

RIVEREAST

# News Bulletin

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

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**Hey Santa...Holiday shoppers attended the Andover Christmas Fair Saturday. The fair featured visits with Santa. Pictured here with the jolly old elf are Trenton, 4, and Brody, 2, Gouchoe. The event was held to benefit the Social Services Fund which assists Andover residents. Anyone wanting to make a contribution to the fund can send a check made out to the Town of Andover, at the Town Office Building, 17 School Rd. Mark the check for the "Social Services Fund."**

## Longtime Resident Honored for Service

by Geeta Schrayter

At an event filled with laughs, warm wishes and reminiscing, Hebron resident John Hibbard was recognized Wednesday for serving the town in a number of capacities for more than 45 years.

A resident of Hebron since 1966, Hibbard has served on the Conservation Commission, the Planning and Zoning Commission, the Boards of Selectmen and Finance, the Open Space Land Acquisition Committee, the Charter Revision Committee, Recreation Commission, Capital Improvement Program Committee and as Town Moderator throughout the years. Additionally, he served as the Executive Director of the Connecticut Forest and Parks Association for 37 years and is currently an Honorary Director.

That service has not gone unnoticed. A number of honored guests were present at Wednesday's event at Gilead Congregational Church to show their appreciation to Hibbard at the town, state and congressional level.

State Representative Pamela Sawyer spoke of her encounters with Hibbard at the legislative office, saying they "went back a little bit," and had a "pretty colorful" past. Sawyer thanked Hibbard for all of his work and said she was very grateful for all he had taught her over the years – particularly when she was just starting out as a "fresh legislator."

Hibbard's wealth of knowledge was referenced periodically throughout the event, as Sawyer mentioned how swamped she was during her first year as a legislator, saying "it was easier to remember 'trees and Hibbard'" for any information she might need. More than once it was stated Hibbard was the Internet before the Internet, and the joke was made that perhaps he

had figured out cloning – he seemed to be everywhere.

"He did an awful lot of work," said Town Manager Bonnie Therrien, who took it upon herself to calculate just how much time Hibbard had given in service.

"I tried to figure out how many hours you've given to us," said Therrien, who took into consideration his various positions, two meetings per month, and the average length of each. "I'm figuring on the conservative side, 2,000-3,000 volunteer hours."

"And I take that times the minimum wage..." she joked, to which Hibbard replied good humoredly, "you can send the check anytime."

And the room erupted in laughter. Appreciation mingled with admiration as those present continuously praised Hibbard for both his work and personality.

"He followed his heart and did what he thought was right," said Sawyer.

He was mentioned as a source of "calm" in the crazy world of politics.

When you're worked up, explained former Hebron selectwoman Karen Strid, "John would just bring it all down. He has such an amazing way of bringing a calmness. Such integrity. So bright."

Strid added Hibbard – a Democrat – never let party politics get in the way.

"He'd be able to talk to both the Republican side as well as the democrats to bring us all together," she said, and called Hibbard "one of the gems."

Donna McCalla, chairwoman of the Republican Town Committee, said Hibbard has been **See Honored Page 2**

## Students Participate in Wreaths Across America

by Joshua Anusewicz

Remember. Honor. Teach.

These are the virtues that are professed by "Wreaths Across America," a program that transports wreaths from Harrington, ME, to Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia each year during the holiday season. In the past two weeks, students from Valley View School in Portland learned the importance of these words to prepare for over 5,000 wreaths that were brought to their school on Tuesday.

Their appreciation towards veterans was evident as you walked into the school, as the walls throughout the main corridor were adorned with handmade wreaths, flags and a "Hall of Heroes" filled with tributes to the students' heroes – friends, family and neighbors that have served our country.

At the end of the corridor, in the school's gymnasium, the students gathered with teachers, veterans and residents to learn more about

the importance of the wreaths. Clad in red, white and blue, the students listened patiently as two of the program's organizers, kindergarten teachers Kathy Burke and Laurie DiMauro, explained just what the wreaths meant.

"A wreath has no beginning and no end," said DiMauro. "It is a symbol of respect, honor, victory and eternal life."

DiMauro explained that starting last Sunday, thousands of wreaths began their 700-mile trek from Maine to Virginia, stopping at schools, memorials and community centers in what is considered the world's longest veterans parade.

While some of the wreaths are eventually laid at the graves of veterans at Arlington National Cemetery, over 200,000 wreaths are sent throughout the country and are laid at various graves and memorials, including Pearl Harbor and Ground Zero.

"The wreaths are a way for us to say 'thank

you,'" said DiMauro.

Burke, a Marine veteran herself, wearing her "dress blues," took the opportunity to introduce the students to some of the veterans in Portland that were in attendance. One of those veterans, Rodney Spooner, who served with the Army in Vietnam, was included in the "Hall of Heroes" by his granddaughter Jamie, a Valley View student.

When asked by Burke why she chose her grandfather, Jamie said, "My grandfather is my hero because he served his country."

Other veterans that shared their stories of service were James Stotler, a social studies teacher and soccer coach at Portland High School who served in Iraq with the Navy, and Reginald Farrington and Bill Willinsky, members of the Portland Veteran Affairs Commission, who all thanked the students and teachers of Valley View for holding the moving event, particularly dur-

ing the holiday season, when service men and women past and present should be remembered.

"During the holidays, we need to keep our men and women that are still over there in our prayers," said Stotler.

As the students waited for the arrival of the wreaths, the Portland High School band led the room with patriotic tunes, like "You're a Grand Ol' Flag," while students waved small flags that had been handed out to them. Valley View teachers also led the students in singing "My Country 'Tis of Thee," which the children belted out enthusiastically.

Soon, it was time for the arrival of the wreaths. Those in attendance poured outside onto the sidewalk, as the 18-wheeler pulled up to Valley View, led by the Patriot Guard Riders, a motorcycle club that attends veterans' events throughout the country. Students proudly

**See Wreaths Page 2**

## Holiday Shopping Guide Inside



**Portland proudly shows off the wreaths it received from Wreaths Across America during a program at Valley View School on Tuesday, as well as a banner of an American flag the students made for the program to display in its museum. Pictured, front row from left, are kindergarten teacher Laurie DiMauro, First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield and Valley View Principal Debby Graner; back row from left, Patriot Guard Rider Skip Petras and Veterans Affairs Commission members Kathy Burke and Bill Willinsky.**

#### Wreaths cont. from Front Page

waved their flags as the riders and the wreaths pulled up.

First to speak was Pattie Ptak, a Patriot Guard Rider and Wreaths Across America volunteer from Seymour. Ptak thanked Valley View and the town for their dedication to veterans, presenting three wreaths – one to Farrington that will be rested at the Veterans Memorial at Town Hall, one to First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield that will be placed on the front door of Town Hall, and one to Valley View Principal Debby Graner, which she said will be placed in the front entranceway of the school.

“I will hang it right by my office, so it reminds us everyday about our veterans,” Graner proclaimed proudly. Bransfield also added how “proud” she was that the event was held at Valley View, as it’s “the school where our children start their education, and what better place to learn about America?”

Graner also presented Ptak and Wreaths Across America with a gift – a banner with a picture of an American flag made of hands from the students of Valley View, proudly displaying the name of the school. The banner is expected to travel with the wreaths to Arlington

#### Honored cont. from Front Page

“a wonderful public servant.”

“There’s never been a better leader that I’ve ever met,” she said. “I think he’s just a wonderful guy.”

McCalla added she found it appropriate the event took place on Pearl Harbor Day.

“I’m just so grateful we have our own pearl in this community, and that pearl is John Hibbard,” she said.

Various town board members were present at the event including Board of Selectmen Chairman Jeff Watt and fellow selectmen Mark Stuart, Gayle Mulligan and Brian O’Connell – the last of which said, “I look up to John.”

The selectmen presented Hibbard with a proclamation honoring his service, which was in addition to the Certificate of Recognition presented by Sawyer from the Connecticut General Assembly, and a Certificate of Special Congressional Recognition from Congressman Joe Courtney and a Certificate of Recognition from Governor Dannel P. Malloy.

Resident Jim Cordier, who is also a citizen-at-large member of the Open Space Land Acquisition Committee, said Hibbard was an “inspiration for our citizens.” He compared Hibbard to Minnesota senator and vice president Hubert Humphrey, who was known as the “happy warrior,” for his genial manner and phenomenal leadership – much like Hibbard. Cordier also likened him to Theodore Roosevelt.

And in a quote by Roosevelt that seemed to sum up Hibbard, Cordier read, “The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood, who strives valiantly, who errs and comes up short again and again, because there is no effort without error or shortcoming, but who knows the great enthusiasm, the great de-

National Cemetery, and then will be displayed at the new Wreaths Across America Museum in Maine beginning next year.

Farrington, representing the Veterans Affairs Commission, also presented a check for \$150 to the Wreaths Across America program, which is completely non-profit and is run through volunteerism and donations. Farrington also presented Skip Petras, a local veteran and Patriot Guard Rider, with a check for \$100 to go to the Patriot Guard Riders.

After the presentations were made, Graner led all in attendance in a moment of silence, followed by a stirring rendition of “God Bless America.” This was followed by the playing of “Taps” by Portland High School band member Alex Kidd.

As the program wrapped up and the motorcycles and wreaths made their way to the next school, the students of Valley View proudly waved their flags again, sure not to forget the patriotic event they partook in this past Tuesday. And if the purpose of Wreaths Across America is to “remember, honor, and teach,” the mission appears to be fully accomplished.



**State Rep. Pam Sawyer shares a laugh with John Hibbard at Wednesday’s event honoring Hibbard for more than 45 years of service to Hebron.**

votions, who spends himself for a worthy cause; who, at the best, knows, in the end, the triumph of high achievement, and who, at the worst, if he fails, at least he fails while daring greatly so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who knew neither victory nor defeat.”

Those in attendance seemed to be in agreement; Hibbard was the man in the arena to whom much credit belongs.

#### From the Editor’s Desk

## Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

I’ve long found people’s outrage at the so-called “War on Christmas” a little overblown. I’ve heard accounts of people urging boycotts of stores, or simply walking out of stores altogether, because clerks have the audacity to say “Happy Holidays” to customers instead of “Merry Christmas.” But...so what? There are other holidays celebrated this time of year, and store clerks see dozens, sometimes hundreds, of customers a day. Some of them may be celebrating Christmas, some may be celebrating Hanukkah, some may be celebrating Kwanzaa, etc. So, to me, saying “Happy Holidays” just seems practical.

And besides, the sentiment is still there. It’s still a nice, friendly greeting at a time of year where we all preach good will toward one another. So accept the thought with the spirit in which it’s given. Would you rather the store clerk say, “Here’s your change, now get the hell out of my store”? I doubt it.

That being said, I think what the governor of Rhode Island has done is just absurd. The governor, Lincoln Chafee, has decided the 17-foot spruce erected in the Statehouse should be called a “holiday tree,” and not a “Christmas tree.”

Chafee said his naming of the tree is in keeping with the state’s founding in 1636 by Roger Williams as a haven for tolerance, where government and religion were kept separate.

Well, bully for Gov. Chafee. He knows his Rhode Island history. Now he just needs to get some understanding of holiday customs.

Because of all those December holidays I mentioned a few paragraphs back, Christmas is the only one that uses a tree for a symbol. It is a *Christmas* tree. There is no *Hannukah* tree; there is no *Kwanzaa* tree. It is a symbol unique to Christmas.

Relabeling a Christmas tree a “holiday tree” isn’t just offensive to Christians – it shows a basic lack of understanding of the symbols associated with different holidays. In a sense, it demeans everyone, because it suggests Chafee doesn’t really care to know which symbols go with which holidays.

Chafee further defended his naming of the tree Tuesday by saying, “when I’m representing Rhode Island I have to be respectful of everyone.” Instead of looking respectful, though, he just looks silly.

\* \* \*

Sunday night the news broke that the Mets’ longtime shortstop, Jose Reyes, had signed with the Miami Marlins. I wasn’t too terrifically surprised – they’d been courting him all off-season – but to say I was bummed would be an understatement.

Reyes, when healthy, is just an absolute joy to watch. During his nine years with New York, I’d seen him leg out many a triple – and following him as he ran the bases was just amazing. The joy with which he played the game was infectious. He was simply one of the most dynamic, exciting players to ever wear the orange and blue (and sometimes black and occasionally cream).

As I write this Tuesday night, I’m still in shock that Reyes won’t be a Met this year. When you read this Friday, I probably will still be in shock. I mean, I knew he was a free agent. I knew this could happen. I just never

thought it would.

And yet, I understand why the Mets let him go, and even admit, it was probably the right move.

The Marlins signed Reyes to a six-year, \$106 million deal. The Mets weren’t going to go six guaranteed years on him. Yes, Reyes is only 28, but to a player with the injury history Reyes has had – he’s been on the disabled list each of the past three seasons, including two separate DL stints last year – you can forgive Mets’ GM Sandy Alderson for being a little wary.

Instead, the Mets were prepared to offer Reyes a five-year deal with a vesting option for the sixth, based on number of games played. That seemed perfectly reasonable to me. But Reyes wanted all six guaranteed – and from his position, knowing that aforementioned injury history, I can understand his position too.

There was a time, not too long ago, when the Mets would have ponied up the six years for Reyes, no questions asked. Heck, they probably would’ve gone seven, or eight. But the team has fallen on hard times lately, due to decreasing revenues and owner Fred Wilpon’s possible involvement with Bernie Madoff (Wilpon is currently being sued over whether he fraudulently earned money through investments with Madoff; the suit is headed for trial next spring, and could potentially cost Wilpon hundreds of millions of dollars). For the time being, the payroll has been cut, and the Mets are not acting at all the way a big-market team normally acts.

I guess that was one of the toughest parts of the Reyes deal to swallow. Watching your homegrown stars cash in on a big-bucks deal with some other franchise is something that happens to other teams, but not the Mets. I mean, just a few years ago *we* were one of the places players from smaller teams went to for mega-deals (i.e., Carlos Beltran, Johann Santana). A 28-year-old, still-in-his-prime player leaving the Mets for more money elsewhere...well, that just isn’t supposed to be.

That he wound up with the Marlins is also unfortunate. As divisional rivals, the Mets will play the Marlins 18 times next season. That’s 18 times I’ll be forced to watch him suit up for somebody else. Eighteen times I’ll watch him run the bases, or make fantastic diving plays in the field, wearing something that isn’t a Mets uniform. Eighteen times I’ll watch him play against David Wright, rather than with him.

Those’ll be 18 tough games.

Now, plenty of people have commented since the signing that six years was way too much, that Mets fans have nothing to worry about, Reyes will be hitting the DL again soon enough. But here’s the thing: I don’t really want him to. Yes, Reyes spending more time injured than not during the length of that contract would prove the Mets right, but it would also rob the baseball world of one of an immensely fun, talented player. I want to see Reyes succeed; I just wish it weren’t going to be so difficult to do so.

\* \* \*

See you next week.

# East Hampton Church Seeks Assistance from Town for Lot

by Joshua Anusewicz

For years, the private parking lot of the East Hampton Congregational Church on Main Street has coupled with the Center School, allowing parents to pick up and drop off students and teachers and parent volunteers to use the lot for parking. When it snows, the church has always kept the lot plowed, allowing the school to continue using the lot despite the wintry conditions – and the church has footed the bill.

But last year's harsh winter was "the straw that broke the camel's back," stated Anita Guerin, the moderator for the church, as the excessive snow removal fees pushed the church to its limit financially.

With seemingly nowhere else to turn, the church has now asked that the town assist the church, requesting \$3,000 for this year's snow removal fees. A proposed license agreement has been drafted by Town Attorney Jean D'Aquila and has been provided to the Town Council for their approval.

"We need to make a change," Rev. Thomas Kennedy said Wednesday. "We've been a good neighbor, but we don't have bottomless pockets."

The issue was originally proposed to the town by the church in March, but Guerin said it was bounced around from the town manager to the Board of Education and Public Works, because nobody was certain whose control the decision fell under, a process she said the church

was "extremely patient and open" with.

Guerin said that when Interim Town Manager John Weichsel took office in May, he told the church to "put a proposal in writing" and he would present it to the council. The former council, Guerin said, believed the agreement "looked reasonable" and it seemed as though the deal was close to being done.

Last Thursday, Dec. 1, at a special meeting of the new Town Council, the matter was slated to be discussed in hopes that an agreement could be reached. Guerin said that when she read the license agreement prior to the meeting, some changes had been made by D'Aquila and she asked that the item be taken off of the agenda. But at the meeting, the matter was included on a revised agenda and some of the council raised concerns over the issue.

"One of the issues we had was the need for the town" of the parking lot, said Chairwoman Sue Weintraub Wednesday. Weintraub said the "need" must be established before the council can make a decision on the matter. Recently, Weintraub said she went by the church to observe the flow of traffic and the amount of employees parking in the lot to see if it's possible to create an alternative to using the church lot.

But Guerin said Wednesday that Center School, in its student handbook, instructs parents to use the parking lot to drop off and pick up students, as it keeps the students away from

the busses. The school also uses the lot when their parking overflows during school events, an agreement that Guerin called "well-understood and agreeable to the church and the school."

Kennedy said that if the school did not have the agreement with the church to use the lot, the church would only plow enough for church employee vehicles – about four or five – and close the lot to the public. If the church does not reach an agreement with the town, he said this could be the result.

"It would have to be closed for safety reasons," Kennedy explained. "It's not a threat of any kind; it's just reality."

One of the misconceptions in the matter, Guerin said, is that the church wants the town to plow the lot, which she said is quite the contrary; instead, the church is asking for financial assistance to pay their own plowing service to remove snow from the lot. In fact, Guerin said that the town's plows are too large and would actually do damage to the asphalt.

As for the next step, Guerin said that today, Dec. 9, she will meet with D'Aquila and Weichsel in hopes of reaching a mutual agreement that can be presented to the church council for approval, and then on to the Town Council for approval. Superintendent of Schools Dr. Judith Golden could not be reached for com-

ment, but it has been discussed by the Town Council as to whether any funds could be used from the education budget – possibly a 50-50 split between the town and education budgets – to assist the church.

Councilor Ted Hintz Jr. said Wednesday he expects the matter to be on the agenda for the council's next meeting on Tuesday, Dec. 13, and said he expects that an "amicable agreement with the church" can be reached. He said the agreement that's currently been proposed looks "one-sided" in favor of the church, and that he hopes that all parties can "sit down and get the best agreement that works for everyone."

Hintz Jr. also said that there would be discussion on residents who use the lot for Village Center access, and for parking at the Post Office, which he said would be a "federal matter."

Guerin said that as long as "the town is negotiating [with the church] in good faith," there are no plans to close the lot to the public in the event of snow. But with wintry weather just around the corner, the church feels that the ball is in the town's court.

"We want the town, in good faith, to make a decision," said Kennedy. "It's not an 'us versus them' thing; we just want to make this thing happen."

## Robber on the Run Causes RHAM Lockdown

by Geeta Schrayter

A robbery in Plainfield resulted in an evening lockdown at the RHAM schools after the suspect made his way to town.

The alleged robbery took place at a bank in Plainfield on Monday afternoon, after which the robber took off in a vehicle that was later discovered in Hebron, Plainfield Police said.

RHAM Superintendent of Schools Robert Siminski said the lockdown was a matter of complying with police.

"The state police called us and said that there was a criminal who abandoned a car at Veterans Park," he stated, adding they "told us to lockdown and we just complied with them."

The lockdown went into effect shortly after 5 p.m., during what Siminski called a "difficult time."

"What we were dealing with is athletic practices and so there's kind of a schedule," he said. "It happened at 5, right at the changing time, so it was a difficult time for us to have this thing happen."

Siminski stated it's tough to say just how many individuals were in the building at the time, but school officials worked with police to let kids go home.

"As individual parents came to the door, students were released and police checked the cars to make sure no one was lurking in the backseat," he said.

The police also checked the building, and Siminski said the Hebron Parks and Recreation Department was called and told to cancel its

evening programs.

The alleged robbery took place at the Citizens Bank on Railroad Avenue in Plainfield at around 3:07 p.m. when, according to police, a white male, described as five feet, six inches to five feet, eight inches tall and weighing approximately 150 pounds, with light-colored eyes entered the bank and demanded money, police said. He displayed no weapon.

Shortly after leaving the building with the cash, a dye pack exploded on the man and scattered some of the bills in the parking lot, police said. He then fled in a blue 2002 Jeep Liberty. A witness was able to take down the plate number, and it was later determined the vehicle was registered to an address in Wallingford, said police.

The suspect was later located traveling west-bound on Route 6 near Columbia but was then lost for a short time, police said, to later be discovered in Hebron. It appeared the suspect had then fled on foot, police added.

Officers from the state and the Plainfield Police Department used dogs to track the suspect; however, as of Thursday morning, the suspect hadn't been found, said police.

But at RHAM, the incident came to a close Monday evening at around 8 p.m., and classes resumed as normal on Tuesday.

Siminski added that everyone did what they were supposed to do, but administrators will be looking at ways to improve things in the future.

"Everybody did a good job," he said. "Ev-



The RHAM schools were locked down Monday after the suspect in a Plainfield robbery, seen above, was spotted in Hebron. As of Thursday, the suspect has still not been apprehended.

erybody did it correctly. Do we have some things that we're going to do a postmortem on to see if we can do things differently? Absolutely."

Anyone with information about the robbery should call the Plainfield Police Department at 860-564-0804 or its anonymous tip line at 860-564-7065.

### Colchester Police News

11/8: Michael J. Williams, 27, of 199 Gifford Ln., Bozrah, was charged with sixth-degree larceny, State Police said.

11/28: Holly Wolf, 35, of 344 Bricktop Rd., Apt. 1, Willimantic, was charged with second-degree forgery and sixth-degree larceny, State Police said.

11/29: Ryan Martin, 33, of 27 Myer Rd., was charged with disorderly conduct and second-degree threatening, State Police said.

11/29: Tyler Vashalifski, 19, of 8 Jan Dr., was charged with failure to respond to an infraction, State Police said.

### Marlborough Police News

12/1: Coburn Palmer, 67, of 273 Cato Corner Rd., was charged with DUI and failure to drive right, State Police said.

12/4: Richard Pineiro, 40, of 40 Loren Hill Ave., Norwich, was charged with second-degree failure to appear, State Police said.

12/5: Police are investigating criminal mischief and a burglary that took place at Papermill Road.

12/1: Dominick D. Jonah, 22, of 199 South Main St., was charged with sixth-degree larceny, State Police said.

12/2: Nicholas Dodge, 18, of 100 Pinebrook Rd., was charged with breach of peace and interfering, State Police said.

12/4: Colchester Police are investigating a report of fraudulent charges on a PayPal account from a victim on Fox Ridge Drive.

12/5: Diane Moore, 54, of 30 Sipples Hill Rd., Moodus, was charged with violation of a restraining order, State Police said.

### Hebron Police News

12/1: Joshua Koplowitz, 23, of 16 Birmingham Ct., Groton, was charged with third-degree criminal mischief, State Police said.

12/6: Jennifer J. Mortimer, 30, of 221 North St., was charged with second-degree failure to appear, State Police said.

## Man Dies in One-Car Crash in Marlborough

by Bailey Seddon

A man was killed when he suffered a heart attack while driving on Route 2, Monday.

Richard Federowicz, 65, of 19 Dickman Rd., Plainville, was driving on Route 2 west, about three-tenths of a mile from exit 13, when his 2009 Lexus GS 350 left its lane. His vehicle traveled to the right shoulder of the highway and struck a rock ledge, coming to a stop in the grass.

According to firefighter Mark Merritt, Middlesex paramedics declared Federowicz dead at the scene, but he said the crash did not appear to cause the death. It "appears at the time that he had a medical issue prior to the accident," Merritt said.

The state Chief Medical Examiner's office later determined Federowicz died of a heart attack caused by coronary artery disease.

Merritt said the crash did not appear to be a life-threatening one and Federowicz had been wearing his seatbelt. If not for the heart attack, Federowicz would likely have been fine, Merritt said.

Due to the crash, Route 2 was closed completely for a short period, "to get the situation under control," said State Police Lieutenant J. Paul Vance. After that, the highway was down to one lane "for a brief amount of time," he said.

# Hebron School Board Receives Award of Distinction

by Geeta Schrayter

Connecticut Association of Board of Education (CABE) Awards are nothing new for the Hebron Board of Education; the board has received 12 awards from the association since 2006. And now, there's a few more to add to the list.

At the annual CABE/ Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents convention held in November, the Hebron Board of Education was presented with the Board of Distinction Award for the third time.

The award, which was established "in order to appropriately recognize those boards which are truly exemplary," according to the CABE website, is considered a Level Two award. Only boards that have received the CABE Board Leadership Award at least twice in the last four years and achieve a certain number of points in categories like Leadership/Student Achievement, Policy and Community Relations qualify to win the award.

To receive the Leadership Award, the boards must in turn fulfill a minimum of 22 out of 34 Level One criteria, such as developing district goals, conducting police reviews or having board members attend workshops throughout the year.

"You have to meet very rigorous criteria in order to even be eligible in the application process," explained Superintendent of Schools Ellie Cruz.

"We're very proud to be included in a group of professionals that have dedicated their time and volunteered their service to the needs of children, so it's really an honor," she said.

"It's a very coveted award," said Board of Education member Tina Blinn. "I think it puts us with an elite group."

Blinn added that "by being recognized, it shows our dedication to the children and to the town of Hebron."

"The process is quite a lengthy bedding process," said board member Kathy Shea, who's a part of a communications subcommittee with Blinn and Cruz. She said "we have to answer a lot of questions and then submit supporting documentation."

Hebron was one of 11 towns to receive the

award.

Also at the convention, the 36th annual Awards of Excellence for Educational Communications were presented. These awards, established in 1975, look to recognize quality communication. The CABE website states, "effective communication with parents and taxpayers in your school district is a very significant part of your district operation."

There are a number of classifications each district can enter that encompass different forms of communication, from newsletters to handbooks, school calendars, websites and special projects.

Hebron received the Computer Generated Project award for Cruz' convocation presentation, which she shows to teachers at the beginning of each year.

The board was also given an honorable mention for their budget book and *Win It in a Minute* video.

Three times a year a respect rally is held at Hebron Elementary School (HES) as part of their Positive Behavior Support (PBS) program, explained HES assistant principal and chair of the PBS committee, Amy Campbell.

"We invite all the students who are exhibiting positive behavior in the school to a celebration," Campbell said, adding they were typically held during the end of each marking period.

In June, she said the committee came up with the idea of holding a rally based off of the reality show *Minute to Win It*, in which contestants have to complete challenges in less than 60 seconds.

Both students and teachers competed in the event, which Cruz called "highly engaging."

Campbell described it as "a spectacular day."

"The energy level of the students was just amazing – they were so excited, cheering each other on, counting down with the DJ," she said. "It was just a fun celebration of the students that do a good job every day following our school expectations and being good citizens."

Campbell added it was "lucky" staff had a few flip cameras going during the rally, since she didn't know they'd be submitting the event until Cruz called one day in the fall.

"We gathered what we could... and put it



Acting Commissioner of Education George Coleman presented the Board of Distinction Award to Superintendent of Schools Ellie Cruz at last month's convention.

together," Campbell said.

The video was sent in "as one of our examples of communication and a positive school climate," said Cruz.

Campbell also said Hebron is "very lucky" to have such a supportive board.

"It's an incredibly supportive board, highly invested in what's going on in the school, anxious to celebrate all of the positive work that

goes on," Campbell said. "The enthusiasm that we feel as the administration watching the Board of Education members is just so encouraging. And I think the awards are reflective of how seriously they take their role in the town, and how supportive they are of the school."

The awards were presented on Nov. 18 and 19 at the Mystic Marriott Hotel in Groton, and are given out each year.

## Community Reacts to Closing of Hebron Camp

by Geeta Schrayter

Funding is an issue all throughout the country, causing numerous recreational, educational, employment and health-related programs to close temporarily or even permanently.

At Camp Hemlocks in Hebron, this is no less true. On Nov. 4, Easter Seals Coastal Fairfield County, Connecticut closed the camp for the winter season due to lack of funding.

Originally in Trumbull, the camp has been in operation in Hebron since 1974, providing individuals with disabilities the opportunity to "experience the outdoors without physical barriers," according to the Easter Seals' website.

The winter program consists of swimming lessons, recreational swimming, therapeutic swim classes, family and respite weekends and group rentals, explained Leslie Chambers, Executive Director of Advancement. Approximately 600-700 individuals and 400 families take advantage of the program, she said, but the funding wasn't there to continue.

"We have been subsidizing the program through various fundraising and support efforts," she said, "but it's just not been enough. We've held on as long as we can."

The cost of maintaining and running the pool program is over \$12,000 each month, and it was explained in a recent press release that Easter Seals has subsidized over \$400,000 over the last two years to keep the camp open year round. Chambers cited increased heating costs as a reason for the decision, in an attempt to keep those costs down during the winter.

"We know how much this swim program means to the families who attend for recreational and therapeutic purposes," Chambers

stated in the release, "but the finances involved in keeping this facility open for the winter have become prohibitive due to lack of funding."

Board of Selectmen Chairman Jeff Watt said from a community stand-point, the closing is unfortunate and the program will be "sorely missed," but the decision is understandable.

Board of Education member Kathy Shea lives nearby the camp, and said she used to utilize the camp when her kids were younger.

"I feel badly because it happens to be the only pool in Hebron" and the surrounding towns, she said, adding "you have to go all the way over to Glastonbury if you want to use the pools," and they're not completely accessible.

"It's really sad that it's closing and I feel quite strongly that it's a sign of the economic times Hebron is facing as well as the state," Shea stated. "It's really too bad. It was a great form of exercise for people too."

Carole Shea of Marlborough said she's used the facilities at Hemlocks and calls the closing "unfortunate."

"I think it's a great resource for the community... and it's also a great resource for disabled people. It's the only pool I know of that's accessible for them," she said. "It's unfortunate that resource is gone."

The camp will be open again for the regular camping and swimming season next spring, and Chambers stated camp administrators are looking to create more programming and opportunities for funding throughout the year. She stressed the goal "is to be open full-year going forward."

## East Hampton Police News

11/21: Stuart Cunningham, 57, of 9 West High St., was issued a ticket for second-degree threatening, East Hampton Police said.

11/22: Michael C. Poe, 37, of 88 Main St., No. 1, was arrested for operating an unregistered, uninsured motor vehicle with a suspended license and for failure to have stop/brake lamps, police said.

11/25: Daniel A. Cyr, 49, of 22.5 No. Main St., was arrested for disorderly conduct, second-degree threatening, third-degree criminal mischief and interfering with an officer, police said.

11/27: Christian R. Mock, 30, of 19

Ridgewood Rd., Moodus, was arrested for sixth-degree larceny, police said.

11/27: David Paul McClendon, 23, of 116 Kent St., Hartford, was arrested for third-degree criminal mischief and disorderly conduct, police said.

11/29: Timothy Ralph Sherrick Jr., 21, of 13 Twiss Ave., Meriden, was arrested for third-degree criminal trespass, first-degree criminal mischief, fourth-degree larceny and interfering with police. Sherrick was also charged with third-degree criminal trespass for a separate incident, police said.

## Portland Police News

11/30: James Davis, 28, of 31-10 Grist Mill Rd., Moodus, was charged with possession of less than half an ounce of marijuana, Portland Police said.

12/1: Katherine Nicolletta, 41, of 576 Main St., was charged with second-degree falsely reporting an incident and misuse of 911 system, police said.

12/2: A 14-year-old juvenile male was arrested for disorderly conduct and possession of less than half an ounce of marijuana, police said.

# Strife Between Colchester Board Members

by Bailey Seddon

The appointment of members to various boards and commissions brought some controversy at the Thursday, Dec. 1, meeting of the Board of Selectmen.

At the previous selectmen's meeting, on Nov. 17, Norman Dupuis was interviewed for the building committee overseeing proposed renovations of William J. Johnston Middle School to incorporate the senior center. Selectwoman Rosemary Coyle moved to appoint Dupuis at last Thursday's meeting to the committee, a motion that was seconded by Selectman James Ford. Coyle read a letter from Theresa Hendrickson in favor of Dupuis serving on the committee. Hendrickson had been part of the Senior Center Study Group but could not serve on the committee because of scheduling conflicts.

However, while Coyle and Ford felt that Dupuis would be a good addition to the committee Selectman Stan Soby disagreed, saying he was concerned with Dupuis because of comments he had made in his interview. Soby said that, during his interview last month, Dupuis told the selectmen current members of the Building Committee "do not have a clue" about what needs to be done for the project. Soby said he would "be concerned about divisiveness" on the committee if Dupuis was placed on it.

Coyle disagreed, saying Dupuis brought a lot of knowledge to the committee, noting that he

had been on the Senior Center Study Group. Dupuis served as vice chair of the group, which was formed in 2009 with the charge of determining three things: whether the senior center should be a standalone facility or a joint/multi-purpose center, what type of populations the center would serve and what services would be provided.

"I think that kind of expertise is invaluable to a senior center," said Coyle.

First Selectman Gregg Schuster, who was also against Dupuis' appointment, objected to Coyle's comment, saying he felt it was a "false premise" to say that certain people "had" to be on the Building Committee.

"This should be an open and inclusive process," he said.

"This makes no sense," Coyle shot back, in response to Schuster's and Soby's objections. Ford agreed, saying he felt Dupuis was well-qualified for the committee. "I don't know why we're not doing this," he said.

Soby said he felt "there seems to some assumption" that current members cannot go through the process to learn more about the senior center. Soby said this has been done in the past and residents should not be put on the committee just because they were part of the Senior Center Study Group. He felt the current members brought their own knowledge to the committee and that was why they were picked.

After the heated discussion, the board decided to vote. The motion to appoint Dupuis failed 2-2, with Coyle and Ford in favor of it and Schuster and Soby against it. Selectmen Greg Cordova recused himself from the vote.

Coyle was not happy with the failed motion – and let it be known.

"Shame on you," she said to Schuster and Soby.

The two men seemed surprised and frustrated with Coyle's reaction. Schuster said her behavior was inappropriate for a member of the board. Soby agreed, saying this was not the first time Coyle has reacted this way. He mentioned that the behavior was not well-received last time and this was no better.

Coyle defended herself, saying she was "just appalled" that Soby and Schuster voted against Dupuis.

Schuster said the decision was not personal, but what he and Soby felt was best for the town. He also said that while he understood selectmen can have a difference of opinion it is not something that should be taken out personally on board members.

"I hope going forward we can have disagreements without personal attacks," he said.

\* \* \*

The other appointments and reappointments discussed at the meeting weren't nearly as controversial. The board unanimously reappointed Mark Noniewicz to the Planning and Zoning

Commission and Marilyn Finnegan to the Commission on Aging. The board also unanimously reappointed Linda Ackerman as an alternate member of the Historic District Commission. Ackerman said at the meeting she hopes to someday become a full member.

The selectmen also unanimously agreed to appoint John Novak to the Planning and Zoning Commission as a full member, to fill the vacancy left by member Thomas Kane, who left after he was elected to the Board of Finance. Novak had been serving until now as an alternate. Planning and Zoning Commission Chairman Joseph Mathieu endorsed Novak for full membership.

Jason Tinelle was interviewed at the meeting to fill Novak's slot as an alternate on the commission. Tinelle, a 13-year resident of town, has been in the military for the past 24 years. He said he would be retiring soon and felt that serving on the commission would be a good transition from serving his country to serving his community. Tinelle added that he has been attending Planning and Zoning Commission meetings off-and-on for the past five years, and knows some of what is going on already. The selectmen thanked Tinelle and said they would have an answer for him at their next meeting.

\* \* \*

The next meeting of the Board of Selectmen is scheduled for Thursday, Dec. 15, at 7 p.m. at Town Hall.

# Hebron Selectmen Look to Re-Word Arbitration Law

by Geeta Schrayter

At their meeting last Thursday, Dec. 1, members of the Board of Selectmen expressed their frustration with, and interest in re-wording, the state arbitration law.

Selectmen had previously expressed their frustration with the law in September, when dealing with the administrators' contract for the Hebron Board of Education. The selectmen were given a short time to review the contract, Board of Selectmen Chairman Jeff Watt said, and were then expected to approve or reject it.

He added it didn't matter if the selectmen didn't know all the information, and if they didn't approve the contract there was no guarantee the Board of Education would go back and discuss the points the selectmen didn't agree with.

"We ended up taking a step back and saying 'you know, I think as a Board of Selectmen, it would be nice if... we were more aware of the front end,'" Watt said at last week's meeting, adding that "one of the pieces at the front end is that the Board of Finance has the opportunity to have someone sit down to listen [to negotiations]," and they'd like a selectman to be involved as well.

"Not only that," said selectman Mark Stuart, "...that individual cannot discuss what happens in the meeting with the Board of Finance, even in executive session."

According to current law, a member of the Board of Finance is chosen to attend the negotiations with education members for financial advisory purposes, but this person "is in there as an observer and a reference... [they] can't go back to the total body and get guidance or discuss anything," said Board of Finance member Malcolm Leichter.

No one from the Board of Selectmen participates in the negotiations, but they are then expected to approve the final contract.

"The only person who knows what's going on is the person who sat in the meeting," said Board of Selectmen vice chair Gayle Mulligan.

The selectmen said they would like to see changes made to the state arbitration law that would allow a member of both the boards of selectmen and finance into contract negotiations and permit those individuals to return to their respective boards and discuss the negotiations.

"They can't truly represent the body and the body's thoughts" if they're not allowed to discuss the negotiations with them, said Stuart.

As it is, "the whole system is flawed," said board member Dan Larson.

State Senator Edith Prague attended last week's meeting and, after listening to the selectmen, stated the legislative history of the statute would have to be examined.

"There must have been a reason" the statute was written in that manner, she said.

Leichter and Town Manager Bonnie Therrien were already scheduled to meet with Prague the following day for an unrelated matter, and Prague suggested they use that time to "see what has transpired."

On Monday, Therrien said last Friday's meeting yielded no specific reason as to why the statute was worded that way. She also stated changes to the statute couldn't be made until the next legislative session in 2012, and "everybody agreed it's very hard to open up the arbitration statutes – everybody gets nervous," she said. "I don't know if the odds are really good... it's a very touchy subject."

But Therrien said they were "going to continue researching."

\* \* \*

The selectmen also voted to accept 30.7 acres of land for Open Space and the conservation easements and roadway right-of-way for the Grayville Estates Subdivision at the meeting.

Discussion occurred regarding the motion, as some members expressed concern over upholding the conservation of the easements, the layout of the roadway and fire safety.

"I just don't know that the conservation easements right on a road are really going to be enforced," said Stuart.

However, he also mentioned there wasn't enough staff to keep an eye on all of the easements.

Board member Brian O'Connell stated, "It's going to be your neighbors that are policy enforcers."

Larson agreed, and said this week, "We have very limited personnel... I have heard from some people in town who say 'this person did that, this person did this...'" But, he added, "many times people don't want to get involved."

Another issue that was mentioned was the layout of the road. A temporary cul-de-sac was created, and members expressed concern over the ability of fire trucks to maneuver the road, and the ease plow trucks would have in the winter, Therrien explained this week.

"I just don't think a lot of thought was given to traffic patterns," Stuart said at the meeting.

But Therrien said it's a temporary cul-de-sac "because the subdivision will hopefully build out in the future," and the road will go with it. She also mentioned the Planning and Zoning Commission had approved the plan, and Public Works Director Andy Tierney didn't have an issue with it.

Tierney explained this week he had made a presentation last winter about the length of time it takes to clean up cul-de-sacs, however he stated the design is changed in some of them to allow for easier plowing, and confirmed what Therrien mentioned about future development.

"That is shown as a future development so

[the cul-de-sac] is only going to be temporary," he said, adding for now, "it only makes sense to put that type of ending."

Tierney also said the Planning and Zoning Commission did a "diligent job" preparing for and presenting the plan and Town Planner Mike O'Leary agreed.

"We put an enormous amount of time into all of those issues in terms of how the road gets laid out," he said, adding one of their primary concerns is to match new road construction with the natural features in the area.

"We look at long range planning for road layouts," he said, also stating "this meets every road specification standard."

The issue was also raised as to why a water system wasn't put in the subdivision for fire purposes.

Larson stated that years ago, water sources had been discussed with a previous deputy fire marshal, but "somehow over the years that has been inadvertently left out of the plan."

However, Therrien said there's no water source in the area to utilize, and Fire Marshal Randy Blais said Thursday there's no ordinance requiring a dry hydrant or cistern be in place and it's "not uncommon in town" to not have one in a subdivision.

Blais added "we carry, between different trucks, about 5-6,000 gallons of water," so being in an area without a water source isn't necessarily an issue. However, he added the fire department always asks to have something implemented, and in the future, would like to see underground tanks put in some areas to store water.

After discussion, the motion passed three to two, with selectmen Watt, O'Connell and Mulligan voting in favor, and Larson and Stuart opposed.

\* \* \*

Also at the meeting, an update was given by town assessor Debra Gernhardt on the town's revaluation. Data collection, initial data entry and review are now completed and the assessment notices were mailed out earlier this week.

Based on the preliminary assessment, market value based on property dwellings, not land value, decreased 12 percent town-wide. Residential properties valued at \$100,000-200,000 had a 12 percent decrease while properties valued at \$200,000-350,000 experienced a 13 percent decrease and \$350,000-600,000 properties decreased 16 percent, on average.

"Bigger houses, they're taking big losses," Gernhardt said at the meeting, adding that was "true for any town."

Leichter said Wednesday the numbers mean "the people who can afford to pay the taxes are going to pay fewer taxes because their houses went down more [than the average house]."

"Unfortunately people with smaller homes – they're down less, so they'll probably pay a little more," he continued, adding that as a board of finance member, he intended to ensure costs and expenditures don't go up any more than they absolutely have to.

Commercial properties showed a 6 percent decrease, and private recreation which includes Camp Hemlocks and the town's two golf courses decreased 38 percent overall.

Gernhardt explained nationwide, golf courses aren't holding their value.

"They just can't get the people out there [playing] anymore" due to the economy, she said.

Earlier this week, Gernhardt stated she can't stress enough "the percentages that were presented, [those are] town-wide averages, not individual."

Notices with individual assessments were sent out on Monday, and informal meetings will be held Dec. 12 through Dec. 30, depending on the number of requests. As a result of the hearings, additional inspections may also take place.

Additionally, it was mentioned a decrease in value doesn't necessarily mean a decrease in taxes.

"The Grand List is the first factor to determining the mill rate," Gernhardt explained.

Once the town budget is approved each spring, the Board of Finance, taking into consideration the income that will come into the town from the state, uses the Grand List to calculate what the mill rate will be.

"If the budget were to stay the same," said Gernhardt, and the Grand List decreases, "then I think we can safely say that the mill rate would have to go up."

Leichter said the mill rate will "absolutely" have to increase, but added there'll be more concrete info as the appeals occur.

He also stated it was important for residents to become educated on the process of revaluation and said "percentages and mills are misunderstood by many people."

"Most towns focus on the mill rate – is it going up or is it going down – instead of the dollars," Leichter said, adding, "you don't pay in percentages; you pay in dollars."

"I think what also has to happen is people have to listen to what the town manager is saying," he continued. "Don't go and calculate [with the] new assessment and the current Grand List and mill rate," he said. "Don't set an expectation and then have it dashed."

Leichter said they won't have the final Grand List until March.

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The next meeting of the Board of Selectmen will take place Thursday, Dec. 15, at 7:30 p.m., at the Town Office Building, 15 Gilead St.



This sweet-tempered one and a half-year-old terrier/pitbull mix has been at the dog pound in Colchester for three months and is looking for a family to adopt him.



This energetic one-year-old Dachshund mix climbed up on the gate to get a better look at passers-by. She has been in the pound for a month and is looking for a family to take her home.

## Pound Pups for the Holidays in Colchester

by Bailey Seddon

Getting a child a brand new puppy for Christmas might be one of the most fun gifts a parent can give. But what could be even better is giving the kid a lonely dog who has been sitting in a pound for several months.

When times are tough for people, they can be even worse for dogs. According to Animal Control Officer Don Favry, in the last couple of years, as the economy has dropped so has the number of dogs being adopted. At the same time, he said, the number of dogs being abandoned by owners has gone up. When strays are caught by an animal control officer – that is, if they are not killed by a car or the elements first – they are brought to the pound, where, far too often, the owner who let them go never calls.

Favry captures roaming dogs in both Colchester and Marlborough; the wandering pooches then share a pound in Colchester. Favry started as the animal control officer in Marlborough 19 years ago; after working there for five or six years, the Colchester pound expanded, and the Marlborough pound was folded into it. Favry then became the animal control officer for both towns.

Favry says sometimes dogs just get out of the yard and owners later call to get them. However, in such tough times as these some dogs are just being abandoned.

“They’re disposable,” and easy to ditch, Favry said. It was plain to see these dogs were in desperate need of some love and attention in the form of a family when the *Riverast* recently came to visit. Ever been sent to your room as a punishment as a kid? Imagine that same scenario, but for months. And unlike humans, dogs do not have TV, books or any other form of entertainment. They eat, sleep, go to the bath-

room and wait for the day they can get out.

Favry said the pound has had volunteers in the past to walk or play with the dogs to provide them with some much-needed love and to get their energy out. However, most of these people don’t last. He said they either have other things they want to do with their time, or seem discouraged when a dog does not get adopted.

The Colchester pound can fit 16 to 18 dogs at one time. Right now, fortunately, there are only four dogs waiting to be adopted. While this may not seem like a high number, Favry said the pound is never empty; there is always a dog waiting for a family.

The four include a one-and-a-half year old terrier/pitbull mix that has been in the pound for three months. Many people shy away from pitbulls, but don’t let the reputation scare you; this dog was the calmest and sweetest-looking guy in the pound. He poked his head out the door and peeked with one eye at the reporter trying to take his picture.

“He’s unbelievable,” Favry said. Unfortunately, pounds see a lot of pitbulls, which are harder to adopt, said Favry. This is “a breed that’s condemned” unfairly, he said.

Next in line is a one-year-old female Dachshund mix that has been in the pound for one month. This is a small, sweet dog that licks your hand as soon as you put it up to the bars. Third is a three- or four-year-old small black dog (a mix of unknown origins) who has been there for three weeks and who could not be more excited to have a visitor, coming up to the bars to wag his tail to see who was visiting. Last but not least, there is a one-year-old male puggle mix that has also been there for three weeks and is a “ball of energy,” accord-

ing to Favry.

“They all seem to have a nice personality,” Favry said. He said this is usually the case, as the pound rarely gets “nasty” dogs. If they do, he said, he does not even try to find a home for them.

Last week, there were two more pooches at the pound, but earlier this week two different families came to pick up two lab mixes. Despite this happy occasion, getting the word out about the dogs up for adoption can be hard, Favry said. Luckily though, he said the Colchester pound has “a relatively good network” for trying to get dogs to families. Animal control officers in different communities will call Favry if they have a family looking for a dog that matches one they have in Colchester. The town also puts the dogs they have available online for residents to see.

Once a dog is adopted, only two to three percent of them are ever returned to the pound, Favry said. And the ones that do get returned are usually due to their owners not being able to handle more high-strung dogs, not because of the dogs being aggressive. Favry said many of the dogs may seem hyper when they are in the pound, barking and jumping, but once they are out and in a home many of them mellow out. They become “good member[s] of society.”

Dogs “in their own way feel it’s a second chance,” when they get with a new family, Favry said. He said people are often surprised by how calm the dogs are once they bring them home. “Dogs are like people,” Favry said. “You think you can figure them out, then you get another curve thrown at you.”

While Favry has occasionally had to take

back dogs, the better part of his job is when he gets to hear how much someone likes their new dog. Favry said he called the families that had adopted the lab mixes and said they were each “tickled pink” by their new pet.

While it may seem that this reporter is just sitting on her soapbox and preaching to the masses, I know from personal experience what dog adoption can do, not only for the dog, but for the family adopting it. I adopted my dog two months ago from the Colchester pound. Julian is a one-year-old American bulldog mix who was in the pound for about four months before we brought him home. He was found, with another dog, walking along Route 16 in Colchester. We were a little nervous about bringing him home to our four-year-old boxer, Romeo, who can be aggressive. However, after two months, the two “brothers” are inseparable.

Anyone looking to adopt can visit the town website at [Colchesterct.gov](http://Colchesterct.gov). Go to “I Want To...” and click on “Adopt a Dog” to see who is in the pound. Or call Favry at 860-841-0561. The rate for adoption is \$5 for a neutered/spayed dog and \$50 for a non-neutered/spayed dog. If the dog is a non-neutered/spayed dog the owners are given a voucher to take to their vet. This will pay either all or part of the neutering/spaying, depending on how much veterinary hospitals charge for the operation. Colchester Veterinary Hospital, for example, accepted the full voucher for Julian. This means the \$50 paid for adoption will pay for the neutering or spaying (not including pain medication) and any two vaccines the dog needs.

Favry said anyone looking to volunteer at the pound should call the Colchester Police Department at 860-537-7270.

## Colchester Agrees to Settlement on 20-Year-Old Sewer Fees

by Bailey Seddon

The Board of Selectmen last week okayed a legal settlement more than 20 years in the making.

The settlement dates back to 1988, when the town did a sewer benefit assessment on a proposed 246-unit condominium project located “along and to the north” of the Chantclair golf course, according to an interoffice memorandum sent by Public Works Director James Paggioli to First Selectman Gregg Schuster. The assessment for the golf course, located at 288 Old Hebron Road, was for \$115,950.59. The golf course was opened by Hy and Gigi Stollman in 1972, and is now owned by the couple’s children, Dave and Carey Stollman.

According to Paggioli, in the memorandum, at the time the amount could have been paid all at once or by a payment plan with 5 percent simple interest. The development, known as “Fairways at Chantclair,” was approved but the developer, CDS Associates, experienced a delay and never got to build the condominium complex. It has been 19 years since benefit assessment payments were last deferred, and 17 years since the permits to build the complex expired. The benefit assessment was never paid.

The settlement took so long because no one

noticed that it had not been paid, said Schuster. “This was noticed about a year or so ago when the accounts were being closed off,” he said. Schuster said the Sewer and Water Commission noticed a “shortfall” in the benefit assessment accounts.

Sewer and Water Commission Chairman Richard LeMay said members noticed the shortfall when the balance of the benefit assessment account did not “zero out.” LeMay said members did “a lot of backtracking,” to try to figure out why they were coming up short and it led them to the CDS Associates benefit assessment that had never been paid.

“We had a very good handle” as to what was actually owed, said LeMay. However, as said in the memorandum, the commission “is limited in its authority to approve negotiations or settlements in regard to benefit assessments,” and had to come to a settlement with CDS Associates. The commission also passed a motion at its Nov. 9 meeting that “recommends the Board of Selectmen,” acting as the commission, to approve the settlement and recommended that Schuster sign it.

However, before the settlement came about, CDS Associates had objected to the payment

demand by the Sewer and Water Commission because it felt the benefit assessment was no longer valid. In his memorandum, Paggioli admitted the validity of the assessment may have passed.

“The [Sewer and Water Commission] recognizes that with a debt that has not been actively pursued” for 19 years, it “risks during litigation that [a] judge may find that the assessment was invalidated at the time the approval permits expired,” Paggioli wrote.

However, after some consideration, CDS Associates decided to work out the assessment benefit with the commission rather than go to litigation, as the company was “desirous of amicably resolving” any disputes related to the benefit assessment, according to the settlement.

It was agreed upon by Colchester and CDS Associates that company will pay the Sewer and Water Commission \$120,950.59 by Dec. 15 — \$115,950.59 for the benefit assessment and \$5,000 to go toward the Sewer and Water Commission’s attorney’s fees. The settlement also states that upon receiving the payment, any obligations “shall be extinguished and forever discharged,” and the Sewer and Water Commission will provide a release of the benefit as-

essment for CDS Associates.

Another stipulation of the settlement was a provision that if CDS Associates wants to develop the property at 288 Old Hebron Rd., it will not need any additional sewer benefit assessment. This is as long as the developer got all the proper approvals from “municipal, state and federal agencies and commissions,” the memorandum said. CDS Associates could then connect up to 246 residential condominiums or single family housing units, as it had planned to do in 1988.

The settlement also states that if a new “commercial use is established” then the developer “shall be entitled to receive a credit against any sewer benefit assessment or sewer connection fees,” up to the amount of the original benefit assessment of \$115,950.59. Lastly, the agreement stipulated that the existing residence and clubhouse on the property may connect to the town sewer system without having to pay any additional connection fee.

The point of the executive session Thursday, Schuster said, was to make sure this was the “final and complete settlement” that ended the issue.

# Portland Rings in the Holidays

by Joshua Anusewicz

On an unseasonably mild night with the slightest hint of winter chill in the air, citizens of Portland gathered Sunday for the town's lighted parade and tree lighting, a true celebration of the holiday season in a quintessential New England town.

Hundreds of residents – after presumably setting their DVR to record the conclusion of the Packers-Giants game – bundled up and headed out to line the sides of Main Street and take in the glowing floats that passed by. The parade, which kicked off at 5 p.m., began at Town Hall, with town organizations making last minute adjustments to costumes, musicians finely tuning their instruments of choice and drivers inspecting their vehicles, double- and triple-checking that every last bulb on their strands of lights was tightened and shining.

As the parade readied, those who had positioned themselves at the final destination – the giant fir in front of Brownstone Intermediate School – were treated to a serenade of Christmas standards by the chorus and jazz ensemble of Portland High School. Conducted by board director Kristin Novak, the young musicians led the crowd in a series of carols that continued until the parade snaked its way down to Main Street and the march was set to begin.

Leading the charge was the Moodus Drum & Fife Corps, which proudly played holiday tunes on their classic instruments. The echoes of the booming drums were only eclipsed by the antique fire engines, brought in by the Connecticut Cellar Savers, which followed. The group seeks to preserve the history of fire engines and was one of the many groups that helped organize the event, led by trustee and Portland resident Bob Currier.

Each engine was carefully decorated with lights, wreaths and decorations, on top of the sirens and horns that already cover the mammoth vehicle. The resulting sight was something that would make even Clark Griswold truly jealous.

Also joining the parade was a group of antique cars and emergency vehicles from East of the River Classics, a spin-off of the Cellar Savers that restores and preserves the vehicles

for parades and other community events. Though some did not include the sirens and horns that the other engines did, the lights and decorations helped, as the popular song goes, “make the season bright.”

Some of Portland's younger residents – members of the boy, girl and cub scouts – marched amongst the vehicles, singing Christmas songs and throwing candy out to eager parade patrons. Most were donning Santa or elf hats, grinning from ear to ear, perhaps imagining what gifts would be awaiting them under the tree on Dec. 25.

As the parade drew to an end, residents gathered around the tree near the entrance of the school in anticipation for the tree lighting. The singers and musicians, most wearing Santa hats, once again played songs for the crowd, which sang along with their families, friends and neighbors. As the crowd sang, volunteers slipped through the crowd, accepting donations of unwrapped toys and non-perishable food items for the Portland Food Bank for the holidays. For the children, the volunteers handed out raffle tickets to see which lucky youngster would join Santa Claus in flipping the switch that illuminated the tree.

As the lighting got closer, First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield, state Rep. Christie Carpino and Parks and Recreation Director Sean Dwyer thanked all of the residents for coming out, with all of them agreeing that this year was the best turnout they had seen yet. The crowd, stretching over a good part of the lawn of the school, cheered in approval.

A touching moment was also shared by Youth Service Director Mary Pont and resident Sandy Baines, wife of the late Bob Baines, the founder of the lighted parade. This year's parade was dedicated to Baines, who passed away earlier this year.

Baines was a lifetime resident of Portland who was a friend to many in town. He was an avid toy truck collector, whose hobby grew to include real antique vehicles. He helped found East of the River Classics and the Cellar Savers museum in Portland, which includes a toy train display throughout the holiday season.



**Yuletide cheer was in the air Sunday as residents gathered around the town Christmas tree for its official lighting.**

Six years ago, after participating in the holiday parades of other towns throughout the state, Baines and the Cellar Savers decided it was time to show off their vehicles in their own town. And so, the lighted parade was born.

After the tribute to Baines, it was time for Santa Claus, who whisked into the crowd to hand out candy canes to all of the good boys and girls, asking them along the way if they had been good all year. He explained that his stay would be abbreviated, but he had been hard at work at the North Pole with the elves and all the reindeer; he did, however, promise that he would be back in a few weeks...

Santa then helped pull out the winning raffle ticket to light the tree, which belonged to Val-

ley View student Dylan Jensen, who happily rushed to the switch with his family. The crowd counted down, as Dylan and Santa got ready; when the countdown reached one, the tree burst into bright, white lights from top to bottom, eliciting cheers, claps and a round of “O Christmas Tree” from the chorus and band.

The crowd soon dispersed, with some residents returning home (perhaps to watch football), some stayed to admire the lights and music and some headed to Fire Company No. 1 across the street for cookies and hot chocolate. But no matter where they went, the Christmas spirit was undoubtedly in the air that night, as Portland welcomed some holiday cheer into their tight-knit community.

## Portland to Receive FEMA Money for October Storm

by Joshua Anusewicz

At Wednesday's meeting of the Board of Selectmen, Director of Public Works Rick Kelsey provided the board with “some good news and some bad news” regarding the cleanup efforts for the October snowstorm.

The bad news: it's taking a long time to clean up.

The good news: it's not going to cost the town a lot of money.

“When all is said and done, with the [Federal Emergency Management Agency] money,” Kelsey said, “it's not going to cost us a whole lot out of pocket.” The federal government declared Middlesex County a disaster area after the snowstorm, and First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield officially signed the application with FEMA this week.

The announcement comes as a big relief to the town, which has had to foot most of the bill for multiple weather-related events over the past year – last winter's snowstorms, July's heavy rains and Tropical Storm Irene in late August. The cleanup efforts have also spread the town's public works crew thin, as they've had to work considerable overtime hours and overexert their

equipment.

Kelsey said most of the savings from this snowstorm come from the fact that the town “worked in-house” rather than contract outside agencies to help in the cleanup efforts. He said that the unfortunate side effect from that, however, is that it has been “a real inconvenience to residents,” many of which are still waiting for brush to be cleared.

“I can't stress enough how thankful we are for the residents, who have been very patient,” Kelsey explained. “I think they see what we're up against.”

Kelsey said Public Works has received some phone calls regarding brush pickup over the past month or so, but said that residents have been patient and understanding.

When it came to estimated cost, Kelsey broke them down into “hard costs” and “soft costs.” The first hard cost was for contracted services and repair, which Kelsey described as overall damages to the town and needed equipment; this includes damaged vehicles, equipment repairs, tree services, a grinder and a rented payload, among other items. Kelsey estimated

this at roughly \$40,000, 75 percent of which will get reimbursed to the town by FEMA.

Another hard cost, Kelsey said, will be the cost of overtime for the Public Works crew, which Kelsey estimated between \$45,000-50,000. He added that 75 percent of this will also be reimbursed by FEMA. According to Kelsey, these overtime hours include Public Works working for three straight days immediately after the storm, additional weekend hours for brush crews over the past month, and additional hours of cleanup.

The largest cost, Kelsey said, will be a soft cost for the town's equipment, which includes fuel, wear and tear, and other maintenance issues. Kelsey said that, at this point, the rough estimate is \$200,000-250,000, 75 percent of which will also be reimbursed by FEMA.

“I commend you guys for this cost,” said selectman Fred Knous after Kelsey announced the figures. “I've read towns having to pay anywhere from \$600,000 to over a million, and it's a lot of towns estimating those kinds of numbers.”

Bransfield also said the Public Works crew

was doing “an excellent job” in its cleanup efforts. “It's been a tedious process,” she admitted. “But it takes time. We don't want people getting hurt, and we want everything to be done as thoroughly as possible.”

As far as the continued brush pickup, Kelsey said Public Works began the efforts on the west side of town and is one-third of the way finished and “making progress.” CL&P also provided the town with a week of tree cutting, an effort which began this past week. The state has also begun cleanup along routes 17 and 66, which Bransfield called “a big, big help.”

For those who have yet to have leaves or brush picked up, Kelsey said all leaves are expected to be picked up in the next two weeks and all brush is expected to be cleaned up in at least a month. Bransfield also recommended that the board schedule a “debriefing” regarding the storm at a future meeting in January.

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The next meeting of the Board of Selectmen is scheduled for Wednesday, Dec. 21, at 7:30 p.m. at Portland Library, 20 Freestone Avenue.

# Obituaries

## Colchester

### Donald K. Bauchmann

Donald K. Bauchmann, husband of Aldene Liedke Bauchmann of Colchester, passed away Sunday, Dec. 4, in Colchester. He was born on Feb. 25, 1931 in Meriden, son of Oscar and Ethel Patrick Bauchmann.

Donald grew up in Meriden. After graduation from high school he enlisted in the U.S. Navy, then served with the U.S. Coast Guard, attaining rank of E-6 during the Vietnam War. He was very devoted to his loving family. He was an engineer, worked for Electric Boat and then for Bay Way. He belonged to the American Legion Post 54 of Colchester.

Surviving are his wife Aldene; a daughter, Jennifer and her husband Paul Betancourt; a son, Peter and his wife Mary Bauchmann; four grandchildren, Belen, Alec, Max and Kate; many nieces and nephews.

Donald was predeceased by a brother, Earl J. Bauchmann.

Visitation was held Wednesday, Dec. 7, at the Belmont/Sabrowski Funeral Home, 144 South Main St., Colchester. Memorial services were held Thursday, Dec. 8, at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, 53 Great Hammock Rd. in Old Saybrook.

Memorial donations may be made to Colchester Senior Center Making Memories Group, 95 Norwich Ave., Colchester, CT 06415 or to Hospice of S.E. CT, 227 Dunham St., Norwich, CT 06360.

## Hebron

### Eleanor Borst

Eleanor (Varney) Borst, 89, a longtime resident of Hebron, widow of the late William Innd Borst, passed away Friday, Dec. 2, surrounded by her loving family at her daughter's residence in Middletown, RI. Born June 4, 1922, in Rochester, NH, she was a daughter of the late Harold and Dora (Morrill) Varney.

She earned a bachelor's degree in engineering from the University of New Hampshire and worked at Pratt & Whitney Aircraft during World War II. During her time there, she met the love of her life, Bill, and they were married on Oct. 28, 1945. Together, they shared 36 years of marriage before he predeceased her on June 29, 1981.

After raising her family, she went on to earn a master's degree and taught first grade at Mary Hall Elementary School in Marlborough for 27 years before her retirement.

She is survived by two children, William V. Borst and his fiancée, Eva LeBaron of Hebron and Sarah Borst Kempen and her husband, Gerry of Middletown, RI; four grandchildren, Ethan Hoffmann and his wife Elizabeth of Sherborn, MA, Alyson Borst and her partner Errico Bachicha of Oakland, CA, Rebecca Hoffmann Frances and her husband Joshua of Brunswick, ME, and Steffanie Borst and her partner Zak Devino of Burlington, VT; two step-grandsons, Eric and Chad Kempen; four great-grandchildren, Hayden, Allegra, Zoe and Samuel; a sister, Marilyn of Berwick, ME; and numerous extended family members and friends.

In addition to her husband, she was predeceased by two siblings, Ruth and Robert.

Friends called Thursday, Dec. 8, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester, followed by a chapel service. Interment followed in St. Peter's Cemetery, Hebron.

In lieu of flowers, donations in her memory may be made to Odyssey Hospice, 2374 Post Rd., Suite 206, Warwick, RI 02886 and Protectors of Animals, 114 Main St., East Hartford, CT 06118-3239

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

## East Hampton

### Brenda Lee Cronin

Brenda Lee (Jones) Cronin, 60, of East Hampton, beloved wife of Robert Cronin, passed away Sunday, Dec. 4, at Middlesex Hospital. Born July 12, 1951, in Biddeford, ME, she was the daughter of Florence Lester of Maine and the late Lealmond Jones.

Brenda was a 1970 graduate of East Hampton High School and had lived in East Hampton and East Haddam before moving to Moodus in 1980. Brenda married her husband Robert in 1971. She had worked for many years as a CNA for Chestelm Health and Rehabilitation in Moodus.

Besides her husband and mother she is survived by her son, Shawn Cronin of Colchester; her daughter, Tammy Noble and her husband Jason of Amston; three sisters, Gail and Jeff Hansen of Moodus, Cathy and Richard Saunders of Marlborough, Cynthia Jones of East Hampton; and her beloved grandson, Ben Noble. She is also survived by several nieces, nephews, friends and extended family.

She was predeceased by her father and stepmother, Lealmond and Thena Jones, and her grandson Alex.

Brenda was a loving wife, mother and grandmother who will be missed by everyone who loved her.

Funeral services were held Thursday, Dec. 8, in the Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton. Burial followed in the family plot in Lakeview Cemetery. Friends called at the Spencer Funeral Home Wednesday, Dec. 7.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the American Cancer Society, 825 Brook St., I-91 Tech Center, Rocky Hill, CT 06067.

To leave online condolences, visit [spencerfuneralhomeinc.com](http://spencerfuneralhomeinc.com).

## Colchester

### John Robert Willson

John Robert Willson, 82, of Colchester, beloved husband of Carol Ann (Brown) Willson, passed away Sunday, Dec. 4, at the Conn. Hospice in Branford, surrounded by his loving family. Born Aug. 8, 1929, in Hartford, he was a son of the late Alfred and Louise (Hale) Willson.

Mr. Willson proudly served with the U.S. Air Force during the Korean War. He worked as a Research Technician in Metallurgy for Pratt & Whitney for 35 years before his retirement in 1992. While wintering at his vacation home in Vermont, he was an avid alpine skier for many years.

In addition to his loving wife of 47 years, Carol, whom he wed on June 27, 1964, he is survived by their three sons and their spouses, Randall and Debra of Alpharetta, GA, Jeffrey and Lisa Cote of Southington and Robert and Cari of Colchester; six grandchildren, Ryan, Katelyn, Courtney, Jamie, Victoria and Adam; and numerous extended family members and friends.

He was predeceased by two brothers, Bradley and Donald.

Friends may call 1-3 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 11, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. Rendering of full military honors will be observed at 2:45 p.m. Burial will be private.

In lieu of flowers, and in recognition of the love and dedication shown by the caring staff at the Connecticut Hospice, memorial donations may be sent to them at 100 Double Beach Road, Branford 06405

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

## East Hampton

### Mark S. Salowitz

Mark S. Salowitz, 61, of East Hampton, beloved husband of Lynn, left this Earth Monday morning, Dec. 5, surrounded by his loving family at home. Mark was born on Sept. 18, 1950, in New Haven, and is the son of Sidney and Shirley Salowitz.

He grew up in West Hartford and graduated the Class of 1968 from Conard High School. He then went onto attend college at Babson College in Massachusetts and became a certified public accountant. He worked at Case, Corrado, Yazmer and Company, P.C., for years and was known as the jokester of the office. He loved being a C.P.A. and playing the game of poker!

Mark grew up in the '60s and '70s and relished the era of change. He and Lynn met in 1977, had a whirlwind romance and were married in 1978. From that point on they have spent their lives together, enjoying the simple things in life and raising two beautiful children. In Mark's words, "It's been a good ride!"

Besides his wife Lynn, Mark is survived by his son, Adam Salowitz of East Hampton and his daughter Erica Tardiff and her husband Marc of Twin Mountain, NH. He is also survived by his parents, Sidney and Shirley Salowitz, and his two sisters Susan and Randi Salowitz of Farmington; his sister and brother-in-laws; Beth and Jim Greig of East Hampton, Diane Niles of Ivoryton, Jim and Diane Roos of Branford and Ken Roos of Nicolet, MN. He also leaves several loving nieces and nephews; Alyssa, Dawn, Tania, Heather, David, Christopher, Jonathan and Caitlin.

Mark was predeceased by his in-laws Fran and Connie Roos, his nieces Sabrina and Mary and his best friends Jeff Krupnikoff and Scrapper.

A celebration of his life will be held at Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton, today, Dec. 9. A greeting of the family will be held from 10-11 a.m., with the celebration commencing at 11 a.m.

In lieu of flowers, donations are requested in Mark's memory to either of the following: Nursing Quality Education Fund, Fund Development Office, Hartford Hospital, 80 Seymour St, Hartford, CT 06102 (please indicate CB5, B7I or Bliss 8) or Protectors of Animals, 216 Wopowog Rd., East Hampton, CT 06424.

To leave online condolences, visit [spencerfuneralhomeinc.com](http://spencerfuneralhomeinc.com).

## Portland

### Frances B. Cambria

Frances B. Cambria of Tolland, formerly of Middletown and Portland, died Monday, Dec. 5, at Woodlake of Tolland.

Mrs. Cambria was predeceased by her husband Guy Cambria, a partner in the accounting firm of Knust, Everett and Cambria, her son, Guy Cambria Jr., and her sister, Katharine Kruse.

She was born in Redding July 4, 1910 to Abram Garrison Barnett and Frances Mallory Craft Barnett and lived on the family farm in Redding until moving to Middletown in 1924. She was a graduate of Middletown High School and received her BA degree from Skidmore College in 1932. Mrs. Cambria was the assistant recorder at Wesleyan University for a number of years before starting her own real estate firm, Frances B. Cambria Associates.

She was very active in many volunteer activities; her favorite was Pet Therapy, which she and several of her friends formed to take dogs into local nursing homes. Mrs. Cambria was a member of Trinity Episcopal Church in Portland and served on its vestry, was a member of the DAR, the Soroptomist Club of Middletown, the University Club of Middletown, and the Portland Garden Club. During World War II, she was very involved in the Red Cross Blood Donor Program. She also served as treasurer and member of the board of St. Luke's Home.

She is survived by her daughter-in-law, Barbara Cambria of Tolland; granddaughter, Suzanne E. Cambria and her husband David Whidden; grandson, Stephen B. Cambria and his wife Annalisa Notaro; and two step great-grandchildren, Cori and Rachel Whidden.

Mrs. Cambria has willed her remains to the UConn Medical School.

A private memorial service will be held at St. John's Episcopal Church in Vernon. Donations in her name may be made to the Memorial Fund at St. John's Episcopal Church, P.O. Box 2237, Vernon, CT 06066.

## Colchester

### Robert J. Halisey

Robert J. Halisey, 78, of Lake Hayward, passed away Thursday, Nov. 30, at home. Born Sept. 24, 1933 in Hartford, he was a son of the late John and Mary (Anderson) Halisey and stepson of the late Fred Calander.

He was a proud Army veteran, having served during the Korean War. Mr. Halisey was a graduate of UConn, where he earned his Bachelor of Arts degree in English. Over the years, he was a true intellectual and enjoyed teaching, writing, research and working with young people.

He is survived by two sons, Forest and his wife, Patricia of Brandon, FL and Bosk of Hartford; their mother, Linda Truitt of Lake Wales, FL; two grandchildren, Robert and Michael; a sister, Barbara Surprenant of Colchester; a special nephew, Norman Surprenant of East Haddam; and numerous extended family members and friends.

Friends called Monday, Dec. 5, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Road, Colchester. A memorial service with full military honors followed. Burial was private.

In lieu of flowers, donations in his memory may be made to the Antique Veterans of Colchester, P.O. Box 54, Colchester, CT 06415.

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

## Portland

### Agnes Siena

Agnes (Quadarella) Siena, 97, of Portland, wife of the late Sebastian J. Siena, died Tuesday, Dec. 6, at Portland Care and Rehab. She was the daughter of the late Angelo and Sara (Petruzzello) Quadarella.

Born July 26, 1914, in Seymour, she was a lifelong Portland resident and a member of the Church of St. Mary in Portland also.

She leaves her sons and daughters-in-law, Michael J. and Joanne Siena and John H. and Elaine Siena, both of Portland; daughters and sons-in-law, Johanna M. and Louis Gerolami of Portland, Gloria S. and Donald Rinaldo of Portland, Rita M. and Kenneth Richter of Middletown, Karen S. and John McNickle of Portland, and Patricia M. and Thomas Elwell of Portland; 17 grandchildren; 16 great-grandchildren; four great-great-grandchildren; and many nieces and nephews.

She was predeceased by a son, Michael J. Siena; a brother, Joseph Quadarella; two sisters, Ann Falbo and Lucy Fazzino; and two grandchildren, Jay Labella and Thomas Gerolami.

Funeral services will be held Saturday, Dec. 10, with a Mass at the Church of St. Mary, 51 Freestone Ave., Portland. Burial will be in St. Mary Cemetery, Portland. Relatives and friends may call Saturday at Portland Memorial Funeral Home, 231 Main St., Portland, from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m., prior to Mass.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Church of St. Mary, 51 Freestone Ave., Portland, CT 06480.

To send an online expression of sympathy, visit [portlandmemorialfh.net](http://portlandmemorialfh.net).

