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Three seniors on the RHAM girls' soccer team will live the D1 dream next September. Pictured from left are Ashley Russo who will play for Stony Brook University, Audra Ayotte who will attend Georgetown University and Kristen Brett who is headed to Monmouth University.

Signed, Sealed, Delivered
I'm Yours, D1 Schools

by Courtney Parent

Three girls on the RHAM soccer team kicked off their final semester by signing letters of intent to play for Division 1 programs in the fall.

The first week in February proved to be monumental in the lives of co-captains Audra Ayotte and Kristen Brett, along with their senior teammate Ashley Russo. Not due to the snowstorm that gave them both Feb. 1 and 2 off, but due to three individual pieces of paper; one for Audra, one for Kristen, and one for Ashley – paper that allowed them each to achieve their dream of playing D1 soccer.

Audra, Kristen, and Ashley were all given Feb. 2 as their official date to sign commitment letters to their prospective schools. However, due to snow days, the three said their signing got pushed back until later in the week. Despite the excitement, the girls agreed that this was not an easy decision. All three said they were flip-flopping between multiple schools until just days before signing their letters. In the end, the deciding factor was scholarship funds.

Head Coach Jen Stahl praised all three as being very talented athletes and very deserving of the scholarships. Stahl also pointed to how rare it was that multiple players from the same class all move on to play at such a high level.

"This is definitely unusual to have three girls from the same class who are all moving on to D1 programs," Stahl said. "We've had girls go on to play at the college level, a few at Division 1 schools, but it's been many years since there were several D1 players all in the same class."

Audra's signature is sending her to Georgetown University in Washington D.C.;

Kristen is headed to Monmouth University in New Jersey and Ashley will be attending Stony Brook University in New York.

For Audra it is a bittersweet victory. "I'm looking forward to playing at a higher level," said Audra, "but I'll miss playing with some of my teammates."

Kristen expressed a different sentiment – anticipation. She said that playing at the collegiate level was always a goal she wished to achieve, but she never had a specific school in mind.

"I always knew I wanted to play in college, but never had a real 'dream' school," Kristen said. "I just wanted to play."

Since tearing her ACL, Ashley said she just hoped that she would still be given the opportunity to play D1 and not be considered a liability. Her wish also came true, as schools started contacting her shortly after she became injured.

Audra, Kristen and Ashley have been playing soccer since their early elementary school days ("Kindersoccer" as Audra and Kristen referred to it). The three said they were excited about being able to continue on at the collegiate level.

Stahl noted not only the girls' skill and talent as individuals, but also their contribution to the team's championship success this past season, and the team's growth over the last few years.

"These three girls have been a large part of the team's success over the past few years as we've gone from a team that was struggling to

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State Cuts to Libraries Could Impact Residents

by Katy Nally

In his budget proposal released Wednesday, Feb. 16, Governor Dannel P. Malloy cut state funding to libraries by about 11.29 percent – a move residents would ultimately feel, Nancy Wood, director of Richmond Memorial Library in Marlborough, said this week.

Local libraries are primarily funded through residents' taxes, however, they do receive some help, and programs, from state and federal funding.

One such program, ConnectiCar, or the interlibrary loan delivery service, was proposed to be eliminated, at a savings of about \$263,000. Also, a program that goes hand-in-hand with ConnectiCar, ConnectiCard, took a 58 percent reduction, netting about \$735,000 in savings.

Wood explained ConnectiCar is a service that delivers books from one library to another, at a resident's request. Malloy's elimination of the program would result in six layoffs, State Librarian Ken Wiggin said this week. It would also mean residents could not request items to be sent from neighboring libraries.

The second cut, to ConnectiCard, would likely mean only Marlborough residents would

be able to check out items from Richmond Memorial Library. According to Wood, the ConnectiCard line item provides an "incentive" for libraries to accommodate non-residents. She said her annual book budget of about \$26,000 is funded through taxes, so the state provides about \$9,000 per year as an incentive to let non-residents borrow the items Marlborough citizens are essentially funding.

"That's about a third of my book budget right there," Wood said. "If we eliminate that, where's the incentive?"

"That small amount of money really does a lot of good," Wiggin added.

And, he said, with ConnectiCard, "not every library has to buy every book."

In Marlborough, Wood said Richmond Memorial Library actually serves about 2,000 more people than the 6,000 who live in town. Typically, residents of a particular town might opt for another library because of its collection, hours and location, Wood said.

With the elimination of the delivery system, and the reduction of incentives to loan to non-residents, Wood said she was unsure how Rich-

mond Memorial Library would accommodate its users from out of town.

"It's a total erosion of services," she said. "We're waiting to see what happens."

Libraries would have to figure out what would happen if, for instance, a Colchester resident returned a book in Marlborough.

"That's going to be an issue and it's going to be hard to police it," Wiggin said. "They're both funds that won't be going to municipalities if the cuts go through."

Wood said the proposed cuts could act like a cigarette tax and probably deter non-residents from using other libraries, which would be unfortunate, as "the public library is the one thing that is available to everyone."

"People are heavily using these libraries, particularly in these economic times," Wiggin added.

Currently, library cards issued from any town in Connecticut are accepted at any library in the state.

"It's a nice little system," Wiggin said. "It works so well, most people just assume it's going to happen."

Of the approximately 33 million items loaned through Connecticut libraries annually, Wiggin said non-residents borrowed almost five million of them.

Wiggin said his department plans on meeting with the state Appropriations Committee Tuesday to discuss the proposed cuts.

"We're going to point out what we see as the importance of the programs," he said. "We're very aware these are two programs that provide a lot of cost savings and cost avoidance to municipalities."

Some of the logic behind the reductions stems from growing online collections, Wiggin said. However, since libraries have begun loaning e-books and audio books, there hasn't been "any sizable reductions" in the number of hard-copy materials loaned out, he said.

In meeting with the Appropriations Committee, Wiggin said his department would ask that other areas be looked at for possible reductions that might lessen the "impact" on residents.

"Ideally," he said, "we would like to see the dollars restored." However, he continued, "I

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make the state tournament, to state champions this past season.”

In 2009 the team made it to the semi-finals, but then lost to Avon. However this year was a different story. In a repeat rivalry in 2010, RHAM came up to battle Avon again, only this time they would come up victorious in the Class L State Championship game.

Audra and Kristen recall the first goal of that 2-1 championship win over Avon as their most memorable moment of play. Kristen said they had fooled around in practice multiple times, with Audra sailing the ball long to Kristen who would then head it in. That practice finally got put into play, at the perfect moment, six minutes into the championship game of their senior season.

The last time the team won the title was 15 years prior when Stahl was a member of the team, rather than the coach.

“For me it was a totally different experience winning the championship as a player and then as a coach. As a player I never stopped to think about all the years that had gone into develop-

ing a team to win a championship.”

Stahl said her team’s 2010 championship win was a two-year process, with almost all of her 2009 starters returning for the 2010 season. Ashley was the only starter not to return due to her knee injury.

Stahl said that while inexperience played a role in the team’s 2009 playoff loss to Avon, that was not the case this past season. In the 2010 championship game, talent, experience, and great chemistry resulted in the team’s victory.

The girls leave behind a legacy as they head to Georgetown, Monmouth, and Stony Brook, beginning their collegiate careers and aspiring for more championship wins in the fall. Stahl hopes the rare success of these three talented seniors will serve as inspiration for her younger athletes.

“I hope some of the younger girls on the team can see the success of Audra, Kristen and Ashley and can strive to play at such a high level themselves,” she said.

State Cuts cont. from Front Page

understand there’s a lot of things being cut in the budget.”

Malloy’s budget proposal includes cutting \$1.76 billion in spending, but also includes \$1.5 billion in tax increases – to sales, gas, income and cigarette taxes. Malloy has also been criticized by unions for seeking \$2 billion in concessions from state employees.

If the proposed cuts to libraries are approved, Wiggin said they “might cause a lot of disruptions.

“We may end up with a hodgepodge of services,” he said.

From the Editor’s Desk

Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

As I wrote last week, I’m in favor of the state nixing the ban on Sunday liquor sales. However, when it comes to the recent debate on re-installing tolls on state roads, I’m squarely on the ‘no’ side.

Could the state use the money? Sure. But a lot of that toll revenue would come from people who already live here, people who are already facing tax hikes under Gov. Malloy’s budget proposal. Now’s not the time to throw even more fees on us.

And the opportune word is “us.” One state lawmaker who was in favor of bringing back the tolls was interviewed by Channel 30 last week. I forget the guy’s name, but he said people from other states, like Massachusetts and New York, are coming into our state and messing up our roads and they should pay for it.

That’d be all well and good if it was just out-of-staters footing the bill. But everyone would have to pay the tolls when they crossed into the state, whether they lived here or not. It seems particularly unfair to those who, say, live in Enfield but work in Massachusetts.

Like I said, now’s not the time.

* * *

It’s become a fairly regular feature in the “Letters to the Editor” section: East Hampton resident Dean Markham’s letter telling a story from Belltown’s past. Many times, they’re interesting stories. I recently got an e-mail from Barbara Wallis Felgate, who told me she looks for Dean’s letters every week. Last week, Dean wrote about an incident he was reminded of when he saw a picture in the *Rivereast* recently of Barbara’s mom, Helen, celebrating her 97th birthday. It seems Dean’s letter needs a slight correction.

In his letter, Dean wrote about an incident involving Jack Wallis, and identified Jack Wallis as Helen’s husband. However, Helen’s husband – and Barbara’s father – was Carl Wallis; Jack was Helen’s father-in-law, and Barbara’s grandfather.

But Barbara didn’t seem that upset about the error. In fact, she said, “What was written about my grandfather was not far off the mark. [It] sounds very much like something he would do. And, knowing my grandmother, I have no doubt she approved.”

* * *

One of the wonderful things about the Internet is it allows the rest of us to easily see when some fool politician shoots his mouth off. This week’s fool politician is Republican Senator Jim DeMint of South Carolina. DeMint, a staunch conservative, told the

Washington, DC, chapter of the Federalist Society (an organization that describes itself as “a group of conservatives and libertarians interested in the current state of the legal order”) that President Obama should not be considered the leader of the United States.

“This whole idea that the president is the leader of our country is a mistake,” DeMint said. “Leadership starts in the homes, in the communities, in businesses, in churches. ... I’ve lived in a community and I know where the leaders are and it’s not in Washington.”

Now, the above quote in and of itself doesn’t make DeMint a fool politician. What comes next does. DeMint insists he’s not singling out Obama, he’s “talking about any president.” But then he goes on to say that Obama needs to go because he’s.....not a good leader.

“It’s pretty clear this president is not going to lead,” DeMint said. “We’ve got to replace this president.”

But wait, Jim, didn’t you just say the idea of the president being a leader is a “mistake” anyway? So why should it matter if Obama is “not going to lead”?

Sure, Jim. You’re not singling out Obama. *Suuuuure.*

* * *

We had our first taste of spring late last week, when temperatures climbed to the 50s and then the 60s for a couple of days. Reality came crashing back all too quickly, of course, as temperatures plummeted and snowflakes filled the air. But if you want to fill your head with thoughts of warmer weather again, you can this weekend, as the first Mets spring training game of the year is broadcast on TV. It’ll be on WCCT, Channel 20 (the call letters used to be WTXN up until last year), at 1 p.m. on Saturday.

The Yankees will have a game that day too, against the Phillies at 1 p.m., broadcast on YES. The Red Sox, meanwhile, won’t have a spring training game televised until next Friday, March 4; a 7:05 p.m. game against the Yankees. It’ll be shown on NESN, YES and the MLB Network (although I’m guessing it’ll be blacked out on the MLB Network, as that often seems to happen whenever the Mets, Yankees or Red Sox are slated to be shown).

The boys of summer, back in action. Even though it’s just an exhibition game, it’s a beautiful thing.

* * *

See you next week.

Solar Farm Possibly Coming to East Hampton

by Joshua Anusewicz

A solar farm may be coming to East Hampton, if a Colchester-based developer gets his wish.

Ron Gaudet, president of White Oak Development LLC in Colchester, has proposed the construction of 22 solar arrays on Gildersleeve Drive, next to the town water treatment facility. He presented his plans at a public meeting Tuesday.

Gaudet said his proposal would generate 250 kilowatts of energy for the Water Pollution Control Authority (WPCA). According to Gaudet, this would generate enough energy to power 25 percent of the facility.

White Oak Development, which builds homes equipped for solar electric to power geothermal heating and cooling systems, would fund all costs for construction, clearing the land, building fences and maintenance. It estimated the total cost of the project to be \$1.8 million. The land would be leased to White Oak by the town and the energy would be sold to the WPCA at a 15 percent discount.

The company projected the solar arrays would last between 40 and 45 years and would then be either replaced or removed and reforested. The arrays would be slightly visible from Route 66, but only in winter months, Gaudet said. The arrays would be owned by White Oak and leased to the town for \$1 a year.

The proposal was met with positive reviews from the Town Council and the public, who see this as a way to cut energy costs and, in the future, apply for federal grants for renewable energy.

“The way the land is shaped, we don’t have much use for it,” council Vice Chairman John Tuttle said. “This would also be a chance for the town to save money.” The land, which is located on a slope, is owned by East Hampton but managed by a joint facilities committee with Colchester.

Some members of the East Hampton High School faculty also look at the project as a way to include renewable energy into the curriculum. There has been a similar proposal made for a solar farm at Colchester’s Bacon Academy, which plans to use the project as a teaching tool.

“We would love to have the students involved with the maintenance of the arrays,” Gaudet said. “We are just looking to give back to the community.”

The solar arrays, which measure 30 feet by 16 feet, would take six to eight months to construct. A contract has yet to be written and the Town Council has yet to decide which department would oversee the project, if approved.

Gaudet urged the town to move quickly, however, as the grant money used by White Oak to help fund the project can be used by other towns.

Hebron Finance Board OKs Money for Recent Snow Removal

by Courtney Parent

The Board of Finance held a special meeting on Thursday, Feb. 10, and approved a supplemental appropriation of \$63,417 to cover the cost of recent snow removal at the Hebron Elementary and Gilead Hill schools.

Superintendent of Schools Ellie Cruz said she prepared a report for the finance board that identified some snow-removal issues the schools were having. The report also included statements by a structural engineer who examined the schools and expressed concerns about student safety. Cruz also included photographs of both schools.

The amount of the supplemental appropriation consisted of the costs necessary to pay the structural engineer that completed an initial and follow-up roof inspection, two crews hired to remove snow from the roofs and custodial overtime removing snow that was blocking emergency exits.

Snow removal efforts took place between Friday, Feb. 4, and Tuesday, Feb. 8. Crews began working on Friday with the largest area of concern, the fourth grade portables at Hebron Elementary, said Cruz. A second team came in over the weekend to start at Gilead.

At the Feb. 10 meeting, Board of Finance Chairman Michael Hazel supported Cruz’s de-

cision to bring a structural engineer in to examine the roofs. Hazel said this was an “unavoidable consequence” of winter and that Cruz had made the right choice.

The Board of Finance unanimously approved the supplemental appropriation in the amount of \$63,417.30. According to Town Manager Bonnie Therrien, the money will come from the general fund balance.

At this time, the school roofs have all been cleared and have been deemed safe by the structural engineer. However, Cruz said this week, there has been some leaking and damage caused by the snow, ice and shovels catching on the roof during snow removal efforts.

According to Cruz, the Board of Education will be filing insurance claims on two different areas damaged by the snow and ice. The first of which are the gutters at Gilead Hill School that were twisted by the weight of the snow. The second of which is a portion of the 1988 wing at Hebron Elementary where ice had caused leaking in the ceiling and damage to the sheet rock.

The Board of Finance’s next scheduled meeting is set for Thursday, March 3, at 7:30 p.m. It will serve as a joint meeting with the Board of Selectmen to discuss the 2011-12 budget.

Concessions Allow Marlborough School Board to Keep Programs, Staff

by Katy Nally

Although the Board of Education didn't adopt a budget at its meeting last Thursday, Feb. 17, members came to a consensus that they would likely approve a spending package with a 1 percent increase.

Originally, the board's budget subcommittee, and Superintendent of Schools David Sklarz, presented three budget options that were pretty bleak. All three included some sort of staff reductions, and ranged from a 3.89 percent increase to a 0.31 percent increase.

However, the budget that will likely be approved at the board's next meeting on March 3 includes concessions from teachers and administrators, and does not cut programs.

At the public hearing held before last Thursday's meeting, it was clear residents were not in favor of the original proposed cuts to staff, and programs like Spanish.

"We shouldn't even be thinking about eliminating a language," resident Pam Farrington said.

Farrington went on to say she had purposely moved to Marlborough because of its reputable education, and such deep cuts to the school's budget would make magnet schools an attrac-

tive option.

Resident Dave Porteus agreed, adding he hoped the board would "reverse the trend" of approving zero-percent budget increases.

Porteus noted that, in September, the Board of Finance shot down a proposal to send a \$2.9 million sewer project to referendum, so it might be easier for residents to swallow a large education budget this year.

"The Board of Finance did you a favor," Porteus said. "I hope you can follow through and do the kids a favor and support a 3.89 percent increase, at least."

However, not everyone shared Porteus' outlook on spending. Resident and Board of Finance member Dick Shea told the Board of Education "this is not the time for anything more than the absolute tightest budget possible."

Shea said cuts to staff would not necessarily have a negative impact on education. Recent advancements in classroom technology at Elmer Thienes-Mary Hall Elementary School could lead to more student productivity with fewer staff members, he said.

After hearing from residents, the board looked at its budget options, and factored in

concessions. Sklarz said teachers and administrators agreed to spreading a one-year 4 percent raise over two years and extending their contract to 2013. Also, instead of paying 18 percent of their insurance costs for the two-year contract, teachers and administrators will pay 17.5 and 18 percent of the costs for the first and second years, respectively.

"It's helping us to save programs, it's helping us to save positions, and it's helping us to be fiscally responsible," Sklarz said. "The spirit of cooperation has been remarkable."

Sklarz himself also agreed to forgo a raise this year.

There were additional savings in the legal fees line item, about \$40,000, because staff agreed to concessions.

Overall, Sklarz said, the new budget represents about a 1 percent increase over the current year's spending plan.

With the rough number of what the board expected to save, board member John O'Toole made a motion to approve a budget of a 1 percent increase, at about \$6.97 million. However, his motion was defeated in a tie vote of 4-4, as some board members said they didn't feel com-

fortable voting on a budget of rough figures that didn't come from the budget subcommittee.

"Putting an actual figure in there, again, might be premature," Carole Shea said. "I feel comfortable voting in favor of a 1 percent increase, with the caveat that if we can go lower, that would be preferred."

So board members came to a consensus that the 1 percent increase was their target budget, and there would be no cuts to programs or staff. They are expected to approve that budget at their meeting on March 3.

Snow days were once again a topic for the board. As of press time, this year's calendar is set to end June 22, which includes five makeup days, and one school day will be completely waived. Sklarz suggested waiving two more days – keeping in line with the state-mandated minimum of 180 – if there are any more snow days, and then taking from April vacation.

The next Board of Education meeting will be Thursday, March 3, at 7 p.m., at the elementary school.

Schuster Seeks Second Term as Colchester First Selectmen

by Katy Nally

First Selectman Gregg Schuster was met with a round of applause from fellow Republicans Tuesday as he announced his plans to seek re-election this November.

"There are a few more things I'd like to accomplish before I turn it over to the next person," Schuster said at Tuesday's Republican Town Committee meeting.

Schuster was elected to his current position in November 2009, and ran on a platform of economic development.

"I'm happy that Sears, Radio Shack, Suburban Medical and countless other businesses have chosen to open in Colchester," Schuster said in a press release. "I'm also anxiously waiting for other developments such as Settler's Green, the expansion at Stop & Shop, the large Parum Road project and the Tractor Supply Company to begin construction. We are poised to see a good number of new businesses open their doors in Colchester."

Schuster made moves to bring businesses to Colchester early on, and included \$20,000 in the current year's budget for a part-time economic development coordinator – a position that was recently filled by Candace Barnes.

Looking ahead, other goals for the first selectman include having the town's local police

force patrolling 24-7, which would incorporate a midnight shift. Currently the Colchester Police Department is at full force – at nine officers and one sergeant – as the two latest hires graduated from the academy and have begun field training.

Schuster also mentioned trying to expand the town's public safety by encouraging more residents to volunteer at the Colchester Hayward Volunteer Fire Department.

At Tuesday's meeting, he went on to talk about his commitment to fixing town roads, which was another campaign-trail promise he made to taxpayers. In the 2010-11 budget, the line item for road improvements was increased by about \$188,000. Also, it eliminated four town positions and reduced two.

Schuster touched on these "tough choices" Tuesday.

"It's been very tough when you're in a bad economy like this," he said. However, he said, he and his "team" were looking at the big picture and "making good long-term decisions."

Part of Schuster's team of fellow Republicans was present for his announcement Tuesday.

Board of Education member Betsy Ciccone applauded as Schuster told the RTC his plans. "I'm very excited about that," she said.

Reached Wednesday, fellow Republican selectman Stan Soby said he was "thrilled" with Schuster's news, and added the first-year head of Colchester "has done a great job" since 2009.

"He's gotten a lot accomplished," Soby continued. "I just see a sense of coordinated effort that's really important to move the town forward."

Soby said Schuster has stayed true to his campaign platform, but noted there's still more work to be done, especially economically.

Board of Education Chairman Ron Goldstein agreed.

"We've been able to come together and make some hard decisions, and it's worked," he said. "For all of us, obviously it's been a challenging time."

Goldstein said Schuster, along with Colchester's boards and commissions, worked hard last year to pass the budget, "and hopefully we'll have that pass this year."

Like Soby, Goldstein said he was "excited" Schuster decided to run for re-election.

"I think we have worked well together over the past couple of years," he said.

And Schuster himself, seemed excited to deliver the news Tuesday.

"For me personally, this has been the best job I've ever done," he said.



Gregg Schuster

Longtime Colchester Fire Department Members Retire

by Katy Nally

After decades of dedicated service, two longtime Colchester Hayward Volunteer Fire Department members retired from their positions last month.

But both Billy Standish and Ellen Gustafson will remain active in the company and the ladies' auxiliary, respectively.

Standish was a chief officer and has been with the department for 45 years.

Gustafson was president of the auxiliary for 18 years and joined CHVFD on her honeymoon, 29 years ago.

Both said they would miss their duties, but were looking forward to having fewer responsibilities.

"It's a very time-consuming position, but it's very fun too," Gustafson said. "The department means the world to me."

"It was time to step back and let some of the young guys move up," Standish said.

The former chief officer first joined CHVFD

as a cadet when he was 14, and has held virtually every title the department offers. Now, at 58, he said it will be nice to "go down to the station and chill out."

"Part of me feels really good that I'm not going to have that responsibility, and part of me is absolutely going to miss it," Standish said.

For Standish, joining the department almost half a century ago was a given. His father was a 50-year member and Standish remembered tagging along on fire calls when he was little.

"I don't know, it's just in my blood," he said about his commitment to the company.

Standish recalled hanging on the back of the fire truck and being mesmerized by huge blazes from chicken coops and abandoned buildings.

"I couldn't do anything but watch, but it was very exciting," he said.

Now that he's not a chief officer, Standish said he'd assume a less-taxing position like a safety officer. He said he'd still drive the am-

balance and act as an MRT several days a month.

Chief Walter Cox said the station volunteers were thankful Standish planned on sticking around.

"Anybody that's been around that length of time has a lot of knowledge that's very helpful," Cox said.

Like Standish, Gustafson's decision to join CHVFD years ago was a no-brainer, and she too has firefighting in her blood.

For three generations, Gustafson's family has been involved with CHVFD, starting with her father-in-law who was a chief; her husband is currently the town's fire marshal and the latest Gustafson to join the department is her daughter.

During her tenure as president, Gustafson said she enjoyed being on the response team and helping firefighters when they went on calls. In the summers, she said, the auxiliary

was responsible for keeping volunteers hydrated as they battled fires in their "very heavy and very hot equipment."

The auxiliary also organized several annual initiatives like distributing cure-chief bandanas to cancer patients and donating teddy bears to ambulances for youngsters.

But her time within the station isn't over. Gustafson, whose 18 years as president set a record within the department, said she still plans on being involved in the auxiliary's projects and helping out the new president, Kathy Ewings.

Gustafson said Ewings "is very excited and she's got a lot of new ideas."

Along with Ewings, Barbara Ford was promoted to vice president of the auxiliary, and Don Lee was promoted to deputy chief within the department, Kenneth McKenna to first assistant chief and Royce Knowles to second assistant chief.

Visintainer Steps Down as East Hampton Fire Marshal

by Joshua Anusewicz

After serving the last 22 years as East Hampton fire marshal, Phil Visintainer has retired from his post, leaving behind a legacy of over 50 years of service in the East Hampton Fire Department.

Visintainer began as a volunteer firefighter before becoming fire chief in 1975. Visintainer became fire marshal in 1988, while he was still chief, and continued in both roles for seven years, before stepping down as chief.

The fire marshal was a full-time position until three years ago, when it then became part-time. Visintainer said he will continue to serve as deputy fire marshal until that position is filled.

"You begin to lose some drive after a while," Visintainer said. "I'm too old now. I'm ready to just enjoy life."

The new fire marshal is Richard Klotzbier, who has served as deputy fire marshal under Visintainer for the past three years. He was voted in unanimously by the Fire Commission at its Jan. 10 meeting and looks to continue in the footsteps of his predecessor.

"He has been a very good friend, mentor and teacher," Klotzbier said.

Visintainer is credited with leading the charge to install a hydrant system in the center of town, creating 10,000-gallon water-storage tanks for housing developments, and upgrading fire equipment in East Hampton. He said all of this has helped lower the cost of fire insurance for the residents of town.

He also spearheaded a group that received a

grant for improved fire education in East Hampton, which provides fire prevention and safety classes to the general public.

Visintainer expects that Klotzbier will continue to take a lead role in expanding the fire education programs.

"He's very energetic and good with people," Visintainer said of Klotzbier, who is also the town's emergency management director. "I hope he gets the same support from the community."

His impact on the community hasn't gone without notice, either, as most describe him as a valuable member of the East Hampton community.

"Phil has been around forever. He has done his job quietly, done it well, and he's been nice to everyone," Town Council Chairwoman Melissa Engel said. "We are definitely going to miss him."

Though Visintainer will serve as deputy fire marshal on a short-term basis, he already plans to enjoy his retirement. An avid boater, he is the commodore of the Middlesex Yacht Club in Chester, where he and his wife Sharon are always active. They also plan to travel more, having already planned a trip to the Dominican Republic in the next month.

He also plans to stay active in the fire community, where he is involved in several groups at the local and state levels. Even retired, he can't completely stay away from what has been his passion for the past half-century.

"It's my time," he says, "but there have been a lot of great memories."



East Hampton Fire Marshal Phil Visintainer, left, has retired from his position, passing down the reigns to three-year Deputy Fire Marshal Richard Klotzbier.

Council Agrees on Hiring Process for East Hampton Interim Manager

by Joshua Anusewicz

The East Hampton Town Council has voted on a hiring process for the interim town manager position, which it hopes to fill by April 1.

At this point, the council has received 19 applications and will continue accepting applications until Feb. 28. After the deadline, copies of the resumes will be distributed to the councilors to review individually. At the Town Council meeting on March 8, the councilors will present their top three candidates, and from that, a list of final candidates will be agreed upon. Those candidates will then be interviewed individually by each council member and may be subject to a background check.

The interim town manager is currently Robert Drewry, who has filled the position since the resignation of full-time manager Jeffrey O'Keefe on Sept. 17. Drewry, the town's former director of public works, is not interested in continuing with the position full time.

The council expects the interim town manager to serve for 12 to 18 months, as there may be turnover in the town council after the November elections. This, the council feels, would give newly-elected council members ample time to work with the interim town manager to work out a new budget.

Several citizens expressed concern during the public comment portion of Tuesday's meeting that this process will lack transparency, which they feel leaves out the opinion of the public. One citizen was worried that it would be "too politicized," and that it may lead to similar problems the town had with O'Keefe.

* * *

The Town Council also voted Tuesday to regionalize the town's dog pound with East Haddam, a move that the council feels could cut the animal control budget significantly and provide better service to the town.

East Haddam First Selectman Mark Walters was present to answer questions from the council members, many of whom felt that the facility in East Hampton is in poor condition. Walters pointed to a regionalization between Colchester and Marlborough in 2003 as an example of how a deal like this can work for both towns.

"They've seen fewer complaints, better service and a decrease in liability," Walters said.

The current animal control budget is \$63,000, most of which goes toward paying three part-time animal control officers. The regionalization would make the top animal con-

trol officer in East Haddam, who currently makes \$16,000 a year with no benefits, the full-time animal control officer for both towns. The current salary would be matched by East Hampton, bringing the full-time officer's salary to \$32,000 a year with no benefits.

The animal control officer would also have an assistant, who would get paid \$10,000 a year and work nights and weekends. A three-year lease of the East Haddam facility would cost the town \$6,000 a year, while the cell phone and travel fees would be split by the two towns.

Council member Sue Weintraub questioned whether the current dog pound could be revamped, explaining that the current facility is "very workable" and that roughly \$13,000 could be put aside for the necessary repairs.

The regionalization is not yet official, and is pending an agreement through lawyers for both towns. The contract with Don Hazard, owner of the current dog pound in East Hampton, will still be honored by the town.

In January, Hazard said he felt the East Hampton facility could be repaired and that the maintenance was the responsibility of the police department. He could not be reached for

comment for this story.

* * *

Town resident Ann McLaughlin presented the council with a proposal to honor the soldiers returning from tours of duty.

Her proposal is to tie yellow ribbons with the soldiers' names around the tree in the island in the town center. When the soldier returns, people would line the street of the soldier's house to wave American flags. The soldier would also cut his/her ribbon off the tree.

McLaughlin, whose son Aaron served tours of duty in Iraq and Afghanistan, requested the help of the Town Council to help notify town members of the soldier's return and to speak at the ribbon-cutting ceremony. The proposal received full support from the council and from the VFW Ladies Auxiliary.

* * *

Also at the meeting, the public works department announced it would begin recycling electronics at the transfer station on April 1. The electronics will only be accepted on Saturdays and it will be free of charge for disposing of the items as long as you have the proper stickers.

Road Discontinuances Create Controversy in Hebron

by Courtney Parent

Controversy and confusion filled the air at last Thursday's Board of Selectmen meeting, the majority of which revolved around the discontinuance of five roads.

Problems evolved from a July meeting last year, at which Planning and Zoning brought forward to the selectmen Phase One of road discontinuances. Phase One included the board approving the discontinuance of Grayville Road, Crouch Road and Jagger Lane. On Thursday, Feb. 17, as part of a Phase Two, the board reviewed an additional five roads being considered for discontinuance.

The unimproved portions of road being considered for discontinuance include 1,615 feet of Papermill Road, 3,380 feet of Slocum Road, 1,250 feet of West Street, 2,840 feet of Robinson Road and 1,330 feet of Chittenden Road.

While discontinuing a road can benefit the town greatly, it can also greatly inconvenience residents. One of the main advantages and motivations behind discontinuing a town road is that the town is no longer responsible for maintaining the road, nor is it liable for anyone hurt on the road. Financially, it can save the town a great deal of money.

However, since the town is no longer main-

taining the road, that means those who live on, or frequently travel, that road, are left with the responsibility and costs of maintaining it.

The most controversial of these discontinuances proved to be on Papermill Road, because of a right path clause. Members of the Holcum family, who are the sole property owners on the 1,615 foot portion of road looking to be discontinued, voiced their concerns loudly.

Anne Holcum expressed having lots of trouble with vandalism over the past year and said she thought discontinuing the road with a right of path clause will just "cause more trouble."

The right of path clause included by the town involved putting a gate at the entrance of the road so that residents would have access to walking paths. The board explained that the clause exists so that if one day the Holcum family decided to sell their property, the town could conduct an open space purchase and possibly build a park on the property retained.

Holcum said she was not opposed to the discontinuance of the road, but opposed to the right of path clause. She said the clause was counter to what her family was trying to do — eliminate trespassing.

Several others also agreed with the discon-

tinuance if the clause was taken out. Two residents proceeded to shout "no access" multiple times to make sure their opinion was known.

After lots of back and forth discussion, Board of Selectmen Chair Jeff Watt gained control back over the room by proposing to remove the clause and move forward with the discontinuance.

"Let's just do discontinuance of the road," Watt said. "Take out the gate resolution and anything about paths, and hold that until future discussion."

With the right of path clause removed, selectmen unanimously approved the Papermill Road discontinuance.

The discontinuance of the remaining four roads was much less controversial. The board also unanimously approved the discontinuance of 3,380 feet of Slocum Road, 1,250 feet of West Street, 2,840 feet of Town Road and 1,330 feet of Chittenden Road with no dispute.

While the board approved the discontinuance of all five roads presented in Phase Two, the meeting still proved controversial. John D. Hooker, representing his mother, Martha W. Hooker addressed the board regarding the discontinuance of Jagger Lane from Phase One.

Hooker explained that his family found out about the discontinuance of Jagger Lane back in July and they were not in agreement with it. Hooker directed the majority of his discontent toward Town Manager Bonnie Therrien and Town Planner Mike O'Leary, who he said had not addressed his concerns and kept him informed.

"I am expressing my displeasure for what I consider to be complete disregard to keep us informed," Hooker said.

The family even went as far as to research their legal rights. According to Hooker, if the town chose to move forward with the discontinuance they would have eight months to appeal to the state Superior Court.

Watt addressed the family's displeasure noting that at the time Hooker spoke with Therrien and O'Leary, the resolution to discontinue Jagger Lane had already been made and town officials did not have any new information to give him. Watt also assured Hooker that they would be able to voice their concerns at a town meeting for all the roads up for discontinuance, to be held after the next phase of the process.

The next Board of Selectmen meeting is scheduled for March 3 at 7:30 p.m.

Scout Presents Eagle Project to Hebron Selectmen

by Courtney Parent

Last week's Board of Selectmen's meeting gave hope to the phrase "the youth is our future." The meeting began with the presentation of a leadership project meant to benefit the community.

On Thursday, Feb. 17, Hendrick Hendrick of Boy Scout Troop 28 proposed the implementation of a fire training facility as his Eagle Scout project. The training facility would be to benefit the Hebron Volunteer Fire Department, with the tentative location being at 150 East St., Burnt Hill Park.

Hendrick said the idea for his project came about after conversations with former Fire Chief Paul Burton and training officer Dave Thurz. Though he could've proposed a much smaller-scale project, he wanted to do something that really made a difference and had a positive impact on the town and the fire department, to which Hendrick is a member.

"I had the option of planting a memorial garden, but I thought it would benefit the department more with the training facility," said Hendrick, "and I wanted to do something that would be permanent and something I could be proud of for years to come, unlike a flower garden."

The facility would be approximately 25 feet by 18 feet, including two different pitched roofs with cut-out pallets for firefighters to practice ventilation. There would also be a tower on the side for firefighters to practice bail-outs. The estimated cost of the budget is \$1,738, which Hendrick said would come from donations from

the fire department and other local organizations. The structure will be supported by 12-foot and 24-foot telephone poles donated by Connecticut Light and Power.

Selectman Dan Larson wondered how Hendrick planned to prevent vandalism from occurring to this new structure. Hendrick said he was working on getting some type of fence or barrier up. Hendrick also pointed to the fact that there are no ladders attached to the 25-foot tall structure. Even at the lowest point of eight feet, it would be difficult to mount without the assistance of a fire truck. Town Manager Bonnie Therrien added that the fire department had agreed to work on securing the area.

With the help of Troop 28 and other local organizations, Hendrick said the facility could be built over a five-day period. He would like to see the project completed sometime during the April to May time frame.

Prior to presenting to the Board of Selectmen, Hendrick brought his proposal to the Parks and Recreation Department. Parks and Rec. approved the project, with one stipulation: that the fire department build a barrier around the structure, once erected, and also to make the commitment to maintain the structure.

Hendrick is looking forward to moving ahead with the project and putting his plan into action. To Hendrick, it was much less about completing a project to move up in his Eagle Scout ranks and more about giving back to his community.

"I loved the challenge of planning the project

and I remembered this is all for community service," said Hendrick. "This is a lot of work for a community service project, but I love helping the community and I love to help others. This is why I am in the fire department."

The Board of Selectmen approved Hendrick's project to move forward to Planning and Zoning.

Also at last week's meeting, the Economic Development Commission made a recommendation for action at 501 Church St. The property is privately-owned and the property owner who recently passed away owed back taxes on it.

After conducting environmental testing at the site, results showed that there was a contamination issue in the soil and ground water. The contamination was caused by underground storage tanks.

After examining several different courses of action, Economic Development Commission Chair Vickie Avelis said the commission felt that taking no action would be the best choice, as any other would be too expensive. According to Avelis, excavation at the site would cost around \$400,000 to \$500,000 and if the town wanted to address the ground water contamination that would be an additional \$160,000.

Avelis recommended that the board take no action at 501 Church St. at this time and revisit it in a year.

The board also addressed the AHM 2011-12

proposed budget in the amount of \$152,200.73. This number represents an increase of 2.2 percent, or \$3,283.36, over the 2010-11 budget.

Selectmen were all in agreement for supporting AHM and accepting their proposed budget. Board of Selectmen Chairman Jeff Watt pointed to a consistently declining increase over the past few years.

"This is probably the lowest amount we've had in three years," Watt said, referring to the budget increase. "It was \$11,000 two years ago, last year it was \$5,000 and this year it was about \$3,000."

AHM's proposed budgets for the towns of Andover and Marlborough also saw slight increases right around \$1,000 each. The proposed budget for Andover is \$40,517.29 and the proposed budget for Marlborough is \$82,999.98.

Selectman Brian O'Connell gave his full support, praising AHM for its hard work and dedication to the towns of Hebron, Andover and Marlborough.

"AHM does a boatload of work to benefit this community and our fellow communities and they don't get enough credit," O'Connell said, "so they do have my full support."

The selectmen voted unanimously to accept the recommended budget from AHM.

The Board of Selectmen will next meet Thursday, March 3, at 7:30 p.m., at the Town Office Building, 15 Gilead St., to discuss the 2011-12 town budget.

Hebron Parks and Rec Settles in at Burnt Hill Park

by Courtney Parent

The Parks and Recreation Department's got a brand new bag!

The department is operating from a brand new location, and opened its doors at 148 East St. last Wednesday, Feb. 16.

Parks and Rec. continued to operate out of the Town Hall through last Tuesday, then moved to the new building on Wednesday, successfully avoiding any interruption to the public. According to Parks and Rec. Director Rich Calarco the main reason for the move was a lack of space at the town hall.

"There just was not enough room," Calarco said. "We literally had two people sharing a desk."

Prior to the move, the department was not consolidated, having two separate operations; parks, and recreation. According to Calarco, moving into one facility will make things much more efficient.

Moving into the new building cost approximately \$30,000, as some upgrades and changes were necessary. However Calarco said this was not a large expense and all of the work was done in-house with the money coming from Parks and Rec. programming.

While it may sound like a large sum, Calarco said this number includes necessary upgrades, some of which would have taken place despite a new location. These include around \$8,000 for new computers and recreation software and \$12,000 for an air conditioning system.

Calarco described the move as a win for ev-

eryone because the change utilizes town space at a modest cost. He also noted the building's open layout that will serve as a great meeting place for the town's committees.

However, with the change in location, the department will have fewer hours of operation. The office is now open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Previously, it was open Monday through Wednesday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., Thursday from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. and on Fridays from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Quite suitably, Parks and Rec. now resides in Burnt Hill Park. It was less than two years ago, in August of 2009, that the park first opened. Burnt Hill Park is 171 acres composed of two baseball fields, two football fields, one soccer field, walking trails, a pavilion and now the Parks and Rec. Department. According to Calarco, prior to 2007 the area was still "chicken farms and corn fields."

Parks and Rec. encourages everyone to stop by and check out its new location and find out more about the numerous programs offered. Activities include aerobics and cardio classes for adults, guitar and martial arts classes for youth, and music and ballet classes for preschool children.

The department also hosts community events such as the Snow Sculpture Contest, which runs through March 5. Visit the new office to find out more.

For more information call 860-530-1281 or visit hebronct.com/parks.htm.



The Parks and Recreation Department moved out of Town Hall last week and now operates out of its new office at Burnt Hill Park, located at 148 East St.

Andover Police Make Arrests in October Armed Robbery

by Courtney Parent

Two Columbia residents were arrested Friday, Feb. 11, in connection with an armed robbery that occurred last October in the parking lot of the 7-Eleven on Route 6, State Police said.

Anthony Flemke, 27, of Columbia, was charged with accessory to first-degree robbery, accessory to second-degree larceny, conspiracy to commit first-degree robbery and conspiracy to commit second-degree larceny, State Police said.

Kelly Danforth, 27, also of Columbia, was charged with accessory to commit first-degree robbery, conspiracy to commit first-degree robbery and conspiracy to commit second-degree larceny, State Police said.

Bond for each was set at \$75,000.

Flemke's and Danforth's arrests came nearly three weeks after the arrest of the main suspect in the Oct. 19 robbery. On Jan. 23, Chadwick Matzdorff, 32, was charged with first-degree robbery and second-degree larceny, according to the state judicial website.

Bond for Matzdorff was set at \$200,000, and his next court date was listed on the judicial website as March 11.

State Police at Troop K in Colchester reported receiving a call of an armed robbery in the parking lot of the convenience store at around 9 p.m. Oct. 19. Upon exiting the 7-Eleven, State Police said, two women were approached while seated in their car by a person wearing a ski-type mask, black gloves and dark clothing. The subject opened the vehicle's driver side door and placed "what was reported to be a hand gun" against one of the females in the car, State Police said.

The robber told the females to "give me all you got" multiple times. The robber then took a purse off of one of the female's laps and fled into a nearby wooded area, State Police said.

According to an affidavit on file at Rockville Superior Court, Flemke and his girlfriend, Danforth, were living with Matzdorff in Lebanon at the time of the robbery. Danforth told police she was an acquaintance of one of the two alleged victims, and often bought the prescription drug Percocet from her, the affidavit said.

The alleged victim had set up a meeting with Danforth, according to the affidavit, so that she could collect \$300 Danforth owed her for prescription pills and money loaned. The original meeting place was supposed to be a Citgo station on Route 6 in Bolton, but the alleged victim told police that when she arrived there it was closed. She then called

Danforth and told her to meet at the 7-Eleven instead, the affidavit said.

According to the affidavit, the robbery spurred from a controversy over rent payments. Danforth and Flemke both stated that Matzdorff had fallen behind in his rent and owed them money.

There was disagreement over who planned and initiated the robbery. Matzdorff told police that Danforth and Flemke threatened to kick him out if he did not rob the alleged victim and get their rent money in the amount of \$125. Danforth stated that Matzdorff overheard her on the phone with the alleged victim and later told her he was going to get their money and asked to use her car. Flemke told police after confronting Matzdorff about the overdue rent, Matzdorff asked to use Danforth's car saying he was going to his mother's house to get the money. Both Danforth and Flemke told police that Matzdorff returned to the house after one to two hours.

The three charged all told police a different variation of events, but they all agreed that Matzdorff committed the robbery, with a black and silver BB gun they kept in the house. They also agreed that all that was gained from the robbery were three Bic lighters. Cash and prescription pills were expected, but Matzdorff stole the wrong purse, the one belonging to the second woman seated in the car, and not that of the woman Danforth was going to be meeting, the affidavit said.

Flemke told police that the day after the robbery, on Oct. 19, Danforth instructed him to get the gun out of the house. According to the affidavit, Flemke and Matzdorff proceeded to a local Subway on Route 207 in Lebanon. Flemke went inside to get a sandwich, while Matzdorff disposed of the gun.

According to the affidavit, on Jan. 10, police received telephone records from Verizon Wireless, which were obtained through a search warrant. The search warrant covered the contact numbers given by Danforth, Matzdorff and the alleged victim known by Danforth. Records showed text messages between Danforth and the alleged victim prior to the robbery. Records also indicated that two calls were placed from Matzdorff's phone to Danforth's phone at the approximate time of the robbery, the affidavit said.

Both Flemke and Danforth appeared in Rockville Superior Court this past Tuesday, Feb. 22. They are both next due in court March 11, at Tolland Superior Court, according to the state judicial website.

Hebron Police News

2/16: The Resident State Trooper's office is investigating a complaint that a contractor fraudulently agreed to make home improvements for a Wall Street resident. State Police said the contractor agreed to conduct home improvements without the proper license, and also stole \$850 after not completing the agreed-upon improvements.

Andover Police News

2/16: Sometime between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. a residence on Boston Hill Road was burglarized, State Police said. Several items were stolen and the case is under investigation.

2/20: Shelly Lewis, 47, of 2 Center Rd., was charged with third-degree criminal mischief and disorderly conduct, State Police said.

Marlborough Police News

2/17: Kathleen Sullivan, 64, of 87 Prospect Hill Rd., Colchester, was charged with DUI and making a restricted turn, State Police said.

2/19: Brittany Rondeau, 24, of 18 High Meadow Rd., was charged with disorderly conduct and third-degree assault, State Police said.

Woman Sustains Multiple Injuries in Colchester Crash

A Lebanon woman was transported to Hartford Hospital Sunday, Feb. 20 with multiple injuries after she crashed into a telephone pole on Lebanon Avenue, Colchester Police said.

Melanie Gorman, 59, was traveling westbound in a 1995 Mercury Grand Marquis when she veered into the eastbound lane and struck a telephone pole at around 7:56 a.m., police said.

Police listed Gorman as having a possible

broken left arm, as well as head, neck and back injuries. She was transported via Colchester Hayward Volunteer Fire Department to Hartford Hospital, police said. On Tuesday, she was listed in "good" condition, hospital staff said.

Her car sustained "severe front-end damage," police said.

Gorman was issued a written warning for failure to drive right.

Colchester Police News

2/10: Marcin Zygmunt, 19, of 47 Westerly Ter., was charged with possession of less than four ounces of marijuana, State Police said.

2/15: A burglary at Walt's Country Motors on New London Road was reported at 8:08 a.m., Colchester Police said. Entry was made through the locked door sometime during the evening hours between Feb. 14 and 15. Approximately \$1,500 was stolen, police said.

2/18: Two 17-year-old males were charged with possession of less than four ounces of marijuana, Colchester Police said.

East Hampton Police News

2/9: John Lachappelle, 54, of 100 Wells Rd., Amston, was issued a summons for objects obstructing view and operating a motor vehicle with a suspended license, East Hampton Police said.

2/9: Eva Terrones, 21, of West Hartford and Dean Michelson, 57, of East Hampton, were involved in a two-vehicle accident on Old Marlborough Road, police said. Terrones was issued a written warning for following too close, police added.

2/13: Danielle Judith Jacobs, 22, of 127 Falls Rd., East Haddam, was arrested for second-degree robbery, two counts of third-degree assault, two counts of second-degree larceny, breach of peace and conspiracy to commit sec-

ond-degree robbery, police said.

2/13: Daniel H. Cook, 47, of 1 Young St., was arrested for two counts of violating probation, police said.

2/14: Cony Caso, 44, of East Hampton and Shawn Saunders, 38, of Hartford, were involved in a two-vehicle accident on Skinner Street, police said. Caso was issued a written warning for following too close, police added.

2/14: Teresa M. Tomasino, 18, of 5 Cherokee Rd., Middlefield, was arrested for second-degree robbery, two counts of third-degree assault, two counts of second-degree larceny, second-degree breach of peace and conspiracy to commit second-degree robbery, police said.

Obituaries

East Hampton

Dorothea Hall Leydens

Dorothea Elizabeth (Enegren) Hall Leydens, 90, of Haddam Neck, widow of the late Malcolm M. Hall and the late Issac "Ike" Leydens, died Sunday, Feb. 20 at Middlesex Hospital.

Born May 4, 1920 in Staten Island, NY, she was the daughter of the late David and Anna (Anderson) Enegren.

She had lived in Haddam Neck for the past 87 years. She was a member of the Haddam Neck Covenant Church and a former member of the Church Choir. Dorothy was the former owner and president of Bailey's Express, Inc. and had previously worked for the former Connecticut Bank & Trust.

She was an avid lifelong Red Sox fan, and she loved to crochet and knit. She was a real old fashioned grandmother who would always have cookies for her grandchildren and would knit hats and mittens for them.

Besides her parents and husbands she was also predeceased by her only son, and daughter-in-law, John M. Hall Sr. and Beverly A. Hall; and a sister, Eleanor Day.

She leaves to mourn her passing her grandchildren, Heather Mokoski of Amston, Michael Stevens of Haddam Neck, Holly Cavanaugh of East Hampton, John M. Hall Jr. of Auburn, MA, and Joshua Hall of Haddam Neck; eight great-grandchildren, Amelia, Zachary, Hannah, Caleb, Jason, Aldan, Keegan and Colton; nephews, Miles, Jonathan and Rodney Day; and a sister-in-law, Pauline Leonard.

Funeral services will be held today, Feb. 25 at 11 a.m. in the Haddam Neck Officiating Church with the Rev. Shelley Timber officiating. Burial will be in Rock Landing Cemetery.

Friends called at the Spencer Funeral Home on Thursday, Feb. 24.

Memorial donations may be made to the East Hampton Ambulance Association, P.O. Box 144, East Hampton, CT 06424.

To leave online condolences visit www.spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

Marlborough

Thomas Whitney Hooker

Thomas Whitney Hooker, 55, of Marlborough and formerly of Gilead, passed away Thursday, Feb. 17, at the Middlesex Hospital after a brief illness. Born July 29, 1955, in Hartford, he was a son of John J. and Martha (Whitney) Hooker of Gilead.

In addition to his parents, he is survived by his brother, Jack and wife, Sandy of Hebron; his sister, Mary O'Dea and her husband, John of Laurel, MD; a nephew, Jeff Hooker of Marlborough and a niece, Karen Hooker of New York City.

He will also be missed by his longtime caregivers and second "family" at the Jerry Daniels Group Home in Marlborough, where he resided. Though he was limited in many functional abilities due to Down syndrome, he always possessed a happy and loving spirit which endeared his caregivers and family to him. With a smile and a hug he became a friend.

Remembrances of his life will be shared with the caregivers at the Jerry Daniels Group Home at a time to be arranged and graveside services at the Gilead Cemetery will be observed in the spring at the convenience of the family.

The family wishes to thank the many dedicated caregivers who touched Tommy's life, especially those at the group home.

Donations can be made to the Gilead Congregational Church Memorial Garden, Gilead Street, Hebron, CT 06248

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

Portland

Alfred H. Puida

Alfred Henry Puida, 84, of Portland, beloved husband of Lois (Gordon) Puida for 61 years, passed away Friday, Feb. 18, at Middlesex Hospital. Born in Hartford, he was the son of the late William and Constance (Miller) Puida.

Al lived in Portland for 56 years, worked as an electrical engineer for Northeast Utilities for 36 years and was the first branch president of the Cromwell Ward of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. He was a veteran of WWII, serving in the US Navy and loved woodworking, gardening and animals.

Besides his wife, he is survived by two sons, William A. Puida and his wife Sarah of Portland and James L. Puida and his wife Sherri of South Windsor; his daughter, Devra Viers and her husband Douglas of Springhill, FL; 12 grandchildren, Robert and his wife, Kimberly, Stewart, Travis, Clayton, Douglas, James and his wife, Lauren, Brennan, Elyse, Adam, Ashley, Matthew and Hunter; and two great-grandchildren, Christopher and Taelor.

Funeral services will be held today, Feb. 25, at 11 a.m., at The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, 130 South St., Cromwell. Burial will be in the spring in the Swedish Cemetery in Portland. Friends called Thursday, Feb. 24, at the Cromwell Funeral Home, 506 Main St., Cromwell.

Friends who prefer may make donations in Al's memory to The Children's Tumor Foundation, 95 Pine St., 16th Floor, New York, NY 10005 or ctf.org.

Messages of condolence may be sent to the family at doolittlefuneralservice.com.

Portland

Henry J. Trella

Henry J. Trella, 82, died Saturday, Feb. 19, at Hartford Hospital. Born in Meriden on Oct. 31, 1928, a son of the late Peter and Nellie (Yara) Trella, Henry attended St. Stanislaus and Wilcox Technical Schools.

Henry worked for W&S Blackington Silver Co. prior to entering the Army where he served in Korea from 1951-53. After his honorable discharge, Henry worked for the Meriden Board of Education for 30 years, until his retirement in 1989. He was a resident of Portland for the past 50 years in a home he built himself on lakefront property.

Henry was always an avid outdoor enthusiast exemplified by his ice-skating at Hubbard Park in earlier years, to hunting, fishing, crabbing and clamming throughout his life. He was a member of the Portland Farmers Fish & Game Club as well as the New Haven Raccoon Club in Durham.

Henry is survived by his brothers, Ted, Benny, Peter and Joe and their respective spouses; his sisters, Emily Bryda and Stasia Murphy; many nieces and nephews to whom he was "favorite" uncle; and several great nieces and great nephews.

He was predeceased by brothers, Cas, Stanley and Ed; his sister, Helen Tone; nephews, Gary and Dennis and a great niece, Marcy Trella.

Funeral services were held Thursday, Feb. 24, from the John J. Ferry and Sons Funeral Home, 88 East Main St., Meriden, CT 06450 and St. Stanislaus Church for a Mass of Christian Burial. Internment will be in St. Stanislaus Cemetery. His family received relatives and friends Wednesday, Feb. 23, at the funeral home.

In lieu of flowers, gifts in Henry's memory may be sent to St. Stanislaus Church or School, 82 Akron Street, Meriden, CT 06450.

Condolences may be expressed at jferryfh.com.

Portland

Peter Brandon

Peter John Brandon, 74, of Portland, husband of Stephanie (Dell' Agnese) Brandon, passed away on Wednesday, Feb. 16, in Niantic. Born in Hartford, he was the son of the late John and Shirley (Carnell) Brandon.

Peter lived in Portland for 28 years and in Niantic for the last year. He graduated from the University of Hartford with a Bachelor's Degree and a Master's Degree, and retired from Kuhn Employment Agency in 1999.

Besides his wife, Peter is survived by three daughters, Selena Molinaro and her husband, John Woolard, Suriporn S. Sirivongsack, and Nutip Sriphonkang; two granddaughters, Heather Shonta and Nutaree Pangparu; a brother, John Brandon and his wife, Lori, of West Hartford; a sister, Judy Nigro and her husband, Tom, of Fort Myers, FL; a niece, Ashley Brandon; and two nephews, Jake Brandon and Tom Nigro.

A memorial service will be held on Saturday, Feb. 26 at 1 p.m. at The Church of the Holy Trinity, 381 Main St., Middletown, with the Rev. Margaret H. Minnick officiating.

Burial will be at the convenience of the family. There will be no calling hours.

In lieu of flowers, friends may make donations in Peter's memory to Hospice of Southeastern CT, 227 Dunham St., Norwich, CT 06360, The Church of the Holy Trinity, 381 Main St., Middletown, CT 06457, or First Congregational Church of Haddam, P.O. Box 215, Haddam, CT 06438.

Messages of condolence may be sent to the family at doolittlefuneralservice.com.

The Doolittle Funeral Home, 14 Old Church St., Middletown is handling the arrangements.

Colchester

Thomas Jarboe Sr.

Thomas Agustin Jarboe Sr., 86, of Colchester, formerly of East Killingly and Southington, peacefully passed away Monday, Feb. 21, at Middlesex Hospital. Thomas was born July 28, 1924, in Whitesville, KY, to the late Hilary L. Jarboe Sr. and Mary Bartley Jarboe.

A typical good old boy from Kentucky, he loved his country and his horses. At the age of 16 he joined the Civilian Conservation Corps Camp followed by the National Youth Administration before serving with the Merchant Marines in World War II. Thomas married Dorothy Hoff, his loving wife for nearly 67 years. Together they raised a family of four in Southington, where he worked for Pratt & Whitney before opening a Sunoco gas station on Queen Street in 1962. It was there that he began his life-long dream of raising and racing horses; Poppy's dream, Lil' Guy and Brownie were always close to his heart.

After leaving Pratt he worked for New Departure as a barring foreman. He temporarily moved back down south for two years to help set up a plant in Shreveport, LA, before retiring to East Killingly where he continued to own and train horses with his eldest son. Over the past few years he became interested in genealogy, tracing his roots back to 1760. It was deeply important to him that this information be passed down to his grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Besides his wife Dorothy, Thomas is survived by a daughter, Diane, and her husband John Kendrick of Colchester; three sons, Thomas A. Jarboe Jr. of East Killingly, James P. and wife Barbara Jarboe of East Putnam, Gary A. and wife Amy Jarboe of Plainville; his grandchildren, Meghan Jarboe Gagnard, Erik Jarboe, James Jarboe Jr., Justin Jarboe Kevin Kendrick, Robin Bushnell Jarboe Gardner Robert Bushnell III; and several great-grandchildren.

He was predeceased by four brothers, James E., Joseph H., Hilary L. Jr., Paul P. Jarboe, and his sister, Lillian "Sis" Barnett.

A memorial service will be held at 11 a.m. Saturday, Feb. 26, at the Belmont/Sabrowski Funeral Home, 144 South Main St., Colchester. Visitation will be one hour prior to the service.

Donations may be made to the American Heart Association in his memory.

Colchester

David Alan Lewis Sr.

David Alan Lewis Sr., 67, of Palatka, FL, formerly of Colchester, passed away unexpectedly at his residence Saturday, Feb. 19. He was born in Willimantic, and had been a resident of Palatka for the last five years, coming from Colchester.

David was a father and mentor to every person who was blessed enough to have him in their life. His infectious smile, fun-loving personality and humor will be missed by all. Some of his favorite hobbies were hunting, fishing and collecting coins. He enjoyed spending time with his children most. He was an entrepreneur who built many successful businesses including construction, insurance and restaurants. He was a member of many organizations including the Moose Lodge 184 of Palatka as well as prior membership in Connecticut.

He is preceded in death by his mother, Mary Lewis; and two brothers, Carlton Lewis and Douglas Lewis; and his former wife, Dorothy Fedus Lewis.

Survivors include his father, Lt. Col. Eugene Hall Lewis Sr., U.S. Army (Ret.), of Willimantic; three sons, David Alan Lewis Jr. of Waterford, Darryl Lewis (Susanne Allen) of Colchester and Douglas Lloyd Lewis (Jennifer Riley) of Colchester; one daughter, Christina Leigh Lewis of Colchester; three brothers, Eugene Hall Lewis, Jr., Gregory Paul Lewis and Robert Michael Lewis, all of Willimantic; three grandchildren, Connor Jacob Lewis, Christian David Charpentier and Allie Mae Lewis; and his former wife, Sandy Lockhart Lewis of Colchester.

He will forever be missed and remembered by not only his family but by all the close friends he has made through the years.

A memorial Service in celebration of his life will be held at the Aurora McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester, on Sunday, Feb. 27, at 2 p.m. The family will receive friends one hour prior to the service.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the ASPCA, 520 8th Ave., 7th Fl., NY, NY 10018, in honor of his dog, Skyler.

For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

Colchester

Harold L. Ross Jr.

Harold L. Ross, Jr., "Skip," 51, of Colchester, beloved husband of Linda (Gebert) Ross, passed away unexpectedly Friday, Feb. 18, at the Marlborough Clinic. Born Oct. 6, 1959, in Norwich, he was a son of Harold L. Ross Sr. of Colchester and the late Gloria (Shaw) Ross.

Skip was a hard-working and dedicated custodian for the Colchester school system for the past 30 years. Early on, he met the love of his life, Linda, at work, and they were married on June 21, 1986 at the Colchester Federated Church.

In his spare time, he was a Facebook fan and enjoyed playing "Farmville" and "Call of Duty." He will be remembered for the imprint that he made upon the entire Colchester school system and the community-at-large; and for his absolute love and devotion for his entire family and large circle of friends

In addition to his father and his wife of 24 years, he is survived by the second love of his life, his daughter, Samantha of Colchester; his sister and brother-in-law, Phyllis and Robert Taylor of Bozrah; two brothers, Robert and Wayne, both of Colchester; dear friends, Rose and Howard Daniels of Colchester, Judy Kudrak of East Hampton, Barbara and David Hock of Colchester and Rex Walden of East Hampton and their families; and numerous extended family members and friends.

Friends called Monday, Feb. 21, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. A chapel service followed. Burial will be private.

In lieu of flowers, donations in his memory may be made to Bacon Academy Music Dept., 611 Norwich Ave., Colchester, CT 06415.

For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.



Colchester

Lillian Elizabeth Patterson

Lillian Elizabeth Patterson, 80, of Colchester Commons and formerly of Meriden, beloved wife of Walter, passed away Sunday, Feb. 20, at Harrington Court GHC Center in Colchester. Born July 18, 1930, in New Haven, she was a daughter of the late James and Winifred (Poppe) Smith.



Mrs. Patterson worked for Mossberg in New Haven for many years before her retirement. She was a former member of Center Congregational Church in Meriden and had been active in numerous groups there before retiring to Colchester. In her spare time, she was an avid and talented quilter, loved arts and crafts and playing board games. Most importantly, she will be remembered by her family as a loving and devoted wife, mother and grandmother.

In addition to her loving husband of 56 years, she is survived by her son and daughter-in-law, James and Tammy of Salem; three grandchildren, Larry Hollis, Amanda Williams and Crystal Ghrist; a great-grandson, James Hollis; three siblings, Richard Smith and June Wilber, both of North Haven, and Ellen Thatcher of Westerly, RI; and numerous extended family members and friends.

Services will be observed Saturday, Feb. 26, beginning at 10:30 a.m. with visitation, followed by the memorial at 11:15 a.m. at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. Interment will be held this spring at Linwood Cemetery, Colchester.

In lieu of flowers, donations in her memory may be made to the American Diabetes Assn., 306 Industrial Park Rd., Suite 105, Middletown, CT 06457.

For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

East Hampton

Almon C. West

Almon C. West, born July 16, 1922, in East Hampton, passed away Monday, Feb. 14, at Northwest Medical Center in Tucson, AZ, at the age of 88.

A decorated veteran of WWII, Al returned to Marlborough and married Dorothy Blish. There they built a house on the Blish homestead and raised two children.

After 18 years as a model maker for Pratt & Whitney Aircraft, they moved to Lake Park, FL, where Al began a second career in the lumber and hardware business. Al served as a deacon at Marlborough Congregational Church and a volunteer fireman at the Marlborough Firehouse.

Al and Dotty enjoyed many years wintering in Florida and summers by the lake in East Hampton. He loved the outdoors, gardening, walking in the forest, and fly fishing for trout throughout New England. A love for automobiles required weekend visits to dealerships from Glastonbury to Salem. An excellent wood crafter, Al built and repaired wood products for countless friends and family. A friendly smile, a hot cup of coffee and gift to gab were Al's receipt for friendship for all who knew and loved him.

He is survived by his wife of 63 years, Dorothy of Tucson, AZ; daughter, Dorothy Slack and her husband Dale of Casa Grande, AZ; son, Kenneth West and his wife Cindy of Tucson AZ; a grandson, Jeffrey West and a great-grandson Jeffrey West Jr. of Thompson.

No funeral services are planned and burial in Marlboro Cemetery will be at the convenience of the family.



Andover

Jordan Matthew Porco

Jordan Matthew Porco, 18, of Andover, passed away unexpectedly Wednesday, Feb. 16, and is now snowboarding in the clouds with the angels. Born in Hartford Oct. 21, 1992, the loving son of Ernest A. and Marisa (Giarnella) Porco, he had been a lifelong resident of Andover.



A freshman at St. Michael's College in Winooski, VT, Jordan was a graduate of East Catholic High School, Class of 2010, and St. James School in Manchester. Jordan was an avid snowboarder and longboarder, and was a member of the Ski and Snowboard Club at St. Michael's. He was the creator of the "Revert Longboards" company, where he designed and manufactured Longboards.

A creative, easy-going young man, Jordan liked photography, the ocean, fishing, attending concerts, listening to music and making CDs for his friends. Jordan was also a "Foodie," enjoying a variety of gourmet foods, and volunteered many hours at the Covenant Soup Kitchen in Willimantic. Most of all, Jordan will be remembered as an energetic, caring and fun-loving individual who had a zest for enjoying life.

Jordan was predeceased by his paternal grandfather, Ernest A. Porco Sr. of Milford; maternal grandfather, Dr. Egidio Giarnella of Wethersfield; and maternal grandmother, Maria (Di Rubba) Giarnella of Wethersfield.

Besides his beloved parents, Ernie and Marisa of Andover, Jordan is survived by his younger sister, Taylor Gabriella Porco at home in Andover; paternal grandmother, Elvira (Manzo) Porco of Milford; his godmother/aunt, Dawn Cataldo and her husband, Robert, of Milford; godfather/uncle, Antonio DiRubba of Rocky Hill; aunts and uncles, Candice and Daniel Palange of Naugatuck, Elizabeth and Jim Quigley of Newington; special close friends, Sean Vieten, Emily Boushee, Antony Xenophontos, and his friends on the second floor of Lyons Hall, all of Andover, Megan Jones of Wethersfield, Colin McCarrick of Manchester, Brenden Morissette of Willington; many dear cousins, other relatives, friends, college friends at St. Michael's in Vermont, East Catholic High School and RHAM students and graduates.

Taylor will always remember him as loving, caring, sweet and compassionate. He was always smiling and could cheer anyone up. He would go out of his way for anyone and was funny, smart, goofy, and had a contagious smile. Jordan gave great bear hugs. He was her role model and best friend.

Funeral services were Tuesday, Feb. 22, with a Mass of Christian Burial celebrated at St. James Church, 896 Main St., Manchester. Burial followed at Cedar Hill Cemetery (Section 34), Hartford. Jordan's family received friends and relatives Monday, Feb. 21, at the D'ESOPPO-East Hartford Memorial Chapel, 30 Carter St., East Hartford.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to The Jordan Matthew Porco Memorial Foundation, c/o 78 Bear Swamp Rd., Andover, CT 06232-1102.

Jordan's family would like to extend their sincere gratitude and appreciation to the communities at St. Michael's College, East Catholic High School and St. James School for the outpouring of support, love and compassion shown and given to all of them.

For online expressions of sympathy to the family, visit desopo.com.