

RIVEREAST

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Members of Portland's Veterans Affairs Commission showed their appreciation for former state representative Jim O'Rourke last week. Shown from left are VAC Chairman Reg Farrington, O'Rourke's daughters Colleen and Brianna, O'Rourke, his daughter Shannon, his wife Kim, and VAC members Kathy Burke and Bill Willinsky.

Veterans Recognize Former State Rep

by Claire Michalewicz

For years, former state representative James O'Rourke made a point of welcoming home every returning Portland veteran. But last Thursday, Jan. 6, Portland's veterans were honoring O'Rourke for his commitment to them.

Members of the Veterans Affairs Committee gathered for a ceremony in First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield's office to present O'Rourke with a special proclamation in honor of his dedication to the town's veterans.

As Portland's state rep for 20 years, Democrat O'Rourke served the 32nd District for 10 terms, before being defeated last November by Republican Christie Carpino.

"This is a very auspicious occasion," Bransfield said. "You've been one of our favorite people for over 20 years and you continue to be so."

VAC Chairman Reg Farrington explained that O'Rourke had personally presented proclamations from the State House of Representatives to every Portland veteran who returned from service in the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

In addition, Farrington said, O'Rourke helped the town establish its veterans memorial behind Town Hall in 2007.

"I know everyone has really appreciated you coming to our little events each and every time," Farrington said, hugging O'Rourke as he handed him the proclamation.

VAC member Bill Willinsky explained that over the years, the VAC has hosted 23 of these ceremonies. O'Rourke missed one ceremony last year, Willinsky explained, but it was "kinda my fault."

Willinsky said O'Rourke only missed it because he had forgotten to send O'Rourke an e-mail to remind him about the event. When O'Rourke arrived at Town Hall a few hours later and realized he had missed it, he drove to the soldier's house to greet him and his family and deliver the proclamation in person, Willinsky said.

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Snow Day!

As you may have noticed, it snowed Wednesday. A lot. If you have any fun pictures of the snow, we'd love to see them.

Send any pictures to rivereast@snet.net by next Tuesday at noon, and we'll publish our favorites next week.

Community 'Mainstay' Fondly Remembered

by Lindsay Fetzner

The face behind Ted's Supermarket in Hebron for nearly 37 years, the beloved Theodore "Ted" Armata, passed away last week, leaving behind family, friends and a community that was like a second home to him.

The heart of the community, an incredibly humble man and a community leader were just some of the words area residents have used to describe the late Armata.

Sunday, Jan. 2, Armata passed away at the age of 82. He was born in Holyoke, MA, but called South Windsor home for the past 47 years. With the help of his brothers, Armata owned and operated Armata's Markets and, in February of 1974, opened up Ted's Market in Hebron.

In addition to his wife Mary, Armata leaves behind three children, Susan Young and her husband Robert of Manchester, Todge Armata and his wife Janet of South Windsor and David Armata and his wife Ginny of Vernon, in addition to numerous other family members and countless friends.

In the days since his passing, Todge said the outpouring from the community has been "really tremendous" and the sentiments from the customers, "very touching."

"Everybody had a story to tell about my dad," Todge said.

Hebron Board of Selectmen Chairman Jeff Watt agreed.

"I think all of us are feeling very sad with his passing and the tremendous contribution he made to the community," Watt said. "All of the volunteer groups could always count on him.

The amount of opportunity that he gave all of the volunteer groups, including the fire department, was just incredible."

Family members said that Armata was also an honorary member of the Hebron Volunteer Fire Department, and was always there to help and assist the organization.

"If ever they needed anything, it seemed like my dad was there for them," Todge said, be it restoring their antique firetruck or donating food for the senior Thanksgiving dinner at the department.

But that support didn't stop with the fire department.

"It seemed like no matter what, when people were in need, my dad found a way to help them out," Todge said. As a close family-oriented business, Todge said Ted's motto was always to "let our family serve your family."

Watt said Armata became a "mainstay" in the community over the years, through not only his business in town but also his incredible support and interaction with the community.

Joel Rosenberg, executive director of AHM Youth and Family Services, credited Armata for his support of AHM since the 1980s and his continual involvement with the yearly golf tournament.

"Both Ted and his sons and daughter have always been very, very supportive of AHM through a number of different programs," Rosenberg said. "They've been one of our main sponsors of the annual golf tournament that goes back for years and years. He's always been a major supporter of that."

Rosenberg said if one were to talk to practi-

cally anyone who has known the Armata family over the years, they would echo the same sentiments.

"He was an incredibly humble man who just understood and embraced the community," he said. "He embodied what a community leader was and was a wonderful individual."

In his professional life, Armata was also the president of Armata Realty and a member and past president of the Lions Club of South Windsor. In recognition of his dedication to the community for exceptional service, he was honored with the Melvin Jones Fellow Award from the Hebron Lions Club.

Hebron Lions member Bernice Barrasso said the Fellow Award is given to "someone that is outstanding in the community." And, she said, Armata was just that.

"He was the most generous person I know in the world," Barrasso said. "Every time someone needed something or they had a fundraiser, he was the first to give. You couldn't ask for a better family-oriented store. He was just so generous."

Todge said his father's honor from the Hebron Lions was "a tremendous award that he was very proud of."

Additionally, Armata was the recipient of the Adam J. Bozzuto's Award for community service and in 2008 he received the Bozzuto's Lifetime Achievement Award for his service to the food industry.

"When he won the Adam J. Bozzuto's Award from the region of retailers, my dad really thought that was a special one," Todge said. "It's been over 60 years that he'd been involved in



Ted Armata

the food industry."

Jennifer Armata, Armata's granddaughter who now works at the market beside her father Todge, described him as a "wonderful grandfather."

"He was very generous," she said. "Any type of organization that needed help, he always wanted to help. He was very, very caring."

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State Rep cont. from Front Page

“They were so thrilled to have Jim in the house,” Willinsky said. “I really appreciate that, Jim.”

Willinsky said working with O’Rourke had always been easy, and O’Rourke was always willing to put in the time and effort to help.

“I was afraid I was gonna get choked up,” O’Rourke said. “The feeling’s mutual. It’s been certainly very easy and enjoyable to work with you.”

And the former rep said he enjoyed working with the town during his time in office.

“I’ve said for years that Portland’s a very special place,” O’Rourke said, explaining that it had a small-town atmosphere that many other towns lacked. “Everyone looks after one another.”

The VAC, he said, exemplified that small-town spirit. He said that while many people were interested in supporting the troops, they didn’t know how to help. In addition to their work on the memorial and the homecoming ceremonies, the commission had helped put together care packages using donations from community members.

“That’s got to be incredibly meaningful for them,” O’Rourke said.

O’Rourke said Portland was unique in the area for the amount of effort it put into supporting its veterans, especially with the welcome-home ceremonies.

“It takes a lot of work, but it would be nice if more towns did this,” O’Rourke said.

O’Rourke was joined by his wife, Kim, and their three daughters – Shannon, 15, Colleen, 13, and Brianna, 8. After the brief ceremony, the O’Rourkes, VAC members, Selectwoman Kathy Richards and Town Clerk Bernadette Dillon chatted over cake.

O’Rourke said he’s continuing at the job he’s held for the past 15 years, as development director at The Connection, Inc., a nonprofit community development agency in Middletown.

He said that while he’s no longer Portland’s state rep, he plans to come back and visit Portland in an unofficial capacity. He said he was proud of the work he had done for the town. Over the years, he said, he’d grown close with many of the town’s employees, officials and residents.

“I’ve enjoyed every minute of it,” he told the people gathered for the ceremony. “You folks are good friends.”

“We do miss you,” commission member Kathy Burke added.

“Anytime you need me, I’ll still be around,” O’Rourke replied.

Bransfield said that while she misses having O’Rourke as the town’s rep, the work he did for the town’s veterans and other residents “stands on its own.”

“It was my honor to say thank you,” she said.

Mainstay cont. from Front Page

Jennifer added that Armata had always viewed Hebron as his second home.

“If he wasn’t at home spending time with his wife, he wanted to be here,” she said, pointing out that he worked six days a week at the market.

Alongside his two sons, Armata also employed several employees, many of whom have worked for the family for over two decades.

Bob Kowalyshyn, a manager at Ted’s, has worked for the Armata family for over 30 years. Kowalyshyn, who has known Armata since he was 21, said he treated each of his employees like family and always gave them a second chance.

“Ted was a man with a heart of gold,” he said. “He was the heart of the community.”

Kowalyshyn said lightheartedly that after 30 years of working for Armata, he felt as though he was “the third Armata.”

Looking ahead, “Todge and David will continue with his legacy and keep it going.”

Ted’s grocery manager, Leon Tetreault, has worked alongside Armata for just over 20 years. He said Armata’s incredible knowledge and success working in the food industry was something that always stuck out to him.

“Working in a small community like this, it’s very hands-on with customers and giving the

community and the customers the type of service that Ted strived for us,” he said. “It was just amazing the knowledge that this man had and the control he had in the store.”

Outside of the professional arena, Tetreault said Armata had a love for the New York Yankees.

“We had a good relationship because I am a Yankee fan and he was a Yankee fan,” Tetreault joked.

On a more serious note, Tetreault drew attention to Armata’s generosity in the community.

“If the community needed help, Ted was right there to make sure we assisted them at our store no matter what it was,” he said. “Ted was a very, very charitable man.”

Friends and family called last Wednesday, Jan. 5, at the Samsel & Carmon Funeral Home and gathered Thursday, Jan. 6, for a Mass of Christian Burial at St. Margaret Mary Church in South Windsor, where Armata was a parishioner. Armata’s burial followed at Wapping Cemetery in South Windsor.

Memorial donations can be made to Hebron Interfaith Human Services, P.O. Box 634, Hebron, CT or to the Hebron Volunteer Fire Department, 44 Main St., Hebron, CT 06248.

From the Editor's Desk

Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

First off, I feel the need to say a few words about that unspeakable shooting in Arizona last weekend and the aftermath of it.

There has been a lot of talk in recent days about how the pundits were too quick to make this a political issue, that this was a horrific crime in which a deranged gunman killed six people – including, most tragically, a 9-year-old girl – and seriously wounded several others. This is true. Above all else, this is a human tragedy, and the loss of life is far more important than the political affiliation of any of those involved.

Also, this doesn’t have any of the markings of a political conspiracy. The gunman, quite simply, appears unhinged. From all that’s been reported about him, from comments by former classmates to notes found in his home to even strange, nonsensical videos he’s posted on YouTube, it seems Jared Lee Loughner is a very unstable man.

But that doesn’t mean we should just look at this as an isolated act of a crazy person and go back to business as usual. The pundits were right to say the rhetoric needs to be toned down. And while Sarah Palin isn’t to blame for this tragedy, it was right for the media to bring up that map she posted on her Facebook page last year.

In case you haven’t heard – and after all the press it’s gotten this week you probably have – last March, Palin posted a map on her Facebook page showing crosshairs over the Congressional districts of Democrats she wanted to see lose in the midterm elections. Among the districts was that of Rep. Gabrielle Giffords, the Congresswoman shot in the head last Saturday.

Around the same time she posted the map, Palin took to Twitter to say to her followers: “Don’t Retreat, Instead – RELOAD!”

Palin’s people have since said the crosshairs on the Facebook map were never intended to be gunsights; that they were simply supposed to be crosshairs on a map. Not so sure I really buy that, not with that aforementioned Tweet and Palin’s overall “Caribou Barbie” image.

Look, I’m not saying Palin personally inspired Loughner; after the shooting, she expressed her deepest condolences and I believe she meant it. But hers was just the highest-profile example of the violent political rhetoric that, simply put, has been spinning out of control for a while now.

Guns and gun imagery played a role in far too many political campaigns across the country last year. One of the most appalling examples came last September, when Dean Allen, a conservative candidate for state office in South Carolina held a “machine gun social,” at which attendees, in addition to entering a raffle for an AK47 semiautomatic rifle, were also each given the chance to fire 20 rounds from the machine gun of their choice. Thankfully, Allen wound up losing the election.

Another gun-themed fundraiser was held last June by Giffords’ opponent, Republican Jesse Kelly. No guns were raffled off at this one, but supporters were invited to come out and shoot an M-16 rifle with Kelly. The theme

of the event? “Get on Target for Victory in November. Help remove Gabrielle Giffords from office. Shoot a fully automatic M16 with Jesse Kelly.”

The violent rhetoric and imagery should have no place in a political discussion, and it’s also not good for twisted minds like Loughner’s. As Giffords herself has said, it simply fires people up.

We need a return to a more peaceful, civilized type of political discourse in this country. One that leaves guns out of the mix.

* * *

On a lighter note, last week Yahoo Finance presented a list of items that babies born in 2011 will never know. Basically, stuff that’s not quite obsolete yet but sure appears to be heading there. Among those were video stores (as the Yahoo writer quipped, “You actually got in your car and drove someplace just to rent a movie?”), dial-up Internet, CDs, film cameras (which are basically extinct now), traditional phone books (which I barely use anymore anyway; the only time I employ one anymore is when I’m home and don’t particularly feel like turning on my computer), paper maps, hand-written letters (as Yahoo accurately notes, “When was the last time you wrote cursive?”) and even watches (after all, you’ve got a clock on your cell phone, don’t you?).

Reading the list made me think about all the home technology items that have changed just since I was born, wayyy back in 1979. I was born into a household that watched TV via an antenna on top of the house, listened to albums via vinyl records and typed letters and other documents using a typewriter. My family didn’t get a VCR until the mid-80s, didn’t get cable until the early ‘90s.

Our first home computer was a Commodore VIC-20, and games for it came on cassette tapes. The computers we had in elementary school were of the decidedly-fancier Apple IIe variety; I still remember how as kids we used to take turns playing *Number Munchers* and *Oregon Trail*.

Okay, before I start to sound like a bad episode of *The Wonder Years* (I know, I know; too late), perhaps I’ll shut up.

* * *

In closing, I have some sad news to report: this is Lindsay Fetzner’s final issue of the *Rivereast*, as she is moving on. In the year she has been with the paper, Lindsay has made quite the impression. Her beat has been Andover and Hebron, and she’s covered both towns well. She has displayed an enthusiasm and thoroughness in her reporting that’s been evident not just to me, but to those she interviewed as well. I’ve received several phone calls and e-mails over the past 12 months from people Lindsay has interviewed, praising not just the article she wrote but the interview itself, noting how impressed they were by her. As an editor, you love to hear stuff like that.

I wish Lindsay the best of luck in all of her future endeavors, but I’m sorry to see her go. And I imagine there are many in Andover and Hebron who feel the same way.

* * *

See you next week.

Marlborough Resident Remembered for Strength, Leadership

by Katy Nally

Above all, Mike Kearns taught his friends about strength.

Kearns, a 2009 RHAM High School graduate who was pursuing a pre-med degree at the University of Connecticut, died Thursday, Dec. 16, at the age of 20, after suffering a relapse from acute lymphoblastic leukemia.

He had lived with the disease for several years – Kearns was diagnosed in April 2005 and relapsed last March – but he never let it define him. Those who knew the Marlborough resident marveled at the strength it took to fight the disease, all the while maintaining his positive outlook and composure.

At his funeral, his closest friends touched on the strength and leadership Kearns emanated. Many said they would find consolation in knowing his greatest traits would not disappear in his passing, instead they would continue on inside all of them.

“So now it’s my responsibility to take what I’ve learned from my world’s greatest individual, and make a difference, since the universe now holds all of the love that Mike’s body once did,” James Adams said in a eulogy at Kearns’ funeral on Tuesday, Dec. 21.

As friends for nearly 10 years, Adams, an Amston resident, recalled the many roles Kearns played throughout his life.

“He’s there when no one else is, a rare breed in the world,” Adams said in the eulogy. “He’s there because he’s my best friend, and he helped to teach me how to be happy.”

The two shared a common role during their senior year at RHAM, when they captained the football team in 2009, along with their fellow friend Sean Goodwin.

Within the trio, Adams said he was the one

who was “a little bit behind” the other two. Goodwin was the football star and Kearns “always had that good attitude for leadership,” Adams said this week.

“I was always more competitive,” Adams explained. “Kearns was always able to stay calm in situations.”

In fact, his leadership role, coupled with his strong academic ethic, landed Kearns the Scholar-Athlete Award in 2009, given by the National Football Foundation and College Hall of Fame. He was one of 15 students selected for the award in northern Connecticut.

RHAM football coach Tom Hammon recalled having Kearns as a player.

“Certainly he was a perfect example of what I want on my team,” Hammon said. “He was just a great kid.”

Kearns was the model student-athlete that the football program was built around, Hammon said.

While on the team, Hammon said, Kearns had the highest gpa of his teammates and also participated in community service.

“I think RHAM is very fortunate, because we have a lot of very successful students who are able to juggle a lot of responsibilities, and I think Mike took that to another level,” RHAM High School Principal Scott Leslie said this week. “He really was somebody that we could all look up to. ...Myself included.”

Kearns continued both his service and academic efforts when he reached UConn, and was active in Relay for Life.

“He was everything you want in a leader; he led by example,” Hammon remembered.

Kearns commanded a quiet respect from players when he captained the football team.

“When he spoke the kids listened,” Hammon

said. “He wasn’t really the ra-ra guy.”

But on the field, Hammon remembered Kearns as “tenacious.” As a football player, Kearns was moved around, going from offensive guard, to line backer to defensive line.

Once, while playing for RHAM, a television news station did a story about Kearns, Hammon recalled. At the time, a reporter asked the coach if he gave Kearns a break because of his disease, and Hammon said he just laughed.

“Mike would have been offended had I gone easy on him,” Hammon said this week.

Kearns didn’t let his leukemia interfere with his performance on the field.

“If you didn’t know about it, you would never have suspected anything,” Hammon said.

As a friend, Adams said he could recognize when Kearns was struggling with the disease, but “as far as when he was on the field, it was hard to notice that it affected him.”

“I always thought that was very admirable,” Adams said.

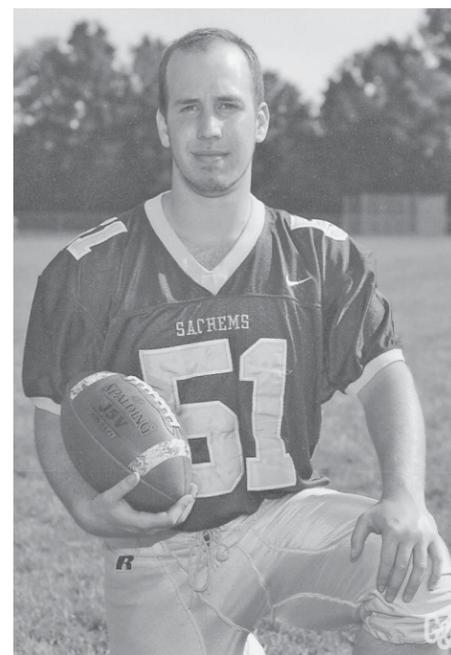
Had he been in Kearns’ shoes, Adams admitted he might not have maintained such an outlook as his friend did.

“Maybe it was his personality from the beginning, being optimistic like that,” Adams speculated. Kearns’ had the perpetual attitude of “Why not make the best of it,” he remembered.

“He always had the best way to look at things.”

Beside football, Kearns was an avid surfer and snowboarder and was also a member of DECA and the honor society.

He leaves behind his mother and father, Susan and Tim; his brother, Joseph; his grandparents, Dorothy Tattenbaum and Judith and David Kearns; as well as several aunts, uncles and



Marlborough resident and 2009 RHAM High School graduate Mike Kearns, 20, passed away last month. During his senior year he captained the football team and is shown wearing his Sachus jersey.

cousins.

“He is survived by the people who watched and listened to him,” friend Chris Wysocki read in another eulogy at Kearns’ funeral. “These people carry on the strength that his body could not allow him to.”

Backyard Accident Claims Marlborough Resident

by Katy Nally

In a freak accident, one of Marlborough’s own was cut down in the prime of life early this month.

Resident Eddie Robitaille suffered a head injury when a piece of pine tree fell on him. He passed away Jan. 3 as a result.

But Robitaille, 65, “was completely in his element” when the incident happened on Jan. 2, his daughter Amy Watts said.

Her father, she explained, was an avid outdoorsman who loved hunting and fishing, and taking down the 50-foot pine in his backyard had been on his to-do list for a while.

Watts said her father, brother and an arborist had worked to take down the “monster” tree, as Robitaille was “meticulous” about his lawn and wanted an even landscape.

She said the arborist was making the final cut and counted two people down below, which he assumed to be Robitaille and Watts’ brother. But, actually, the second person was a neighbor, and Robitaille wasn’t accounted for. As the arborist dropped the last cut – a wedge about the size of half a watermelon – it fell from the 50-foot tree and hit Robitaille square in the head.

“It was really a crazy thing,” Watts said.

Robitaille briefly lost consciousness, but when he came to, he was complaining about his chest, not his head, Watts said. He had also broken his shoulder and fractured two ribs, but Robitaille was still able to stand and walk over to the gurney when medical personnel arrived.

But, as the head injury set in, Robitaille’s brain began to swell while riding in the ambulance to Hartford Hospital, and by the next day, he was declared brain dead.

“We knew he was gone,” Watts said. “They couldn’t have done more.”

But Robitaille’s death also provided an opportunity for three Connecticut residents, Watts said.

On Tuesday, Jan. 4, doctors prepped Robitaille and were able to salvage his two kidneys and liver, and donate them to recipients, Watts said.

“It was the most touching part of the whole thing,” Watts said.

Even after his death, Robitaille was imparting his carpe-diem philosophy on those around him. Watts said her father ended every day by saying “‘That was a really good day,’ and he really meant it.”

“Even if it was just a walk on the Air Line Trail or a mountain bike ride,” Watts continued. “We should all live like that.”

After his retirement from Pratt & Whitney five years ago, Robitaille was able to focus on his hobbies like striper fishing, boating, hunting deer and spending time with his wife of 44 years, Virginia.

Along with his wife and daughter, Robitaille left behind his mother, Patricia Robitaille; his son, Joseph Robitaille; three brothers; three sisters and five grandchildren. His full obituary appeared in last week’s *Rivereast*.

But the younger members of the Robitaille clan probably remember their grandfather as “pepere,” or one of his other French-Canadian-inspired names: Frog, Frenchy, Francois and Babe.

Besides his family, Watts said Robitaille also loved his neighborhood on Caffyn Drive.

“His neighbors were his family too,” Watts



Resident Eddie Robitaille died Jan. 3, one day after he helped to cut down a pine tree in his backyard. He was remembered by his family as an outdoorsman and a loving father and is pictured with his catch of the day from Lake Terramuggus.

said.

Her father could usually be found at home, “with the woodstove going, listening to bluegrass and surrounded by camo,” she remembered.

“Everyday he did something he liked to do,” Watts said. “He was so completely on the top of his game.”

“He was truly happy; there was not one part of his life he was waiting for.”

Bacon Students in Colchester Design New Logo for C3

by Katy Nally

After a persuasive presentation from Bacon Academy students, and the unveiling of a snazzy new logo, the new year could spell change for the Collaborative for Colchester's Children.

A marketing class at Bacon, made up of juniors and seniors, was tasked by Superintendent of Schools Karen Loiselle to come up with a new logo for the volunteer organization. In just a few weeks, Nick Mulé's class had engineered a new brand and a marketing strategy, and impressed a panel of town officials and administrators with their efforts Tuesday.

Currently, the logo for the Collaborative for Colchester's Children is a red wagon that contains books and an apple, with the word "Colchester" printed along the side. However, the organization, which looks to prepare all local children ages zero through 8 for school, is routinely referred to as "C3."

The marketing class capitalized on this, drawing inspiration from other brands such as Gatorade, which simply uses the letter G with a lightning bolt.

On Tuesday, students revealed the new logo, an interconnected C and a 3 in blue and yellow, with "Collaborative for Colchester's Children" circling the two figures.

"I thought simple, and I thought of other

things I had seen," student Thomas Dunbar told the panel. "It doesn't have to be more complicated than that," he said about the C and 3.

The students were also conscious of C3's affiliate, the Colchester Rotary Club, and incorporated its colors of blue and yellow.

"The old logo doesn't actually say C3," student Corey Geisman explained to Board of Education Chairman Ron Goldstein, who had asked how the class arrived at the new graphic.

"We were having problems making that big first impression — having that affect," Geisman said.

Loiselle noted some members of C3 are very attached to the current wagon logo, but added she appreciated "the respectful way you presented the new logo."

Geisman suggested maybe the new year could bring "a new way of going about things" for C3.

Geisman, who was part of the branding team, explained important factors of branding included "really maximizing the public exposure to the logo, and the image." He suggested C3 utilize stickers and flyers that picture the new brand and distribute them at events and programs.

As far as marketing, the students said they would target certain places that parents of young children frequent, such as doctors' offices, daycare centers and fast-food restaurants, and leave flyers there.



Nick Mulé's marketing class at Bacon Academy fabricated a new logo and marketing strategy for the Collaborative for Colchester's Children. The students presented their ideas to a panel of administrators and town officials Tuesday.

Laurie Silva from the collaborative sat on the panel Tuesday and told the students, "I look forward to taking it back to C3 and see what we can do."

Silva said the organization would discuss and possibly vote on the proposed change at a meeting in February. While not speaking on behalf of C3, Silva said the rest of her fellow volunteers would be "crazy" not to go ahead with the new brand.

Other panel members felt similarly.

"I'm really impressed," Loiselle told the class.

And it seemed the students were impressed with what they took away from the real-life

challenge.

"I definitely think a lot of us learned from it," Dunbar told Loiselle.

If C3 does decide to adopt the new logo, the marketing students might eventually see their hard work around town, on flyers and stickers.

"Seeing it out would be so rewarding," Katelyn Hughes told the panel.

"It will be looked at very seriously by the collaborative," Loiselle pledged.

"This was impressive," she told the students. "Young children need to come to school as ready as they can. Your work will help make that happen. Thank you for being so professional."

Portland Woman Arrested After Fight With Ex

by Claire Michalewicz

A Portland woman was arrested last week after fighting with an ex-girlfriend, then driving her to the hospital and turning herself in.

Shelima Dickerson, 19, of 2 Chatham Ct., turned herself in to police last Tuesday after she said she beat up another woman, Sgt. Scott Cunningham said.

Cunningham said Dickerson and the other woman had broken off their relationship in late December. The two stayed in touch because the alleged victim needed Dickerson to help babysit, he said.

When the woman arrived at Dickerson's house last Tuesday to pick up her child, Cunningham said, the former couple returned to the woman's car and began talking about their relationship. Dickerson became angry because the woman had been receiving text messages from a former boyfriend, Cunningham said, and as she questioned her, the woman received another text.

"Things became ugly at that time,"

Cunningham said, explaining that Dickerson started pulling the other woman's hair and bashing her head against the center console of the victim's car.

But Dickerson immediately felt "extremely sorry" for what she had done, Cunningham said, and drove the woman to Middlesex Hospital and made sure she received treatment. The alleged victim was treated for bruising and a possible fracture around her eye, Cunningham said.

Afterward, he said, Dickerson went to the Middletown Police Department to turn herself in, as she was in Middletown at the time. A Portland Police officer then went to Middletown to arrest her.

Portland Police charged Dickerson with second-degree assault, second-degree threatening, third-degree criminal mischief and disorderly conduct. She was released on a \$1,000 promise to appear and is due back in court on Feb. 4.

Former Dealership Burglarized

Between Wednesday, Dec. 22 and Tuesday, Dec. 28, the former Colchester Chevrolet on South Main Street was burglarized, Colchester Police said. Three Benwell Car Lifts, a Rotundi Evaporating System and two air compressors were stolen.

Colchester Police are actively investigating the incident, Sgt. John Thompson said Thursday. Although he could not discuss specifics about the case, Thompson said the perpetrators would need a "truck of some sort" to make off with the two car lifts.

General Motors closed the dealership in June 2009, and Thompson said the building has been vacant for the past nine to 10 months. Several months ago, juveniles were caught "exploring" the building, Thompson said.

Pequot Commercial, the real estate company that represents the owner of the property, said the owner did not wish to comment.

Man Injured After Fall from Vehicle

A 68-year-old man was transported to the Marlborough Clinic Sunday, Jan. 9, after falling from his vehicle while trying to retrieve a newspaper from his mailbox, State Police said.

John Ayers, of Marlborough, stopped his 2004 Toyota 4runner on Stage Harbor Road around 10:30 a.m., attempted to pick up a newspaper and fell from his vehicle. His car continued to roll down the street and came to an "uncontrolled rest" against a tree, police said.

Ayers was listed on the police report as having pain in his right hip, which was caused when he hit the pavement. He was issued a written warning for unsafe movement, police said.

Concerns in Colchester About Chatham Raised at Hearing

by Katy Nally

A few people expressed opposition to joining the Chatham Health District at a public hearing last Thursday.

In December, a Health District Task Force unanimously recommended that Colchester join the regional health district, as opposed to maintaining its own health department or creating an entirely new district. The Chatham Health District covers East Haddam, East Hampton, Haddam, Hebron, Marlborough and Portland.

Selectmen voted Dec. 16 to send the proposal to last Thursday's public hearing. The next step will be a town meeting, scheduled for Thursday, Jan. 20, at 7:15 p.m., where residents can vote for or against the move to join Chatham.

At last Thursday's hearing, several concerns centered on the financial aspect of Colchester's would-be membership, and others revolved around staff.

George Veneziano questioned Chatham's fee schedule for restaurants, which uses different classification than Colchester's current ordi-

nance. Director of Health at Chatham, Thad King, explained the way these fees are calculated differ, but the final fees from Chatham versus Colchester's are "very close."

First Selectman Gregg Schuster added an incentive to join Chatham was not to save the town money, but to "preserve the level of services we have now" as the state looks to possibly cut health-related grants slated for municipalities. Currently, Chatham's per capita cost is \$8, which puts a total town-wide estimate at about \$125,000, or only about \$6,800 less than maintaining the current health department.

(The per capita cost for Chatham is expected to increase to \$8.25 for the next fiscal year, but Schuster said the cost of continuing the health department would also likely increase in the next fiscal year.)

Schuster noted Colchester has already felt the impact of these cuts, as its health department lost one grant-funded position in the latest budget cycle.

Besides coinciding with the state's new di-

rection, according to the task force's presentation, other reasons to join Chatham included acquiring "greater breadth and depth of staffing."

But Chris Reichardt noted the flip side of having that wider coverage. Reichardt questioned what would happen when other towns in the district hold major events and sap staff from the health district.

"I also think that could work against us," Reichardt cautioned, adding the town would lose "having two people here at all times."

However, King assured "we have a main office [in East Hampton] that's always staffed during any regular business hours." Also, King said, the district would plan on opening a satellite office in town, specifically at Town Hall. King added that all current paperwork from Colchester's health department will continue to be stored at Town Hall, even if the town joins Chatham.

Reichardt also brought up the potential cost of reinstating Colchester's own health depart-

ment, if the town joins the health district, but is unsatisfied with its services and wants to relinquish its membership.

Schuster did not have an exact figure, but he reiterated the cost difference of about \$6,800 between joining Chatham and running a town health department.

Dave Dander, chairman of the Health District Task Force, said the cost of the town reinstating its own health department was a "legitimate concern" that his board did look into, but ultimately, "we felt very confident that Chatham would be a good fit," he said.

"We generally feel the best choice for Colchester is to join the Chatham Health District," he continued.

Current Health Director Wendy Mis agreed with Dander.

"Chatham offers very comparable services to what we have here," Mis said. "I think it's a good move."

The town meeting will be Thursday, Jan. 20 at 7:15 p.m., at Town Hall, 127 Norwich Ave.

East Hampton Pound Owner Slams Proposed Move to East Haddam

by Claire Michalewicz

The Town Council voted Tuesday to move ahead with plans to regionalize the town's dog pound with East Haddam's, but the owner of the current facility says the town hasn't thought the move through.

Council member Chris Goff explained that he had spoken with East Haddam First Selectman Mark Walters, and said that renting part of their facility would cost about \$6,000 annually.

The current animal control budget is around \$63,000, Goff said, most of which goes toward paying the three part-time animal control officers. Renting the current facility on Wopowog Road costs between \$11,000 and \$12,000 a year, so the town would see a savings between \$5,000 and \$6,000, he said.

But at the end of the meeting, Don Hazard, who owns the dog pound, said his facility is substantially larger than East Haddam's, capable of holding 12 dogs, with more room for future expansion. East Haddam's can only hold about nine, he said.

"Well, do what you got to do," Hazard said. He said the town has rented the facility for 37 years, and during that time, almost all the animals found homes.

"All I'm hearing around town is I'm running a dump," he said. But the maintenance of the facility was the police department's responsibility, not his, he said. Hazard said he knows the building is unsightly, but he's waiting for the town to clean it up. Moving to a smaller

facility six miles away for a savings of a few thousand dollars, he said, might not be worth it.

"Just think about it before you make the decision," Hazard said. "Just do it for the right reasons."

Police Chief Matthew Reimondo said the pound's maintenance began to suffer about 12 years ago, when one full-time animal control officer was replaced by three part-time ones.

Reimondo said the animal control officers could work with any proposal the town gave them, whether it was to repair the current facility or to regionalize with East Haddam.

"This is a small step but it's a savings of money by regionalization," council Vice Chairman John Tuttle said. Chairwoman Melissa Engel agreed, and said the Board of Finance might look at cutting animal control staff after the two pounds had merged.

Engel said Goff had "done his homework on this," and made a recommendation. She pointed out that the council would vote again after interim Town Manager Bob Drewry drafted a lease agreement with Walters.

* * *

Also at the meeting, the council continued its discussion of a possible noise ordinance, a major discussion in town for years.

Sue Weintraub explained that Hartford has an ordinance that covers any noise that can be heard from 100 feet away, which means the city's police officers don't have to be trained in

using a decibel meter. East Hampton could consider using a longer distance, she said.

"The 100 feet works for me," Reimondo said. "We'd be issuing a lot of tickets and making everybody upset, but it works." Reimondo explained that the police could try other options, such as ticketing the bands at Angelico's for creating a public disturbance.

"I think what we need is a compromise with the business owners," he added.

Tuttle said that no matter what kind of noise ordinance the town enacted, it would be "spot legislation" targeted at Angelico's Lakehouse. But, he said, residents had been complaining about the restaurant for years.

"This is gonna be spot legislation at its best," Engel agreed.

Council members directed Weintraub and Thom Cordeiro to do more research on an ordinance, and return to the issue at another meeting.

* * *

The council also heard a presentation from Ron Gaudet from White Oak Development, about the possibility of erecting solar panels on the steep hill behind the Water Pollution Control Authority on Gildersleeve Drive.

White Oak would own the panels, Gaudet said, and lease them to the town for \$1 a year. The town would agree to buy the power the panels produced. Gaudet said the solar array would provide about one quarter of the power needed at the WPCA, but the town would see

savings in their utility bills.

"The biggest purpose for doing this is to do something for the environment," Gaudet said, explaining that it could set an example for local residents.

The project would cost about \$1.8 million, he said, but there would be no expense to the town. White Oak would put up \$1 million, and the rest of the funding would come from state and federal grants, although Gaudet urged the town to move quickly before the grant money is claimed by other towns.

The council agreed to set a public information session with Gaudet before their regular meeting on Feb. 22.

* * *

The council also voted unanimously to appoint Republican Maria Peplau to the Board of Finance. That position has been vacant since Judith Isele resigned in October.

The Democratic Town Committee's nominee, David May, had withdrawn himself from consideration, Engel explained.

Weintraub said Peplau was an appropriate choice, since she had been the highest vote-getter of those that didn't get elected in the 2009 municipal election.

The next Town Council meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, Jan. 25, at 6:30 p.m., at Town Hall, 20 East High St. A public hearing about adding two alternates to the Commission on Aging will be held at 6:15 p.m.

Car Strikes Mailbox, Tree on Wall Street in Hebron

by Lindsay Fetzner

A Hebron resident was sent to the hospital last Monday, Jan. 3, after he and his passenger struck both a mailbox and a tree on Wall Street, State Police said.

At approximately 3:11 p.m., David Stamand, 21, of Hebron, was driving southbound on Route 316, roughly five-tenths of a mile north of Loveland Road. Stamand, who was traveling with Jordan Lee Hearn, 20, of Andover, skid and went off the right side of Route 316, and into the front yard of 405 Route 316. The car then struck a mailbox, but continued to skid across the left side of the

road. The car then hit a tree head-on in the front yard of 398 Rt. 316, police said.

The 2000 Jetta Volkswagen that Stamand was driving had heavy front-end damage, police said.

Stamand sustained minor cuts and was transported by the Hebron Volunteer Fire Department to the Marlborough Clinic. Police said Hearn had a cut on his face and complained of pain in his left knee, but was not transported due to Hearn refusing medical treatment.

East Hampton Bus Drivers Say Disciplinary Guidelines Needed

by Claire Michalewicz

East Hampton's school bus drivers say they lack a set of clear guidelines for handling disciplinary problems on their buses, and that the superintendent's office has been mishandling their concerns.

Lori Weech, a driver for Nichols Bus Service, addressed the Board of Education at their Monday meeting on behalf of the town's nearly 30 drivers. Weech, who's been driving a bus for 10 years, said she and other bus drivers had seen increased behavioral problems from students on their buses, but they were having a hard time getting school administrators to listen.

"Due to the lack of support that the drivers receive from the superintendent's office, our next step was to come before the BOE," Weech said.

"The lack of respect for the drivers from the superintendent's office and Memorial School especially is insulting and degrading," she said. Weech said students have insulted, sworn at, and thrown things at bus drivers, and parents have come to the bus to confront them.

Misbehaving students created safety issues, Weech said, since drivers needed to focus on driving rather than on controlling students.

"Our job is to transport students to and from school safely and on time," Weech said. "We are not child psychologists and we are not babysitters."

Weech said she had repeated issues with a

Memorial School student who climbed on seats, crawled in the aisle and hit other students. In December, she said, the student had to be removed from the bus by three school staff members while the other children on the bus watched.

Before the student was removed, Weech said, the district had instructed her to use positive reinforcement, giving the child a paper cutout of a bus when they behaved well. Weech said this didn't address the problem, and she didn't feel comfortable doing this in front of dozens of other children who usually behaved well.

Weech also said the bus drivers had invited Superintendent of Schools Judith Golden to a meeting to discuss disciplinary issues, but said Golden had refused to attend. When drivers complained to administrators, she said, they were labeled as "uncooperative." Weech pointed out that the bus drivers' contracts gave Golden the authority to prevent them from driving Nichols buses in town.

Golden said she had never been invited to a bus drivers' meeting, and neither had Director of Business Services Karen Asetta, who handles transportation issues. Weech said Asetta had attended a meeting at the beginning of the school year, before the drivers started discussing disciplinary problems.

Disciplinary complaints usually went from bus drivers to the Nichols dispatcher to the school principals, Golden explained. When

complaints came to her office, she said, Asetta handled them.

"My position is not appropriate for me to be intervening," Golden said.

Golden explained that she had planned to meet with Nichols' owners, Charlie and Marie Nichols, last week to discuss the removal of the student from Weech's bus, but their meeting was canceled. She was still waiting to hear from Nichols about rescheduling.

Golden said there are rules for behavior on buses in the handbook each student and their family is issued at the start of each school year. The rules are enforced, she said, and several students, including the one Weech had concerns about, have been permanently removed from buses and transported in vans.

"Every child is different," she said, explaining that administrators suggested different strategies for dealing with confrontational students, depending on the child's behavior and maturity level.

"We follow our procedures and we do what's in the best interest of our children, and the safety of our children," Golden said.

But Weech said she had to contact other town officials to get Golden to listen to her. She explained that she had been "absolutely scared to death" during the December incident on the bus, and she contacted Board of Education member Don Coolican and Town Council member Sue

Weintraub about her concerns.

"The only thing [Golden] seemed to be concerned about was that I went over her head and didn't follow procedure," Weech said. But, she added, she didn't think the child ever would have been removed from the bus if she hadn't contacted Coolican and Weintraub.

After the meeting, fellow bus driver Dawn Planeta echoed Weech's concerns.

"The respect and gratitude is not there," Planeta said. "We do this because we care about our kids."

"This is not to point fingers at any one person," Weech said. "The goal is to put in place a set of clear guidelines."

* * *

Also at the meeting, the Board of Education voted to adopt a set of goals for the district, which they developed in a series of workshops this fall. The three main objectives are to maintain high expectations for students and monitor student progress, to engage each student with the curriculum, and to improve technology and facilities throughout the district. Golden said the goals would be posted to the board's website.

Golden announced she would present her proposed budget for the 2011-12 fiscal year at the next Board of Education meeting, scheduled for Monday, Jan. 24, at 7 p.m. at the Middle School library, 19 Childs Rd.

Hebron Education Board Begins Budget Deliberations

by Lindsay Fetzner

Last Thursday, at the first of four budget-focused meetings of the Board of Education for this month, the areas of special education, curriculum and technology, as well as maintenance, were spotlighted.

Superintendent of Schools Ellie Cruz proposed her recommended budget last month, at a 1.42 percent increase over last year's budget. The proposed budget sits at \$11.88 million, an increase of \$166,240 over the 2010-11 budget of \$11.716 million budget.

Director of Curriculum and Technology Vonda Tencza presented an overview of anything new in the current budget, anything that has significantly changed from the current budget and potential implications of any reductions from the superintendent's recommended \$11.88 million budget, which was presented last month.

Tencza drew attention to the old, obsolete student information system that the district is currently using and discussed its replacement, known as PowerSchool, which is included in the proposed budget.

Tencza said PowerSchool is the most widely used student database in the state and offers several "attractive solutions" for the school to upgrade. PowerSchool offers a web-based grade book for teachers, fosters regional collaboration and an increased level of communication,

she said, due to the fact that RHAM also uses the system and will provide for an easy transition for students.

"[PowerSchool] has a very strong user group within Connecticut and states around us," Tencza said, adding that it will allow the district to "grow exponentially in our skills."

Tencza pointed out that there is a slight increase in curriculum development, a decrease in textbooks and a decrease in curriculum supplies. The increase, she said, is due to the state adoption of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS); Hebron's curriculum must be aligned within the 2011-12 timeframe. Due to the alignment, Tencza said she does not anticipate any textbook purchases until she knows that the material in the textbooks is aligned with the CCSS.

"For next year, we are very comfortable keeping that line item lower," she said.

The decreases to curriculum supplies, Tencza said, are down "to a bare minimum." The implications of the decreases, she said, do not allow for "flexibly addressing individual student needs" or for the support of resources that teachers need to continue assessment, instruction and professional development.

Director of Special Education and Pupil Personnel Services Lisa Wheeler, like Tencza, pre-

sented an informational presentation on her specific department, and the implications of the superintendent's proposed budget.

Wheeler began by informing the board that local boards of education are required to provide special education for any "exceptional child," as mandated by the state Board of Education.

Although line items vary from year to year, depending on special education enrollment and needs, Wheeler said there was a large cost savings this year with the new in-house clinical day program, which reduced the number of students requiring a special education placement out of district. The Hebron board approved the program back in June.

Wheeler went over some of the costs associated with special education, including professional services, tuition and transportation. Under purchased services, the largest amount was for occupational therapy, at a cost of just under \$66,000 and the least, at \$2,000, for a school physician.

Special education transportation, Wheeler said, totals approximately \$107,000 for preschool students and elementary students who either require special transportation or who are out-placed. Finally, tuition for special education placements totals roughly \$30,000 for stu-

dents placed in a special education facility, for children placed by the Department of Children and Families and for magnet school students who require special education, Wheeler said.

The final area the board reviewed was maintenance. Cruz pointed out that the department has one maintenance foreman and just over seven custodian personnel (two head custodians and 5.2 FTE night custodians).

Out of a total of \$918,000 in the budget for maintenance, mandated contracted services were the largest percentage, at 50.67 percent, for a total of \$465,000. The second largest expenditure came in at \$313,900, at 34.19 percent, for personnel services.

Other portions associated with maintenance are employee benefits at 10.67 percent, or just under \$98,000, and finally, materials and supplies at \$41,000, or 4.47 percent of the budget.

Cruz pointed out two items that were new to the budget from last year, which included asbestos and radon testing, which the district is required to perform.

The next meeting of the Board of Education is scheduled for Jan. 13 at 7 p.m. at Gilead Hill School. A public forum to allow for dialogue between the board and the public on the budget will take place before the regular meeting from 6-7 p.m.

Colchester Police News

1/7: Irena Levasseur, 70, of New Britain was issued a writing warning for making an improper right turn after she crashed her 2008 Honda CRV on Brainard Road, Colchester Police said. She had a "possible injury" and was transported via Colchester Hayward Volunteer Fire Department to the Marlborough Clinic for an evaluation, police said.

1/7: A 17-year-old male was charged with possession of drug paraphernalia, possession of prescription drugs, possession of heroin and possession of tobacco by a minor in a public

place, Colchester Police said.

1/8: Deborah French, 42, of 255 Norwich Ave., was charged with failure to appear, Colchester Police said.

1/9: Zachary Lincoln, 18, of 116 Oconnell Rd., turned himself in for sixth-degree larceny, Colchester Police said.

1/10: Michael Damiata, 52, of 488 Parum Rd., was charged with disorderly conduct, third-degree assault and third-degree strangulation, State Police said.

Hebron Police News

1/4: Colin Chamberlain, 25, of 65 Hawks Landing, Amston, was charged with making an improper turn and DUI, State Police said.

Marlborough Police News

1/2: Peter Polotnianka, 59, of 53 Crescent St., West Hartford, was charged with DUI and speeding, State Police said.

1/6: A youthful offender was charged with conspiracy to commit burglary and fifth-degree larceny from a motor vehicle in connection with car burglaries that occurred in December of 2009 on Jones Hollow Road, State Police said.

East Hampton Police News

12/31: Bryan P. Kneeland, 27, of 6 Austin Dr., Marlborough, was arrested for failure to drive right and evading responsibility, East Hampton Police said.

12/31: Robert Pellerin, 49, of 9 Upper Walnut Hill, East Lyme, was arrested for DUI and failure to drive right, police said.

Portland Police News

1/4: Shelima Dickerson, 19, of 2 Chatham Ct., was charged with second-degree assault, second-degree threatening, disorderly conduct and third-degree criminal mischief, Portland Police said.

1/8: Jason Hyde, 31, of 8 Minnetonka Tr., East Hampton, was charged with DUI, evading responsibility and traveling too fast for conditions, police said.

Hebron PZC Approves 32-Lot Subdivision

by Lindsay Fetzner

At its meeting Tuesday night, the Planning and Zoning Commission approved a 32-lot subdivision that had sparked serious opposition from residents in the Amston Lake area over the past few months.

The application was approved by a 4-0 vote (PZC member Terry Piggott abstained); however, 16 conditions were applied to the application from the commission.

The subdivision is proposed for a total of 123.8 acres, with frontage on the west side of Hillcrest Drive, the south side of Lake Road and the east side of Route 85 (Church Street). The 32 units are all single-family homes. According to Town Planner Mike O'Leary, three lots have access onto Church Street and the other 29 lots will be on the new subdivision streets.

Most of the conditions, O'Leary said, are "standard conditions of approval" for all subdivisions with new roadways. These include requirements for performance bonding, the payment of engineering inspection fees as per town ordinance, inspection requirements and the requirement for the submission of deeds and easements shown on the plan, in addition to others, O'Leary explained Wednesday.

Other conditions were more specific to this particular development, O'Leary said, and included improvements to the open space, the requirement to make and install some historical signs within the open space and to allow the extension of a cul-de-sac into the adjacent property.

"The PZC went methodically through their subdivision and zoning regulations for this type of development and concluded that the regulations were met," O'Leary said. "There was an extensive planning process that is required with all Open Space Subdivisions that was followed."

The result, O'Leary said, was "a low-density subdivision with a large amount of open space."

"This is a process that the Nature Conservancy is using as an example of a good comprehensive planning process for these types of developments," he said.

Before the commission made its decision Tuesday night, Chairman Lewis Hinman said this particular application was both lengthy and complex, and had been in the discussion stages for a number of years. He added that site walks had been completed in the area of the proposed subdivision and that the commission had received professional input and opinions from various expert agencies including two traffic experts and the town engineering staff.

"All of this is to assist Planning and Zoning in determining whether or not the application meets the Hebron regulations," he said, adding that there was also "considerable input from the public."

Hinman said the proposal came before the PZC for review a couple of months ago. The public hearing on the application, from James Grossman of Westport, was opened Nov. 9; residents packed the Town Office Building that night and urged the PZC not to approve the application. Residents brought up traffic and safety concerns, pointing out that Hillcrest Drive, already a narrow road, could not handle the additional traffic from the proposed subdivision.

Back on Sept. 16, the Conservation Commission approved Grossman's application. Following the approval, nine residents from the Amston Lake area filed a lawsuit in Rockville Superior Court, appealing the decision. However, according to the state judicial website, the complaint dated Oct. 12 was dismissed on Dec. 13. One of the plaintiffs, Luana Stanulonis, of Hillcrest Drive, said the reason for the judgment last month was a "technicality in how the papers were handled." Stanulonis explained that there are several deadlines for each stage of the appeal, and one of the deadlines was missed.

The PZC public hearing was continued until Dec. 14, where residents again spoke against the application, citing traffic and safety concerns if the developer were allowed to build the subdivision. The hearing lasted just over two hours, and residents packed the Town Office building, allowing for standing room only.

Margaret Cone, of Hillcrest Drive, said the traffic in the area is not just those people who live on Hillcrest, but also people from Colchester, who use the road as a shortcut. Cone also said Hillcrest is "a very dangerous road" and the addition of any more traffic would make it more dangerous.

Lake Road resident Matthias Nolte also expressed concerns about Hillcrest Drive being the access road to the proposed development. He said the street is "very narrow" and "unfit to handle additional traffic."

Several other residents from the Amston Lake area echoed similar concerns of the effects that the subdivision would have on the area. Paula Verrier, of Hillcrest Drive, suggested that the PZC look into the "professional opinions" of town safety personnel, in regards to roughly 290 additional cars that would result from the subdivision.

The public hearing was closed at the end of the Dec. 14 meeting, and the PZC decided to postpone any decision until this past Tuesday. Unlike the previous meetings, there were roughly less than 10 residents who came to hear the commission's decision, although a major snowstorm did rip through the state later that evening and could have played a role.

When reached Wednesday, Hillcrest Drive resident Melissa Swanson, who was in attendance at the meeting Tuesday, said she was not pleased with the PZC's decision.

"I am disappointed that the approval of the subdivision outweighed the impact of the current neighborhood in relation to the points that I've brought up in the past - increased traffic,

speeding, problems with water and the fact that they've now created a traffic nuisance," Swanson said. "I'm very disappointed because I really do think it's going to impact the current community and the way we live our lives around the lake."

She continued, "We brought our ammunition and they countered."

Wendy Steiner, a resident of Hillcrest Drive, said her family moved to the Amston Lake district about five and a half years ago because of its small community feel - the ability to walk in the neighborhoods and the familiarity of faces, among other aspects.

"We liked that about the community," she said. "It is a very tight community with very friendly people. Then we heard about the subdivision going in behind us. We were kind of disappointed."

Steiner said there are a lot of small children in the neighborhood and that there is already a traffic problem.

"It's not going to be the same," she said. "There is going to be a lot more traffic. It's really going to make a big difference."

Hillcrest Drive resident Andrew Stanulonis agreed, and used an analogy to describe the situation. He said with the congestion in the Amston Lake area, "it's almost like a bee's nest." Stanulonis said when you come up on a bee's nest, if you walk diligently and don't bother it, "usually everything is fine." However, if you "poke it with a big stick, then catastrophe can happen." He added that the PZC had to power to tell the developer to move the entrance from Hillcrest Drive to Route 85 for the safety of the residents.

"We've told them how dangerous it can be, or is," he said. "We told them over and over again and we weren't kidding."

The next scheduled meeting of the PZC is on Jan. 25 at 7 p.m. in the Town Office Building.

Deteriorating Water Tower Elicits Concern in East Hampton

by Claire Michalewicz

The tank is leaning and the planks are rotting, but town officials are having a hard time tearing down the disused water tower on Summit Street.

The tank on top of the tower, on the property of the industrial building at 1 Watrous St., leans noticeably to the east, up the slope of the street.

Building Planning and Zoning Administrator Jim Carey said that while the tower isn't in danger of falling down, the town has been looking for ways to remove it before it causes any problems.

"We've been trying to explore every option to bring it down," Carey said. "We've been really banging our heads trying to get something done."

Interim Town Manager Bob Drewry agreed, explaining that the town doesn't currently have the funds to remove the tower.

An East Hampton resident who did not wish to be named said he has concerns that the tower could pose a safety hazard. He pointed out that the metal wires holding the tank in place have been migrating toward the top of the tower, and he said he was concerned the tank could topple if the wires slipped off. He said he saw the tank slowly slide across the platform, getting closer and closer to the edge.

In addition, he said, planks and a piece of a ladder had fallen in recent months and become tangled in the tower's frame. The planks that support the tower itself appear to be rotting, he added.

The resident said he's concerned the tower could fall onto a neighboring building, or onto pedestrians or cars, on Summit Street. Beneath the tank, at the corner of Summit Street and Starr Place, is a school bus stop where children and their parents wait each morning.

The resident said he has been concerned about the tower for years, but just in the past six to nine months, he's noticed the tank starting to list more and more to one side. He said

that while he doesn't have the engineering skills to measure how much the tower is leaning, the angle visibly increases with each storm.

Carey said the state offers emergency funding that could be used to tear down a structure that presented an immediate safety hazard, but since the tower had survived high wind gusts in recent snowstorms, this situation isn't eligible.

If the tower does cause any damage, Carey said, the owner, James Downey, would be responsible.

Downey said this week that he knows the town wants the tower removed, but said he can't afford to do it.

"They can afford to take it down," he said. "They have the power to tax."

But Carey said tearing the tower down would cost about \$150,000. If the town owned the property, he said, demolition would be cheaper, since they could knock the tower down onto the Watrous Street building.

A similar water tower on Walnut Avenue was torn down in 2008, using funds from the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development. The town owned that tower, having acquired it after the manufacturer shut down.

The concerned resident who asked to remain anonymous said he spoke to former Town Council member Bill Devine about the tower several times, and Devine passed the issue on to the rest of the council.

"It's definitely a safety hazard," Devine said. He said something needed to be done to remove it, but the town was having trouble obtaining funds to tear it down.

Devine said the issue had come up at Town Council meetings in recent years, but town officials had few options because Downey would not cooperate with them.

"You can't just go in and tear down somebody's property," Devine said.

The town filed for an injunction against Downey in 2008, accusing Downey of zoning



A dilapidated water tower, located at the corner of Summit and Watrous streets, has begun to tilt in recent months, drawing concern from town officials who want the structure torn down.

violations for operating an illegal business in the building adjacent to the water tower. A judge ruled in the town's favor in 2009, and Carey said Downey owes the town \$100 a day since the date of the violation. But, he said, Downey is in financial trouble and the town is unlikely to see any of the money. Another East Hampton property Downey owned foreclosed last month, Carey said.

In a separate case, Carey said, Downey was arrested in another town concerning violations at another property he owns, but a judge threw out the case, ruling that Downey "was not of sound mind."

Town Council Chairwoman Melissa Engel said she agreed the tower was a problem, but

said the town simply didn't have the money or the legal right to do anything.

"We don't own the damn thing," Engel said.

Downey said he expected the town would eventually own the property, since he was having financial difficulties.

Downey said the town erected the tower in the 1920s to provide fire protection for industrial buildings in the area. He said the only reason it was on the Watrous Street property was because it was centrally located. Since the town erected the tower, it should be responsible to remove it, he said.

"Now that it doesn't serve them anymore, they've gotta pay the price," he said. "I don't really know what I can do about it."

Burbank Seeking Another Term as Andover First Selectman

by Lindsay Fetzner

Monday night at the Old Firehouse, the Republican Town Committee sent forth its ticket for the municipal elections in May, and the list included several incumbents.

Heading the slate is First Selectman Bob Burbank, who is seeking re-election to a position he's held since 2006, following the resignation of Charlene Barnett. This would be Burbank's second full term in office, as he started in June of that year.

Burbank said that since he took office, his goal has been to work with his administration to keep taxes low.

"Basically, I've done that in a number of ways," Burbank said. "I've certainly increased the controls in the town and I've gone after cost-saving measures on many, many avenues in terms of getting better prices."

He drew attention to his efforts in going after grants to assist the town in areas of need, or assistance in upgrading town buildings as well as renegotiating contracts and building the town's fund balance to a favorable place for credit rating.

"These are all things that have overall saved the town money," he said.

The changes he has made in the town since he came on board, Burbank said, are "pretty self explanatory."

In a letter to the editor that appeared in last week's *RiverEast*, Burbank acknowledged the state of the town when he was selected to serve.

"When I was selected by the Board of Selectmen to fill a vacancy in the Office of First Selectman the town was in fiscal chaos," he wrote, referring to Barnett's term, which ended when she resigned amid allegations of financial misappropriation. "It was not an easy time

to come into office. Many months were needed to smooth existing problems."

He continued, "In the past four and a half years, there has been a turnaround in our government," adding that it "now works efficiently."

Burbank concluded his letter by writing, "I'd like to thank residents for their support during my term and I look forward to the opportunity to seek re-election to this post."

For the Board of Selectmen, Cathy Desrosiers, currently the chair of the Board of Finance, is seeking a seat. And Jay Linddy is seeking re-election for the selectman seat he has had for about the last 17 years.

Carol Lee is seeking to reclaim her role as town clerk, a position she secured in July 2003. Before that, she had been the assistant town clerk since 1998.

Linda Fish and David Gostanian are both seeking to reclaim their seats on the Board of Finance, and Ted Sakelarakis is looking to fill the third opening. While he has never been a member of the Board of Finance, Sakelarakis previously served on the Board of Education from 1996-2007, as well as the Inland Wetlands Commission a number of years ago.

"I think as far as the town of Andover goes, and really the state and the nation, the biggest thing is finance," Sakelarakis said. "Paying bills – that's where my interest lies now. As far as making sure that we're spending taxpayer money wisely, it's a huge interest of mine just to make sure that every tax dollar is spent wisely."

On the Planning and Zoning Commission, Sakelarakis' daughter, Kara Sakelarakis, Mike Palazzi and Linddy are looking to fill the open seats. Kara Sakelarakis, a member of the Republican Town Committee, was also hired last

month as the town's social services director. Aside from the RTC, this is the first commission that she is looking to serve on.

"I feel like I have the formal training, having a degree in public administration," Kara Sakelarakis said. "I want to use that formal training and turn it into practical experience."

The one resident nominated for an alternate on the Planning and Zoning Commission is David Knowlton. Presently, he is serving a term on CIP.

Danny Holtsclaw and Ken Lee are each seeking re-election to the RHAM Board of Education. If re-elected, this would mark Lee's eighth year on the board, and Holtsclaw's fifth. (Holtsclaw has also served on the local Board of Education for the past six years.)

On the local Board of Education, Linddy, currently the chair, is seeking to stay in his post in addition to Sharyn Keeney. Linddy said he has been on the board for about 20 years, and of those, he has been chair for roughly 15.

Evelyn Russell, Holtsclaw and Mary Duval are all looking to be on the Zoning Board of Appeals. Currently, Russell is serving a four-year term and is the chair of the board. In terms of alternates, Ylo Anson is seeking re-election and Alicia Lee, currently a member of the Board of Finance, is looking to come on board. (Lee will continue to serve on the Board of Finance.)

Georgette Conrad is looking to be re-elected to the Board of Assessment Appeals, alongside Bob Russell, who does not currently serve on the board. Conrad came on board in early 2008 to fill a vacancy.

Two Republicans are looking to serve on the Fire Commission, in addition to one Democrat, who is being cross-endorsed by the RTC.



Bob Burbank

Wallace Barton is seeking re-election, in addition to Curtis Dowling. Democrat John Colli was the third nomination.

Overall, RTC member Conrad said there wasn't a big controversy over any of the candidates on Monday evening. Former RTC Chairwoman Leanne Hutchinson, who stepped down last month, agreed and said few residents showed up aside from those on the committee. Burbank estimated that 18 people were attendance and said the caucus went "very well."

Town elections will be held Monday, May 2.

Obituaries

East Hampton

Robert Elton Fales

Robert Elton Fales, 82, formerly of East Hampton, died Thursday, Jan. 6.

Robert was born in Wilton, ME, on Aug. 25, 1928. He was the second of five children to Charles and Ethel Fales. He lived in Dryden, ME, until the age of 12, at which time his family moved to Fairfield, ME, in the interest of better work opportunities for Charles. Robert took an interest in raising chickens, which followed through to presenting prize winning roosters at county fairs later in life. He would later tell his own children of his beloved Wilton and Fairfield memories including humorous stories of boys getting into mischief. Robert was voted president of his senior class at Lawrence High School in Fairfield and graduated in 1946.

Shortly after graduating, at the age of 17, Robert enlisted in the Marine Corps during World War II where he promptly found himself in boot camp on Parris Island, SC. He quickly grew accustomed to this new life and excelled in the skills of marksmanship and discipline, taking full advantage of the mental and physical training. Finishing his tour of duty, Robert took advantage of the G.I. Bill and went to the University of Maine in Brunswick, but only to answer the call of duty again and enlist in the Army during the Korean War.

Stationed in eastern Europe as an O.S.S agent (predecessor to the C.I.A.), he was quickly recognized for his potential and was offered a position in the C.I.A. After careful consideration, he made the choice to finish his college studies where he graduated from the University of Maine with a B.A. in political science in 1955. While at UMO, Robert met Patricia Parsons; little did he know this was the start of a long life together.

The two were married at St. Patrick's Church in Newcastle, ME, on June 4, 1955. He and Patricia started their careers in Connecticut with Robert hired on as a plant engineer with Southern New England Telephone, where he eventually became a district manager of areas in central and southern Connecticut. They settled down in East Hampton in a beautiful old 1850 Greek Revival farmhouse. The four sons that followed enjoyed growing up on a hilltop surrounded by stone walls, fields, streams and deep woods.

Life in East Hampton was busy. Robert pursued multiple interests in the community. He was scoutmaster of Boy Scout Troop 8 for many years and chair for the Boy Scouts of America, where he made a strong, positive influence on many young men in the community. He was also president of the Chatham Historical Society and treasurer of the Haddam Neck Fair, taking special pride in his award-winning White Rock Roosters.

Bob was also active in town government as a member of the Republican Town Committee for many years, serving in at least one elected position. He was on the conservation and wetlands commissions and was instrumental in building the Wopowog Conservation Showcase. He was also a member of the Lions Club, where he contributed many weekends to the organization.

Bob was an avid sportsman who enjoyed boating, hunting, and fishing with his family and friends. He was also a gifted carpenter, woodworker and boat builder, leaving many beautiful and lasting projects to remember him by. His vegetable garden beat all, providing both rewarding work and produce for the family.

Upon retirement, Bob and Patsy returned to Maine and built a home on the Damariscotta River. He continued to expand his skills by learning to restore and build canoes, turn wooden bowls and add his carpentry handiness to projects around the property. Anyone who knew Bob will attest to his hand craftsmanship. There are numerous examples of his woodworking and furniture in the households of family and friends.

Bob lost his courageous battle with dementia on the morning of Jan. 6. He was 82 years old. Robert is survived by his loving wife Patsy of 55 years and four sons and their families. Dr. Robert E. Fales, his wife Valerie and their two daughters Zoe and Libby of Old Lyme; James P. Fales, his wife Carmela and their dog Sammy of Nobleboro, ME; Patrick A. Fales, his wife Ellen and their four children Spencer Daly, Grace, Gabrielle and Vivienne of East Hampton; and Neil E. Fales, his wife Renee and their daughters Heidi and Caroline of West Chesterfield, NH.

Robert will be fondly remembered by all that he touched. Burial services are to be announced.

East Hampton

Rose Eileen Valli

Rose Eileen (Gerken) Valli, 87, of East Hampton, passed away Sunday, Jan. 9, at Middlesex Hospital Hospice. Born Dec. 19, 1923, in Brooklyn, NY, she was the daughter of the late Fred and Catherine (Dettling) Gerken. She was the beloved wife of the late Paul W. Grund Sr. of Fort White, FL. They were married Jan. 9, 1999. She and Paul were raised in Cohecton Center, NY, and attended a one-room schoolhouse. Reconnecting at a reunion, they enjoyed their last years together. Rose was predeceased by her loving husband of 33 and a half years, Arthur E. Valli, in 1993.



She worked as a waitress at the Maple Hill Restaurant in West Hartford upon arriving in Connecticut during the 1940s. She was employed at Royal Typewriter in Hartford and Colts Industries in West Hartford, and retired from Travelers Insurance Co. as a computer analyst in 1989. Rose was very active in her church communities in both East Hampton and Fort White. Her hobbies included gardening, knitting, and reading. There are many happy recipients of her famous Christmas stockings.

She is survived by her son, Frank H. Stanavage and his wife Gloria of San Francisco, CA; her loving daughter, June E. Valli and her life partner Gary M. Sanborn of East Hampton; her nephew, Douglas Cornell and his wife Donna of Windsor Locks; three grandchildren and two great-grandchildren; many loving friends and extended family members.

She was predeceased by her sister, Marie A. Kucia, and her two children, Joseph and Patricia Stanavage.

Her family wishes to thank her caregivers at both Middlesex Hospital Hospice and Cobalt Lodge.

The funeral procession will leave the Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton, Monday, Jan. 17, at 10:30 a.m., followed by the funeral liturgy at 11 a.m. in St. Patrick Church. Burial will follow in St. Patrick Cemetery. Friends may call at the Spencer Funeral Home Sunday, Jan. 16, from 6-8 p.m.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to Middlesex Hospital Hospice, 28 Crescent St., Middletown, CT 06457, or to St. Patrick Church, 47 West High St., East Hampton, CT 06424.

To leave online condolences, visit spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

Marlborough

Arthur S. Parent

Arthur S. Parent, 92, of Marlborough and formerly of Granby, beloved husband of Lorraine, passed away Wednesday, Dec. 22, at the Marlborough Health Care Center where he had been residing. Born in VanBuren, ME, on June 7, 1918, he was a son of the late Simeon and Mina (Dubey) Parent.

He was a proud veteran of the Army Air Force, having served during WWII where he received the American Campaign Medal and the Victory Medal. In later years, he became a member of the American Veterans Association. On Nov. 11, 1950, Arthur married the former Lorraine Latendre in East Hartford. He retired several years ago after having worked as a foreman for Capewell Mfg. in Hartford. He was a communicant at St. Thomas Church in West Hartford.

He will be sadly missed but remembered always by his family, his wife of 60 years, Lorraine; four children, Lynette Parent and Lorelee Morneau and her husband, Jim, all of East Hartford and Arthur and Michael Parent; a sister, Lucille Bricault; five grandchildren, Marceline, Jessica, Sabrina, Sydney and Neci; several great-grandchildren; and numerous extended family and friends.

He was predeceased by an infant daughter, Marceline Parent; a grandson, Airk Moreau; a great-granddaughter, Ashley Rosa; and three brothers, Clifford, Philip and Gerald.

Services will be held Monday, Jan. 17, beginning at 10 a.m. with visitation, followed by a memorial service at 11 a.m., then military honors at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. Burial will be Tuesday, Jan. 18, at 10 a.m. in the State Veterans Cemetery, Middletown.

Donations in his memory may be made to benefit his granddaughters' education, c/o Webster Bank, NA 1491 Silver Lane, East Hartford, CT 06118.

For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

Portland

Rose Daniels

Rose (Conti) Daniels, 86, of Portland, passed away Thursday, Jan. 6, at Portland Care and Rehab, surrounded by her family. She was a loving wife, mother, grandmother, sister, aunt and great aunt. She was born Nov. 15, 1924 in Middletown, the daughter of Michele Conti and Josephine (Campisi) Conti of Middletown.

Rose worked for the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company as a secretary in Middletown for the majority of her career. After she retired, she went back to work at Daniels Oil Co. with her husband and sons until the age of 78.

She is survived by her husband of 63 years, Sebastian D. Daniels and her sister Mary DiStefano of Middletown. She has three sons, Barry P. of Westbrook, Robert P. and David J., both of Portland, as well as two daughters-in-law, Teresa and Carolyn Daniels. She also leaves behind her five granddaughters, Nicolette Daniels Andolfo and husband Matthew, Lauren, Cara, Morgan and Alisa Daniels and one grandson John Daniels. She has many nieces and nephews.

Rose grew up in the north end of Middletown. She attended Middletown High School, graduating in 1942 as a member of the National Honor Society. She was voted Best Sport Athlete, participating in basketball, volleyball and tennis. Rose loved to cook and spend time at the family beach house in Westbrook. She will be missed by all those who knew and loved her. She truly was a remarkable lady.

Funeral services were Tuesday, Jan. 11, at D'Angelo Funeral Home, followed by a Catholic Mass at Saint Mary Church in Portland and a burial at Saint Sebastian Cemetery in Middletown. Friends called at the D'Angelo Funeral Home, 22 South Main St., Middletown, Monday, Jan. 10.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to Saint Mary Church in Portland or Mercy High School in Middletown where her granddaughters attended.

The Daniels family would like to thank all the staff at Portland Care and Rehab for their exceptional kindness.

East Hampton

Peter G. Standley

Peter G. Standley, 77, of East Hampton, beloved husband of Margaret (Libby) Standley, died Saturday, Jan. 8, at Middlesex Hospital. Born Jan. 31, 1933, in Lewiston, ME, he was the son of the late Richard and Marjorie (Green) Standley.

Peter graduated from Deering High School in Portland, ME. He was a member of SAE while at the University of Maine, where he received his Bachelor of Science in engineering physics degree. While at U of M, he was a member of the Army ROTC program and after graduation served his two years while stationed at Ft Huachuca, AZ. He would later earn both a master's of engineering from R.P.I. and a management master's from USC. Peter retired from Electric Boat after 35 years.

Peter was an Eagle Scout, with over 46 years of registered Scouting participation. He was an honored recipient of the Silver Beaver Award. He spent over 30 years as either Scoutmaster or committee chair, for Troop 57. He was the camping chair for Middlesex district. He was recognized with the District Award of Merit and by a James E. West Fellowship funded by his troop and church in his honor. Peter was a member of the Camp Tadmah Task Force, and Camp Tadmah Campmaster Program for 30 years and was a member of the Council Camp Promotion Committee. Peter was an active member of the Congregational Church of East Hampton for close to 50 years. He was a member of the Board of Deacons, the Board of Stewards and served two years as the chair of the board.

Besides his wife, he is survived by his sons Peter L. Standley of Woburn, MA, Paul G. Standley of Versailles, KY; a daughter, Pamela G. Standley of Spring, TX; a sister, Virginia Standley Rutter of Portland, ME; three grandchildren, Laura, Caleb and Aaron.

He was predeceased by a brother Richard A. Standley Jr.

Funeral services will be held Saturday, Jan. 15, at 11 a.m., in the Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton, with the Rev. Thomas Kennedy officiating. Burial will be private at the convenience of the family in Lakeview Cemetery. Friends may call at the Spencer Funeral Home today, Jan. 14, from 6-8 p.m.

To leave online condolences, visit spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions can be made to support need based summer camp scholarships in the local Boy Scouts of America Council. Send donations marked "In memory of Peter Standley" to Connecticut River Council BSA (attn: Judy Casey), 60 Darlin St., PO Box 280098, East Hartford, CT 06128-0098. Online contributions can be made at ctrivers.org.