeting in April. At the meeting, the board voted to send a detailed description of the project to the facilities division of the state Department of Education, which is expected to reimburse the town for about half of the \$3.40 million project.

The BOE also voted to authorize Golden to handle any financial transactions that may be made over the summer. "I wouldn't do it unilaterally," Golden assured the BOE about any major financial transfers. She said that in case the school district had to make a major transfer, she would consult with the BOE and call a special meeting.

The next regularly scheduled BOE meeting will be held in late August, shortly before the start of the school year.

Portland Water Main Project Sent to Town Meeting

by Claire Michalewicz

The High Street water main may be replaced all the way to the water tanks at the crest of the hill, rather than to Spring Street as currently planned.

The Board of Selectmen (BOS) voted Wednesday night to send the project expansion, which would cost \$125,000, to a town meeting. That meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, July 21, at 7 p.m. at the library, before the regularly scheduled BOS meeting.

First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield said the project, originally approved at \$816,000, could be expanded because the selectmen have transferred money from an unused well development fund into the water operating budget. From that fund, \$125,000 would be put towards the water main project.

Another factor in the decision to expand the project, Bransfield said, was that construction was moving along efficiently, and would come in under budget. She said the project started several weeks ago and is currently about 30 percent complete. The contractors, she said,

have been careful not to break sidewalks or cause any other damage that might increase the project costs.

At this point in construction, Bransfield said, "we have a clear view of the cost, and we find there will be extra dollars."

Under the project's current plan, 3,400 feet of pipe are supposed to be replaced, but the extra funds allow for 1,000 extra feet, Bransfield said.

"It means less water main breaks and better quality of water," she added.

Originally, the pipe was supposed to be replaced up to the tanks, but in February, Director of Public Works Rick Kelsey said the town had not allotted enough money to complete the project. At that point, the BOS voted to only replace the pipe from the bottom of High Street to the intersection with Spring Street. They decided to replace the lower part of the water main because pressure is higher in those parts of the pipe, and thus the pipe is more prone to breaking.

New Trial Requested in Portland Sex Assault Case

by Claire Michalewicz

A Portland horse trainer has requested a new trial in a lawsuit brought against him by a former student who accused him of sexual assault. The judge in the case has not yet made a decision on the motion.

Robert Johnson, who owns Quarry Town Stables in Portland, has been ordered to pay Andrew Srb \$1.67 million in damages. Srb claimed Johnson sexually assaulted him when he was a student at Johnson's stable over 20 years ago. When Srb filed the suit in 2008, the statute of limitations for a criminal trial had already expired.

In April, a jury awarded Srb \$1.27 million in damages. Judge Mary-Margaret Burgdorff awarded Srb an additional \$400,000 in compensatory damages in May.

Johnson's attorney, Michael Dwyer, said Johnson had filed the motion because he felt the jury had been unfairly prejudiced against

him. In this trial, Dwyer said, attorneys and witnesses were not allowed to mention Johnson's previous sexual assault conviction.

In 2001, Johnson was convicted of fourth-degree sexual assault of a minor and risk or injury to a minor. He served nine months in jail and remains on probation until next year. Johnson is also listed in the state's sex offender registry.

During the trial, Dwyer said, Srb's attorney, Gerald Sack, made an "insinuation as to [Johnson's] prior conviction."

Because of this insinuation, Dwyer said, Johnson felt the jury was prejudiced, and filed the motion "to avoid manifest injustice."

Dwyer said a motion to overturn a verdict was a "pretty standard" procedure after the verdict in a civil case. Burgdorff has 120 days to decide on the motion.

Sack did not return calls for comment.

Hebron BOS Hears Results of Building Study

by Lindsay Fetzner

At last Thursday's meeting of the Board of Selectmen, the results of a town facilities study revealed that life safety issues, accessibility and overcrowding were concerns in some buildings throughout the community.

Building Official Joe Summers was in attendance at the meeting to review the study, which he had completed with Fire Marshal Randy Blais.

According to Town Manager Bonnie Therrien, funds had been proposed to be placed in the CIP budget last year to have an outside firm conduct a town facilities study of the town buildings. However, both Summers and Blais felt they could do the study of all the buildings, with the exception of the schools.

"We felt we had the qualifications to do it for the town as a cost-saving measure," Summer said.

The study took Summers and Blais roughly one year to complete. Although Summers said "it did take a lot of time," it was the "cooperation with the town staff [that] made it easier." A survey was handed out to employees in the town to receive their feedback as well, Summers said.

About \$10,000 was set aside in case any further work needed to be completed after Summers and Blais concluded their study, Therrien

said.

The Board of Education (BOE) is also conducting its own study utilizing an outside firm. Therrien said approximately \$65,000 was set aside for the school study, and as of the end of June, had expended just over \$21,000.

One of the facilities Summers addressed was the public works complex. When the public works garage was built in the 1980s, Summers said it was "undersized then" for the staff. Now, over 25 years later, the problem still exists, and he added that only one vehicle can be worked on at any given time. It was recommended that the public works complex be the first facility that the town looks at for renovations.

Another facility, the Town Office Building, was discussed. The study found that the building should be renovated for accessibility reasons. Although there is an elevator in the office building, Summers said reaching some offices in the building and maneuvering around them could be difficult for people with disabilities.

In terms of public safety, Summers said the current fire station, Fire Company No. 1 on Main Street, will need work in the coming years, such as a new roof. Another station, Fire Company No. 3 on North Street in the Gilead section, is not only "a very old structure," but there is a "tremendous amount of wetlands on

the property," which could pose problems for adding on to the building. Summers suggested that a central fire station could be built, combining station one and three. The ideal spot, he said, would be in the vicinity of the Lions Fairgrounds on Route 85, but that "a lot of work would have to go into it," due to concerns with things such as emergency vehicle response times.

BOS members were very grateful for the tremendous amount of work put in by both Summers and Blais on the project.

"You guys did a phenomenal job," selectwoman Gayle Mulligan said. "We appreciate all of the work you've put into it." Mulligan went on to say that this study's results coupled with the BOE's results will allow for an opportunity to "really see where the priorities are."

Brian O'Connell agreed with Mulligan, adding that for him, the study "provoked a lot of thought" and was evident that a lot of thought and effort went into the project. "It is something we needed," O'Connell said.

Also at the meeting, the BOS appointed Beth Morrisette as the senior center program coordinator. A resident of Portland, Morrisette was

previously the senior center director in both Portland (July 1994-January 2008) and Middlefield (July 1992-July 1994).

"I am very excited about returning to a field I really enjoy," Morrisette said. "I am also looking forward to meeting a whole new group of people."

Morrisette added that she is already thinking about how to expand and enhance some of the current senior center's services, specifically regarding transportation and caregivers. If someone in the community is in need of assistance, Morrisette said she wants to have packets available with information on home care, transportation, meal care as well as contact numbers, among other topics.

Therrien said there were "some excellent candidates" for the position, and commented on Morrisette's extensive background as a past senior director in two different towns. O'Connell added that she has a "great portfolio and a great resume" and looks forward to working with her in the future. Morrisette assumed her post on July 1.

The next regularly scheduled BOS meeting is Thursday, July 15, at 7:30 p.m. in the Town Office Building, 15 Gilead St.

Colchester Grad Night to Become Independent Nonprofit

by Katy Nally

Grad Night, a drug- and alcohol-free night of partying till dawn for newly-graduated Bacon Academy seniors, recently faced a crossroads after encountering a liability issue at certain fundraisers.

However, since the majority of parents of Bacon students surveyed said they wanted to maintain Grad Night, volunteers have since taken the first steps toward making the celebration a nonprofit organization.

The Grad Night Committee now goes by a new name, Bacon Academy Project Graduation Inc., to encompass all the events and fundraisers the group heads.

"There wasn't a single person that showed up at the meeting who didn't want to do a grad night," Debbie Godinez, events chair for the soon-to-be nonprofit, said.

Godinez said there were really only two options for Grad Night: to become a nonprofit, or to eliminate the all-night celebration.

"There's no in between," she said.

Godinez said the committee faced a liability issue when it came to fundraising at University of Connecticut sporting events. The group's

volunteers sell beer and food at UConn games, but due to a recent rule change by the university, these vendors must have their own insurance to sell alcohol.

"[Nonprofit status] will give us the insurance and liability coverage we need," she said.

Like other school-affiliated groups in town, Bacon Academy Project Graduation Inc. had to find its own insurance instead of piggybacking on the town's, vice president of the committee Theresa Kennedy said. The group also had the option to buy a one-time insurance package, but this would be temporary and "very limited," she added.

All Grad Night funds come from private donations and fundraising events. Once it becomes a nonprofit, the committee can add raffles to its list of planned events, Godinez said.

Since Bacon's Class of 2010 had its Grad Night on June 17, the committee has held several meetings and has since begun to create bylaws and to fill out the paperwork to become a nonprofit. Godinez said the filing fee of about \$600 was taken from a surplus from this year's celebration.

Kennedy said Monday she thinks the paperwork will be "wrapping up shortly," so the group can focus more on planning activities.

This year the graduating seniors enjoyed an all-night party at a submarine base in Groton, which happened "by chance" after another school moved its graduation date and Bacon took its slot, Godinez said.

In their final farewell to Bacon, the students participated in a luau with hula dancers, played in a swimming pool that was entirely filled with inflatables, danced in a club with bubbles and enjoyed ping pong, pool and other games.

"From beginning to end it was non-stop," Godinez said. "The kids said it was the best [Grad Night] they've ever had."

And because it was so much fun, Godinez said it was a goal of the committee's to secure the sub base for next year too. "That would definitely be our first choice every single year," she said.

But Kennedy said having the party at the sub base is just one idea. "It's all going to be up in the air until we figure out what our budget is

going to be," she said.

Traditionally, Bacon students are unaware where they are headed when busses take them from the graduation ceremony to their all-night party, so as to prevent party crashers and possible plans to leave the site early. However, because the security at the sub base is top-notch, Godinez said these issues wouldn't be a problem and the site wouldn't be kept secret.

Securing the Groton location depends partly on a school's seniority with the sub base and the date of graduation. Godinez said if Bacon's graduation date were fixed, it might be easier to lock in the sub base. A fixed date would also help families who travel to Colchester for the graduation, she added.

"That's a proposition some of the parents are interested in," Kennedy said.

Bacon Academy Project Graduation Inc. will hold its next meeting in August to plan the next Grad Night and other fundraising activities.

For more information contact Godinez at 860-537-1341 or at dlgodinez@sbcglobal.net.

Colchester Police News

6/29: Pamela Kloo, 39, of 259A Westchester Rd., was charged with risk of injury to a minor and disorderly conduct, State Police said.

7/1: Eric Glanert, 52, of 44 West Woodland Rd., Lebanon, was charged with operating an unregistered motor vehicle and DUI, Colchester Police said.

7/2: Coty Rugar, 22, of 10 Eighth St., Newington, was charged with operating an unregistered motor vehicle and operating a motor vehicle with a suspended license, State Police said.

7/5: Three unlocked cars parked on Elm Street and Alexander Drive were entered and personal items valued at \$358 were stolen, Colchester Police said. Anyone with more information is asked to call the Colchester Police Department at 860-537-7270.

Hebron Police News

6/30: Steven Rochette, 22, of 103B Chestnut Hill Rd., Hebron, was charged with breach of peace and carrying a firearm while under the influence of drugs/alcohol, State Police said. At about 8:49 p.m., Rochette had reportedly pulled out a gun while in the driveway at his residence, State Police said, and was waving it in the air toward the person who had called the police.

7/2: Laura Marie Bergeron, 22, of 344 Leonard Bridge Rd., was charged with DUI and

failure to drive right, State Police said.

7/3: Arthur and Elizabeth Lavalette, both 67, of Manchester, were sent to the Marlborough Clinic for minor injuries after a motorcycle accident, State Police said. Arthur Lavalette was traveling southbound on Route 85 when he attempted to stop behind a car that was waiting to turn left onto Route 207. Arthur Lavalette lost control of the 2004 Harley Davidson motorcycle and laid it down, causing damage to the left side, State Police said.

Marlborough Police News

6/30: During the overnight hours on Sunday, June 27, two Netflix DVDs were stolen out of a mailbox on Phelps Road, State Police said. This is the second crime of this nature that occurred last week, State Police said. Police are advising residents to not put DVDs in mailboxes at night, instead put them in the mailbox in the morning. "It is believed that suspects are identifying" mailboxes with the red flags up and removing the contents, State Police said. The case remains under investigation and anyone with more information is asked to contact Trooper Craig Fox at 860-537-7500.

7/4: Jeffrey Baird, 18, of 141 Bluff Point Rd., South Glastonbury, was charged with reckless driving, State Police said.

Portland Police News

6/28: Charles Mifflin Jr., 40, of 256 Airline Ave., was charged with second-degree failure to appear, Portland Police said.

6/28: Naomi Lasane, 27, of 40 Grove St., was charged with violation of probation, police said.

6/28: Cody Caron, 18, of 11 Middlesex Ave. Ext., was charged with third-degree assault, second-degree breach of peace, and second-degree strangulation, police said.

6/28: Two 13-year-old males were issued a juvenile summons and charged with sixth-degree larceny, police said.

6/28: A 17-year-old male was charged with third-degree assault and breach of peace, police said.

6/29: Donald Alger, 29, of 573 Saybrook Rd., Haddam, was charged with DUI, traveling too

fast and driving in improper lane, police said.

7/1: Rachel Villalba, 27, of 9 Sherman Ave., New Britain, was charged with possession of less than four ounces of marijuana and possession of drug paraphernalia, police said.

7/1: Curtis Washington-Daws, 19, of 92 Marlborough St., was charged with simple trespass, police said.

7/1: A 16-year-old male was issued a juvenile summons and charged with less than four ounces of marijuana and simple trespass, police said.

7/1: A 17-year-old male was arrested and charged with possession of less than four ounces of marijuana, possession with intent to sell, possession of marijuana within 1,500 feet of a school and simple trespass, police said.

Glastonbury Resident Killed in Salem Crash

by Katy Nally

Before he left his house last Monday, June 28, 20-year-old Benjamin Bleszinski hugged his mother once, then again harder, and told her he loved her. Although she didn't know it, this would be Marianne Bleszinski's last memory of her son.

Benjamin died later that evening after veering off Route 11 in Salem. He was pronounced dead at the scene, State Police said.

Marianne said the kindness her son demonstrated hours before he died, was commonplace for Benjamin.

"As a son, he was gentle and so kind and so loving," Marianne said this week.

At about 9:42 p.m. last Monday, Benjamin, of 179 Barrington Way, Glastonbury, was reportedly traveling northbound on Route 11 in the area of exit 5 when he went off the shoulder and struck the metal beam guide wire and several trees off the right shoulder, State Police said.

Marianne said Benjamin was on his way home to Glastonbury.

His 2000 Dodge Stratus was totaled and police said he had a "severe head injury." Benjamin was reportedly wearing his seatbelt and was not transported to a hospital.

Benjamin had just finished up his sophomore year at the University of Connecticut (UConn). He was accepted into the Neag School of Education last semester and was working toward a degree in secondary social studies and history. He aspired to teach high school social studies and coach hockey, Marianne said.

"He was a serious student," she said. "He worked really, really hard at school."

While at UConn, Benjamin volunteered for

Big Brothers Big Sisters out of Windham and mentored a third grader named Trenton. Marianne said Benjamin "blocked" every Thursday to spend time with Trenton, and hoped to have an effect on the boy's life.

At Benjamin's funeral last Friday, July 2, Marianne said a representative from Big Brothers Big Sisters confirmed just that and told his family how Benjamin had made "such a difference" in Trenton's life.

On campus, Benjamin was involved with Student Union Board of Governors (SUBOG) concert committee. Last year, he helped to organize a Third Eye Blind concert and planning had already begun for an upcoming OAR show.

"He really loved UConn," Marianne said. "He embraced the college experience."

Before he went off to Storrs, Benjamin was part of the National Honors Society and a varsity hockey forward at Glastonbury High School (GHS). Benjamin played hockey for all four years of high school and he acquired the nickname Blez (a shortened version of his last name) from his teammates and other friends.

GHS hockey coach Ken Barse remembered Benjamin as "one of those kids that truly loved the game."

"He had heart, tenacity, and his passion for the game allowed him to succeed on the ice," Barse said. "He was a fine young man who had a mature soul and he was loved by the coaching staff and his teammates."

To carry on Benjamin's passion for hockey, Barse has begun the Blez Award, which will be given to the GHS player with the most heart, tenacity and love of the game.

Benjamin's younger brother Nate, 15, who



Glastonbury resident Benjamin "Blez" Bleszinski died last Monday, June 28 after veering off the road in Salem. The 20-year-old is shown here riding a bus to a UConn football game.

also plays hockey for GHS, will be a potential candidate for next year's Blez Award.

In addition to Nate, Benjamin also leaves behind his father Gregory and his youngest sibling, Emma, 11, whom he called his "little sunshine."

Marianne said Emma and Benjamin were "ridiculously close," and now, with her brother

gone, Emma "has a completely broken heart."

Although Benjamin has passed on, Marianne was confident that the kindness and lovable nature Benjamin exuded in life would remain with him wherever he is now.

"He was swept up into heaven," she said. "I truly believe...he's going to do better things as an angel."

Fence at Angelico's Draws Ire of East Hampton Neighbor

by Claire Michalewicz

In the latest development in the ongoing controversy about noise from Angelico's Lakehouse Restaurant, the Planning and Zoning Commission unanimously voted Wednesday night to send a complaint about the fence at Angelico's to the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA).

The next ZBA meeting will be held Aug. 9.

Angelo Tammaro, who lives on Lake Boulevard, filed a complaint to the Planning and Zoning Commission (PZC) about a fence erected at Angelico's earlier this year. Tammaro said the fence made the noise from Angelico's outdoor bar louder in his neighborhood.

Building, Planning and Zoning Administrator Jim Carey should not have issued the permit, Tammaro said, because the fence violated the town's regulations. Tammaro said Angelico deliberately built up the earth under the fence to get away with building a taller one.

"The sound is bouncing off more than ever before," Tammaro said.

Earlier this year, Paul Angelico, the restaurant's owner, erected an eight-foot tall fence along the lake and along Barbara Avenue. According to East Hampton's building regulations, Carey said, a fence only needs a building

permit if it's over eight feet tall.

The problem with Angelico's fence, Tammaro and the PZC agreed, was that it was built on top of a three foot mound of earth, bringing the total height to about 11 feet.

Angelico, Carey said, started building the fence without a permit. Carey said that later, Angelico called him about getting a permit. Carey granted him the permit without viewing the fence, since Angelico said it was eight feet tall.

"I was laboring under the idea that a fence eight feet in height doesn't need a permit," Carey said.

Carey said that since the fence was unpopular with residents in the neighborhood, and since he had given him the permit without seeing the fence, he was willing to reverse his decision.

"If it's the will of the community, and they want to chainsaw that thing to the ground," Carey said, "I would certainly take no issue with that."

The current fence, PZC Chairman Ray Zatorski said, was "extremely similar" to a plan for another fence that Angelico had brought to the commission last year. The PZC rejected those plans, Zatorski said, but Angelico built

this fence without consulting them again.

Angelico could not be reached for comment for this story.

The PZC discussed having Carey send an order to Angelico to take the fence down, but Carey said it should go to the ZBA. "This commission [the PZC] may not have the authority to tell me 'Jim, tell him to take that wall down,'" Carey said.

PZC members agreed the fence was a problem, and Angelico had violated the town's regulations by building it.

"I clearly made it clear to this gentleman to work with the neighbors, and stop pissing off the neighbors," PZC member Rowland Rux said. "I don't like hurting business either, but we all gotta live by rules."

PZC alternate Kevin Kuhr agreed. He said if the town allowed Angelico's fence, others may build up the ground to make structures taller. "There should be some kind of fine for that," Kuhr said.

Another problem with the fence, Tammaro said, was that it blocked the view for cars turning at the intersection of North Main Street and Barbara Avenue. Zatorski said he had received

a letter from police sergeants Michael Green and Jared Boynton that said the intersection was not dangerous if a driver made a "cautious approach." But Tammaro said the two officers had only tried turning right, rather than left, which he said was more dangerous.

The PZC said it would also discuss changing their regulations about fences. Under town regulations, fences eight feet and under don't need permits, but under state regulations adopted two years ago, Zatorski said, the height had been changed to six feet.

Zatorski said the PZC might consider changing the town's regulations to bring them in line with the state's.

Some residents came to the meeting to support Tammaro. "There are many of us who are very much in support of what he is presenting," said Fran Klein, who noted that her corner on Bellevue Street was known as "Fran's Corner" because of her frequent complaints about noise.

The ZBA is scheduled to discuss Tammaro's complaint at its next meeting on Monday, July 12, at 7 p.m. at the town hall. The next PZC meeting will be held on Wednesday, Aug. 4, also at 7 p.m. at the same location.

No Action Taken on Proposed Fees Increase in Andover

by Lindsay Fetzner

The Board of Selectmen took no action on a proposal to amend the current land use fees approved at a June 21 meeting of the Planning and Zoning Commission (PZC). The fees are for subdivisions and special permits, among other matters put before PZC.

First Selectman Bob Burbank recommended the issue be tabled until he met with the town zoning agent to discuss the "pros and cons of these fees," drawing on comments from the public in regards the fees. He said Thursday that no action would be taken "until we clarify a few points."

Resident David Knowlton expressed concern during public comment over the proposal to amend the land use fees. Knowlton said he was in attendance at the meeting last month where the PZC came up with the amendments to the land use fees. What PZC took into consideration, he said, were the "worst case scenarios."

"The fee schedule they came up with is outrageous," Knowlton said, adding that the fees will "do nothing but dry up small businesses" and should be sent back to PZC for further review.

In a correspondence dated June 29 to selectman Jay Lindy from the Zoning Enforcement Officer John Valente, the current fees approved

by PZC and fees dated October 2009 were included in a packet. Many fees showed a dramatic increase. Burbank said Thursday the town had not reviewed the fees in about 10 years.

Burbank said the town "certainly wants to have our fees in line with what other towns are doing." However, he expressed that he heard comments that "we have the potential of driving businesses out of town."

"Certainly we don't want to put something in effect to do this," Burbank said. On Thursday, Burbank added, "We don't want to discourage businesses from coming into town."

In the 2009 fee list for land use commissions, a zone change fee was \$210, broken down into a charge of \$150 plus a \$60 state fee. On the fee listed for 2010, the charge for a zone change is \$500.

Another significant increase was for subdivision fees. On the 2009 list, a base fee for administrative costs was \$260, which was inclusive of a \$200 fee plus a \$60 state fee. For lots one through three on an existing road, the charge was \$25 per lot. Lots three through 10 on an existing road were \$50 per lot. And, lots on a new road were \$100 per lot.

When a subdivision is approved on a new road, there is also "an inspection fee of 3 per-

cent of the cost of the public improvements" listed on the 2009 list.

However, on the 2010 list of fees for subdivisions/re-subdivisions/modifications, there is a \$500 fee, plus \$100 per lot for the first three lots. There is an additional \$150 charge per lot for each lot over three lots.

In terms of special permits, the 2009 list listed a charge of \$200, encompassing \$140 plus a \$60 state fee. On the 2010 list, a special permit/exception without site development is \$350 and a special permit/exception with a site development is \$500.

It was noted on the bottom of the 2010 fee list that the zone changes, special permits and subdivisions/re-subdivisions/modifications fees, among others not discussed, do not reflect additional fees required by some state agencies, which would be added on.

Lindy also expressed discontentment with the fee proposals, and said he was "very, very disappointed."

The BOS also approved \$10,180 for Fox Heating Service, Inc. of Tolland to replace a hot water boiler and \$3,200 for other services related to the boiler replacement, including installing valves, a warranty and disposal of de-

bris. Burbank said several quotes were received for the replacement.

Burbank said the town "had an opportunity to get a federal energy grant," and planned on replacing the furnace in the Town Office Building, which dates back to the 1980s when the building was built. Burbank said the current furnace is "very inefficient."

The town received confirmation that they could use the energy grant to purchase the furnace, which Burbank said is "highly efficient" and only starts when needed as opposed to keeping the water heated when not in use. Due to the fact that it was an energy grant, Burbank said it was a "necessity to go with the highest energy efficient unit."

Burbank said there would be a 100 percent reimbursement for the furnace replacement in the building after the town expends the funds to install it.

At the June 2 BOS meeting, Burbank announced that work on installing the new furnace would commence on June 16. He said Thursday the work has been completed.

The next meeting of the BOS is on Aug. 4 at 7 p.m. at the Town Office Building.

Obituaries

East Hampton

Robert Lohrmann

Robert Lohrmann, 56, of East Hampton, beloved husband of Susan (Potter) Lohrmann, died Friday, July 2, at Middlesex Hospital after a brief and courageous battle with cancer. Born Dec. 13, 1953, in Meriden, Bob lived in East Hampton for the past 22 years.

Bob was the president of Associated Architects PC in Farmington where he devoted his 30-year career in architecture; he was also a member of the American Institute of Architecture. Bob was proud and honored to be able to donate his time and talent to the development of the East Hampton Ambulance Association building. For the past 32 years, Bob looked forward to working with his friends and fellow committee members planning and organizing the annual Daffodil Festival in his hometown of Meriden. Bob's greatest joys came from spending time with his family, friends, and pets, traveling, playing golf, relaxing at his lake house, and watching movies.

Along with his wife Sue, he is survived by his son Peter and daughter-in-law Alison of Stafford Springs; his two daughters Kim and Keri both of East Hampton; a brother Dick and his wife Lynn of Arlington, VA; a sister Judy Picicelli and her husband Tom of Meriden; a sister Susan Reale and her husband Rick of Meriden; a sister Barbara Drake of East Berlin; a brother and sister-in-law Steven and Holly Potter of York PA; and many beloved nieces and nephews.

He was predeceased by his parents Walter and Neva (McCarthy) Lohrmann and his brother-in-law and dear friend Lawrence Drake.

A funeral liturgy was celebrated Wednesday, July 7, in St. Patrick Church. Burial will be private. Friends called at Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton, on Tuesday, July 6.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the East Hampton Ambulance Association, P.O. Box 144, East Hampton, CT 06424.

To leave online condolences, visit www.spencerfuneralhome.com.

Marlborough

Richard Smith Jr.

Richard Clark Smith Jr., 66, of Glastonbury, formerly of Marlborough, passed away Friday, June 25, surrounded by his loving family, after courageously fighting a five-year battle with multiple myeloma. He will be remembered for his positive attitude, selfless generosity, honesty and compassion. Rich was a deeply devoted family man.

In addition to Carla (Roslund) Smith, his beloved wife and best friend of 43 years, he will be missed by his son and daughter-in-law, Richard and Elizabeth Smith, their daughters, Madeline, Katherine and Courtney of Suffern, NY; his daughter and son-in-law, Cheryl and John Benedetto and their daughter Julia of Marlborough.

Born in Glen Cove, NY, on Oct. 13, 1943, he was the son of Richard and Doris (Goossen) Smith. Rich grew up in Bayville NY, graduating from CW Post. After proudly serving in the Army for two years during the Vietnam War, Rich and Carla moved to Marlborough in 1970. Before opening his own business, Successories of CT, he worked for CG/CIGNA and UTC.

Vacationing with the family created many cherished memories. His favorite pastime was skiing, serving as president and member of the Manchester Ski Club. He also held many roles around the community including: Board of Ed., mentoring, coaching sports and a longtime member of Marlborough Congregational Church.

Family and friends called at Mulryan Funeral Home, 725 Hebron Ave., Glastonbury, Tuesday, June 29. Funeral service was held in Marlborough Congregational Church, 35 South Main St., on Wednesday, June 30, with burial following at Marlborough Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, donations in his memory may be made to Marlborough Congregational Church or the Multiple Myeloma Foundation.

Portland

Robert J. Curtin

Robert J. Curtin, 80, of Meadowbrook Lane, Palmer, MA, formerly of Portland, and Foxfire in Naples, FL, beloved husband of Nancy (O'Brien) Curtin, passed away Friday, July 2, at Redstone Rehabilitation in East Longmeadow, MA, surrounded by his family. He was born in Hartford, the son of the late William and Mary (Sullivan) Curtin. A veteran of the Korean War, he served with the U.S. Air Force.

Prior to his retirement, he owned and operated Insurance and Real Estate Center, Middletown, for many years. Bob formerly served as Portland representative to the state legislature, and was a former member of the Ancient Order of Hibernians, Middletown Rotary, Middlesex Hospital Corporaters, Portland Knights of Columbus, and Rockfall Corporation.

Above all, Bob was a loving and generous son, husband, father, brother, uncle, and friend to all. Avid golfer and sportsman, Bob lived life to the fullest, with his quick wit and fun loving nature.

He will be deeply missed by the many people whose lives he touched. Besides his wife, he is survived by his son, William J. Curtin and his wife Ellen of Portland and grandsons Evan, Dylan, and William Jr.; his daughter, Erin Curtin-Johnson of Monson, MA and granddaughters Lauren and Hayley and their father Scott Johnson; his brother, John O. Curtin and wife Marilyn of Bridgewater; his sister, Patricia Lawler and husband Thomas of Worcester, MA; as well as several nieces and nephews.

He was predeceased by two sisters, Maureen McKinley and Helen Moskey.

A funeral Mass will be held Saturday, July 10, at 11 a.m., in St. Mary's Church, Freestone Ave., Portland. Burial will be in St. Mary's Cemetery, Portland. Friends may call at Biega Funeral Home, 3 Silver St., Middletown, Saturday, July 10, from 9-10:30 a.m., prior to the service.

Memorial contributions may be made to the Alzheimer's Support Network, 660 Tamiami Trail N., Suite 21, Naples, FL 34102.

To share memories or express condolences online, visit www.biegafuneralhome.com.

Colchester

Joseph R. Pellicane

Joseph R. Pellicane, 77, formerly of Hartford, died peacefully Sunday, July 4, at Apple Rehab in Colchester, with his family by his bedside. He was born in Wethersfield and was the son of the late Vincent and Giuseppa Pellicane. Joe was a ceramic tile setter by trade, retiring many years ago. He will be dearly missed by his family and many friends.

He is survived by his two daughters, Lorraine Myers and Theresa Torres and her husband, Robert, grandchildren, Brian Myers, Jr. and Rachal Torres, great grandchildren, Alexis, Vincent and Victoria. He also leaves behind his lifelong friend, Adora.

Funeral service was held Wednesday, July 7, at 10 a.m., at the D'Esopo Funeral Chapel, 277 Folly Brook Blvd., Wethersfield. The burial was in Mt. St. Benedict Cemetery, Bloomfield. Calling hour was Wednesday morning before the service.

A very special thank you to the doctors, nurses and staff at Apple Rehab and the Hospice staff and volunteers for the love, care and compassion shown to Joe and his family.

For online expressions of sympathy, visit www.desopo.com.

Hebron

Deborah Morocco

On Tuesday, July 6, Deborah Morocco departed this life. Devoted wife, loving mother, faithful daughter, trusted sister, adoring grandmother, dedicated public servant, accomplished businesswoman, faithful friend and devout communicant, Debbie loved life, wholeheartedly devoting herself to every task before her, daily celebrating her many joys and answering life's challenges with strength, determination, unfailing optimism and love.

Debbie was born March 12, 1946, to William and Rosemary Smith of Wethersfield. Educated in Wethersfield public schools, Deborah went on to UConn, earning her degree in 1968. Smart, ambitious and strong, Deb embodied the new generation of working women, distinguishing herself first at Travelers and later at Open Solutions.

Anchored by a deep belief in family, she and her husband Joe settled in Hebron and raised their family. As with all she did, Deb, armed with seemingly limitless energy, took the roles of motherhood and community member far beyond their traditional boundaries: teaching Sunday school classes; coaching soccer and serving as president of Hebron soccer; serving on the RHAM Board of Education for 12 years and taking on the duty of chairwoman during difficult economic times; hosting legendary Christmas Eve parties and family holidays, and welcoming into her warm family circle countless numbers of friends. Debbie's door was forever open. Her table was never too crowded for just one more.... or two, and there was always room in her heart.

To celebrate her life and carry on the legacy of unconditional love, remarkable courage, and selfless charity she instilled in all of us, she leaves her devoted husband Joseph and her beloved children: her son Jonathan and his wife Christine; her daughter Laura Morocco Kompanik, her husband Kevin, and a source of constant joy in Deb's life, grandson Mason and a soon-to-be-welcomed granddaughter; son David; her mother Mrs. Rosemary Smith; her mother-in-law Mrs. Frances Morocco; her sister Karen Smith Satriano, her husband Gennaro, their son Adam and his wife Rachael; her sister-in-law Maryanne Costerella and her children Brennan, Kelsey, and Mackenzie; her sister-in-law Debra Gallo and her children Kevin and Kimberly; extended family members Josephine Campione, Nina Fournier, and Amanda Doll; and many, many dear friends.

Debbie was welcomed into the loving arms of her father William, brother Roy, father-in-law Joseph, brother-in-law Gregory and sister-in-law Donna.

The family would like to thank the Helen and Harry Gray Cancer Center for their help in supporting and caring for Debbie, especially Dr. Schaeur, Laurie V., and the wonderful nursing staff.

A Mass of Christian Burial will be Saturday, July 10, at noon, at Church of the Holy Family, 185 Church St., Hebron. Everyone is asked to meet directly at church. Burial will be private. Family and friends may call at the Mulryan Funeral Home, 725 Hebron Ave., Glastonbury, today, July 9, from 5-8 p.m.

In lieu of flowers, a donation can be made to the Helen and Harry Gray Cancer Center.

Colchester

Diana Rosenthal

Diana Rosenthal, 82, of Waterford and formerly of Colchester, Old Saybrook and Moodus, widow of the late Morris Rosenthal, passed away Saturday, July 3, at the Bride Brook Health Care Center in Niantic with her loving children by her side.

Born May 10, 1928 in the Bronx, NY, she was the daughter of the late Harold and Clara (Davidson) Krepisman. She and Morris were married on June 15, 1952, in New York and shared 54 years together before he predeceased her on April 30, 2006. Mrs. Rosenthal worked outside of her home for short periods of time, as a clerk in New York and a factory worker. Mostly she was a homemaker, caring for her family and working in the family businesses; a poultry farm in Moodus and her husband's tailor shop in Old Saybrook.

Diana was a member of the former Colchester Jewish Aid Congregation and was a current member of Congregation Ahavath Achim. She loved shopping, cooking and her family pets. Most importantly, she will be remembered by her children as being a devoted and loving wife and mother.

She leaves her two children, Nathan Rosenthal and Lillian Rosenthal, both of Waterford; a twin brother, Leonard Davidson of Olney, MD and numerous extended family and friends. The funeral was observed Monday, July 5 in the Sanctuary of Congregation Ahavath Achim, 84 Lebanon Ave., Colchester. Burial followed in the Jewish Aid Cemetery, Colchester.

Donations in her memory may be made to the Alzheimer's Association, CT Chapter, 279 New Britain Road, Suite 5, Kensington 06037.

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

Amston

Dorothy Hart

Dorothy (Kowalski) Hart, 86, of Sturbridge, MA, formerly of Amston, died Saturday, July 3. She was the beloved wife of the late John J. Hart.

Born in Columbia, Dorothy's family moved to Amston in 1941. She worked in Hartford, and married John Hart of Hartford in 1941. She lived in Sturbridge, MA for the last 11 years.

Mrs. Hart was a communicant of St. Augustine Church, Hartford for 40 years and was a member of the Ladies Auxiliary of the V.F.W. Hannon-Hatch Post, W. Hartford and was a volunteer for the Harrington Hospital Auxiliary.

Survivors include her two daughters and sons-in-law, Marge Banach and Chris of Newington, Doreen Brisendine and Clyde of Muscle Shoals, AL; her daughter-in-law Linda Hart of Charlton, MA; eight grandchildren, Sean, Meghan and Tim Hart, Christopher, Paul and Grace Banach, Jordan and Ben Brisendine; her two sisters, Eleanor Wengrzynek of Amston and Alice Gudhean; several nieces and nephews.

She was pre-deceased by her son, John Hart. Her funeral service was held Wednesday, July 7, at 9 a.m., from Newington Memorial Funeral Home, 20 Bonair Ave., Newington, followed by a Mass of Christian Burial at St. Mary's Church. Burial was in Mt. St. Benedict Cemetery, Bloomfield. Calling hours were held Tuesday at Newington Memorial.

To share a memory with her family, visit www.newingtonmemorial.com.