

RIVEREAST

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Portland resident Jennifer LaFave sustained a fractured skull, two black eyes, a concussion, a broken wrist, scrapes and bruises on her legs after an incident on Main Street in June. She said she was hit by a car. Police, however, told her she simply fell.

Was Portland Woman Hit By Car?

by Joshua Anusewicz

The Town of Portland website promotes Main Street as “a safe and wonderful environment for walking, jogging, or bicycle rides.” On any given day, you will see residents taking advantage of the sidewalks on both sides of the road, getting their daily exercise while enjoying the great weather.

Jennifer LaFave is one of the people you would usually see running along Main Street. LaFave is an avid runner and frequently goes to the gym. She has competed in several road races and, until Thursday, June 9, was training to run her first marathon.

Since that date, however, LaFave hasn’t been able to run much. At around 8 p.m. that evening, LaFave was running her usual route along the west side of Main Street, toward Indian Hill Avenue. As she reached Indian Hill Avenue, she turned around to run back up Main Street to her house.

As she turned, LaFave said she was hit by a car. She doesn’t know how it happened or what happened; she doesn’t remember much. LaFave said she found out later that a young girl who lives nearby saw her lying on the side of the road, unconscious and bloodied, and notified her father to call the police.

“The next thing I remember is waking up in the ambulance,” LaFave said. LaFave said she

vaguely remembers giving the police – Portland Officers Peter Paranzino and Eric Grant were on the scene – her address so that they could tell her husband of the accident. LaFave said one of the officers told her she had “fallen while running and had some minor injuries to [her] head.”

Fallen? “I’ve never fallen while running before – never,” LaFave said. And the injuries didn’t end up being very “minor” – LaFave spent two days at Hartford Hospital with a fractured skull in two places, two black eyes, a concussion, a broken wrist, and considerable scrapes and bruises on her legs. She still has a cast on her right wrist.

“There was blood all over my shoes; I had to throw them out,” LaFave said. “These were significant injuries.” LaFave said she also lacerated her left ear and it had to be glued back together.

One week after the accident, LaFave said she had still not heard anything from the police. She said she was able to speak with an officer after leaving voicemails at the station and asked why they were not looking into a hit-and-run. LaFave said she was told that there was “no physical evidence of [the incident] being a hit-and-run” and that her “injuries were not con-

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‘So Far, So Good’ for Arrigoni Traffic Flow

by Joshua Anusewicz

In late June, when construction began on the Arrigoni Bridge, locals feared for the worst. Cramped lanes, backups for miles, and journeys to other crossings of the Connecticut River in Haddam or Glastonbury were the talk of the town. And when the jersey barriers and traffic cones showed up, Portland residents braced themselves.

But after one month, most residents have come to the same conclusion: it’s hasn’t been that bad.

“All words have been good,” First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield said Monday. “It’s been very well managed.” Bransfield said that instead of receiving complaints about the traffic, residents have contacted her to let her know how well the project is going.

Bransfield said she has been most pleased with how “courteous” drivers have been yielding to other traffic to maintain a steady flow.

Kevin Nursick, director of communications for the state Department of Transportation, echoed Bransfield’s sentiments on the traffic situation, saying “so far, so good.”

“We haven’t seen anything out of order,” Nursick said Wednesday. “People are negotiating the work zones sufficiently, and we think some people have even altered their driving plans to avoid the bridge. I’m optimistic right now; it certainly hasn’t been the traffic monstrosity we thought it might be.”

Police from both Portland and Middletown have been stationed at their respective end of the bridge over the past month to oversee the flow of traffic. On the Middletown side, an officer has been stationed at St. John’s Square during rush hour to keep the intersection clear.

Recently, police presence has been scaled back. According to Portland Police, Middletown and Portland have been “rotating” which side an officer will be located on each week.

So far, there has only been one accident on the bridge – a minor accident on July 13 that closed the bridge for 20 minutes. Traffic on both sides of the bridge was stopped to allow emergency vehicles to attend to the crash. Bransfield said that “everything went according to plan” and there have been no other reports of problems for emergency vehicles.

One concern some residents have had is that it never seems like anybody is there doing work. But if you drive over the bridge during the day, the workers are there; you’re probably driving right on top of them.

Assistant District Engineer for the DOT Ken Farnoli said Wednesday that most of the workers are on the suspended platform underneath the bridge, where they are currently installing an “underdecking.” This underdecking will be steel netting that will prevent debris – and possibly workers – from falling into the river or

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Portland residents braced themselves for the worst when construction on the Arrigoni Bridge began in late June. But, one month into the project, things seem to be going smoothly. According to the DOT’s director of communications, “it certainly hasn’t been the traffic monstrosity we thought it might be.”

Portland Woman cont. from Front Page
sistent with actually being hit by a car.”

She was also told strike three – the case was being closed.

LaFave said she was in “disgust” when she received the police report – a month after the accident – and there were no witness statements, no pictures, and that some of the information was incorrect. The police report mentions that there are many potholes along that area of Main Street that could have caused “the fall”, but a quick drive along that stretch will tell you otherwise.

Phone calls to Paranzino and Officer David Bond, the investigating officer who prepared the police report, were not returned. Lt. Ron Milardo said Wednesday that he didn’t “know anything about” the case.

LaFave speculated that because most of the trauma was centered on her head, she may have been struck by the side mirror of a vehicle that was either driving behind her or turning into a driveway. There were no signs of tire marks or pieces of a vehicle that indicated a collision, which leads her to believe it was not a direct hit.

Regardless of how the incident occurred, life has been difficult for LaFave over the past two months. She is still attending physical therapy for the head injuries she sustained and is still in a cast. She said she has tried to get back into running, but can’t run more than two miles before getting dizzy and hasn’t been to the gym since the accident.

Work has also been a struggle for LaFave. She is a retail manager at Target in Windsor, and said it’s become “hard to focus” on performing tasks. She has often had to miss work simply because she can’t focus, and says she has lost wages because of it.

LaFave said she has spoken with a lawyer, but hasn’t decided how she wants to pursue the situation as of yet. LaFave said she’s “not sure if suing [the police] is the right thing to do,” but said she hopes to get at least an apology. She said she may pursue



Shown above is a close-up of facial injuries Jennifer LaFave sustained on June 9.

getting her medical bills covered, as they have reached a level “that [she] just can’t afford.”

Although the police were unable to find any witnesses, LaFave is holding out hope that somebody might have information about what happened that night. With the incident occurring on a main road, she said she thinks that somebody must have seen what happened and will hopefully come forward. But if nothing ever develops in the case, she will feel let down by the same officials that are in place to protect her.

“I feel like I was not a priority to this town and the Portland Police Department,” she said. “I was hit by a car on Main Street and not one thing was done to try and find who did this.”

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ground, Fagnoli said.

Fagnoli said that none of the deck has been torn up yet, but will be removed “in sections” when preliminary work underneath is complete. He said the asphalt on the two closed lanes, which is about two to four inches thick, and the sidewalk on the south side of the bridge have been taken off.

The closing of the two south lanes of the bridge is the first phase of the project, which is scheduled for completion in November. The second phase to repair the two middle lanes is scheduled to begin in December and be completed in April 2012. The third phase to complete the final lanes is scheduled to begin in May 2012 and the project will wrap up in November 2012.

Both Fagnoli and Nursick said that the project is “on schedule” and there have been no unforeseen obstacles. Nursick said that problems “can come up when dealing with older infrastructure” like the Arrigoni, which was built in 1938 and has remained mostly intact ever since.

The project, which is being entirely funded by the state, is slated to cost just under \$17 million. In April, the contract for the project was awarded to The Middlesex Corp. in Littleton, MA. Concerns over the bridge have been voiced for year by residents, but the concern came to a head in 2009 when the DOT inspected the bridge and gave it a three out of 10.

“This is something we have to do,” Nursick said. “We’ve waited long enough. The bridge has served dutifully for all of these years, but it’s time to make the proper upgrades.”

Fagnoli reminded residents that they were “not in the meat of the job” yet, and that circumstances could easily change. He said that the DOT “does envision the traffic picking up



Shown here is the platform which the DOT and The Middlesex Corp. are utilizing as they complete work on the Arrigoni Bridge.

a bit” in the fall, particularly when crews begin to work days and nights.

To ask questions or to offer comments or suggestions, the DOT has asked residents to e-mail them at DOT.Arrigoni@ct.gov.

From the Editor's Desk

Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

Well, if you made it all the way through my column last week, you probably are the type of person who has already heard: yes, the Mets did wind up trading Carlos Beltran after all. I was upset about it. Then I made peace with it. Now....well, I’m not so sure.

The Mets dealt Beltran for the Giants’ top pitching prospect, Zach Wheeler. The Mets proceeded to go on a tear against Cincinnati, the team whom they were playing when they traded Carlos. The Mets were dominant, and wound up sweeping the four-game series; a very difficult feat. And one could be forgiven for thinking.....you know, maybe this will all work out. Maybe their offense really can get by without Beltran. Maybe an improbable wild card run is a little less improbable.

Then came a reality check last weekend against, of all teams, the last-place Washington Nationals. The offense that had been rolling in Cincinnati went off the skids in our nation’s capital. David Wright, who had been hitting like crazy since returning from the DL, started making outs. The once-white hot Jose Reyes hit a terrible cold spell, hitting fly ball outs (and the speedy Reyes is best when he keeps the ball on the ground) and swinging at bad pitches.

The Mets returned home on Monday and proceeded to lose both Monday’s and Tuesday’s games in very painful fashion. Monday night, in their last at bat in the ninth inning, they hit a dramatic home run to tie the game, only to lose the game the very next inning thanks in part to some shoddy infield defense (it was the second straight game in which they’d come back to tie in the ninth inning, only to quickly lose the game anyway). Tuesday, they had a one-run lead in the ninth, only to wind up losing again, again due in part to some shoddy infield defense.

And before you knew it, the Mets were on a four-game losing streak, completely canceling out the nice little four-game win streak they’d experienced in Cincy. Perhaps most painful was that the Braves, in the lead for the wild card, had been losing too. Had the Mets won Sunday, Monday and Tuesday (and all three games were winnable), they’d find themselves 4 ½ games out of the wild card as I write this column Tuesday night. Instead, they have a ho-hum .500 record, and are in fourth place in their division.

Look, I’m not saying Beltran would’ve gotten the Mets these wins. He couldn’t have single-handedly stopped the bullpen from turning in pedestrian performances; he couldn’t have helped the infield defense be better. But when you lose games in close fashion (well, okay, Monday’s final score was 7-3, but maybe with Beltran here they wouldn’t have been down a run in the ninth inning to begin with), you can’t help but wonder what would’ve happened if the team leader in home runs and RBIs were still here.

But then I stop, and calm down, and think. The Mets very well could’ve been in exactly the same spot. Because that’s the kind of team the Mets have been all season, even with Beltran. They’re a streaky bunch; that’s how a team winds up with a record hovering around .500, never too far below it but never too far above it either. To paraphrase the wisened Katy Perry, they’re hot and they’re cold; they’re yes and they’re no.

Sandy Alderson, the club’s general manager, isn’t stupid, and likely knew this. Winning the wild card with Beltran would be a crap shoot, and with the Giants deal he brought back someone who is, like I said at the top of the column, one of the best prospects in the game, the number six draft pick from 2009. It’s tough not to pull the trigger on that.

I’ll keep watching the games, and hoping for the best; hey, ya gotta believe, right? I just hope I can stop wondering “what if?” But when you’re losing games in the ninth and 10th innings, and your best bat is located on the other side of the country, helping some other team win, well, it’s tough not to wonder.

I picked up a *Hartford Advocate* last week and, as always, the “News of the Weird” section proved interesting, particularly one item, which dealt with municipal government at its most bafflingly wasteful. It seems that in June, five young men gathered around the Mount Tabor Reservoir near Portland, OR, and one of the five urinated in it. This contaminated the 7.2 million gallons that served the city and, according to Water Bureau administrator David Shaff, the entire supply needed to be dumped.

An inquisitive reporter for the weekly newspaper *Portland Mercury* asked Shaff if the water supply is dumped every time an animal pees in it (or, worse, dies in it), the administrator said no, telling the reporter, “If we did that, we’d be [dumping the water] all the time.” Well, the intrepid reporter followed up, what’s the difference? Because, Shaff replied, “Do you want to be drinking someone’s pee?”

Another item in the “News of the Weird,” though, was more sad, and frustrating, than anything else. In May, a 53-year-old man committed suicide by wading into San Francisco Bay, 150 yards offshore, and standing neck-deep in the 60-degree water until he died. The worst part, though, is police and firefighters from the city of Alameda watched from offshore the entire time.

Why didn’t anyone intervene? A police lieutenant commented, “We’re not trained to go into the water [and] don’t have the type of equipment that you would use.” Local station KGO-TV chalked up the reluctance to budget cuts that prevented Alameda’s firefighters from being recertified in water rescues.

Okay, on to something a little cheerier: if you’re of a certain age, then you grew up watching the movie *Ferris Bueller’s Day Off* multiple times, be it on video or cable, and know the John Hughes classic inside and out. Well, Craig Berman, a contributor to *The Today Show’s* website, recently had a fun little entry. He imagined where the main characters from the movie would be now.

Ferris, Berman wrote, would be a very wealthy man. In the movie, you may recall, Ferris was none too pleased to have received a computer for his birthday instead of a car. But he knew how to use the machine to his benefit – hacking into the school’s computer to reduce the number of absences on his record – and this knowledge would serve him well after high school.

Berman predicted Ferris would combine his computer know-how with his knowledge of social networks to create “Ferrisbook,” long before Facebook creator Mark Zuckerberg even stepped foot in Harvard. The website would make Ferris a ton of money, cash that he’d use to buy the long-suffering Chicago Cubs. Ferris’ shrewd management skills would turn the franchise around, leading to a World Series title in 2008.

As for Ferris’ girlfriend, Sloane Peterson, she’d wind up marrying Ferris, Berman wrote, and would form her own cosmetics company. She would also develop a charity that brings children from inner-city Chicago to see the Art Institute. She would become such a name in the Windy City that she’d wind up with a starring role on *Real Housewives of Chicago*.

As for Cameron, well, initially things didn’t start out that hot. After his father discovered the wrecked Ferrari, Cam was shipped off to military school. However, the extra discipline would prove useful, Berman wrote, helping Cameron to excel on Wall Street. Cameron’s fondness of avoiding risks would also come in handy, helping him to avoid the recent meltdown. He would then become a leading financial magnate, avoiding the housing bubble and making a ton of money selling overvalued stocks.

Granted, it was just an alternate universe, but it’s still nice to know the *Ferris Bueller* leads all had happy endings.

See you next week.



Nearly 100 people gathered in the Village Center last Saturday to welcome home two soldiers. Senior Airman Nicholas Pawlak, shown at left with his girlfriend Courtney Cunningham, had been stationed at Bagram Airfield in Afghanistan since last year. Marine Lance Corporal Kristopher Schonagel, shown at right on crutches due to a recent car accident, has been stationed in Iraq and, most recently, Afghanistan.



Belldown Salutes Two Returning Soldiers

by Joshua Anusewicz

It was a true display of patriotism last Saturday evening, as close to 100 people gathered on the lawn of the Congregational Church of East Hampton in the Village Center to welcome home two soldiers who recently returned from service.

As the summer sun beat down on the picturesque scene of waving American flags, members of Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Post 5095 and the Ladies Auxiliary led Senior Airman Nicholas Pawlak and Marine Lance Corporal Kristopher Schonagel to the tree in the middle of the Village Center to remove their yellow ribbons. The ceremony was part of the Yellow Ribbon Welcome Home Program, which was launched this spring by East Hampton resident Ann McLaughlin.

Joining the ceremony and holding a row of over 20 American flags were the Patriot Guard Riders, a motorcycle group of veterans.

Pawlak, a 2004 graduate of East Hampton High School, has served in Japan, Mississippi and Oklahoma, but had been stationed at Bagram Airfield in Afghanistan since last year. He arrived in Hartford on Saturday afternoon and was surprised by the warm welcome.

"I knew there would be some welcome, but nothing like this," Pawlak said as he looked around at those in attendance. "The people of East Hampton are wonderful. I'm proud to be from East Hampton."

Pawlak said he will return to Tinker Air Force Base in Oklahoma City in two weeks, and will be spending time with family and friends in the meantime. He will serve at Tinker until November 2012 and said he will only be deployed "if something big happens."

Schonagel, a Vinal Tech graduate, has been stationed in Iraq and, most recently, Afghanistan. He has served as a driver and "assault man" in the Marines.

"Thank you to the town of East Hampton," Schonagel said to the crowd. "And a special thanks to my family for sticking by me for the last few years." Schonagel has completed his service and will complete a vehicle mechanic's training program in Boston.

Schonagel attended the ceremony on crutches due to an injury stemming not from combat, but from a recent motorcycle accident that resulted in a leg fracture.

Both of the soldiers returning home received a proclamation from the Town Council,

represented by councilor Christopher Goff, as a sign of appreciation from the town. The two soldiers then removed their ribbons with their families.

Before the two returning soldiers were recognized, the family of recently-deployed U.S. Army Specialist Roger Boulanger was on hand to place a ribbon around the tree for their son. Boulanger, 21, has been stationed at Fort Hood in Texas for three years, and was recently deployed to Shindand Air Base in Afghanistan, where he will serve for the next year. Boulanger is an armory specialist and repairs most hand-held weapons.

Boulanger's parents, Ray and Jackie, said that he is "doing well" and that "he loves what he does." They said that the deployment was a long time coming for Boulanger, who has waited with other soldiers at Fort Hood to go overseas. Ray said that the younger soldiers were getting upset that older soldiers, even members of the National Guard, were getting chosen over soldiers like Roger.

When the opportunity arose to go to Afghanistan, Ray said Roger "jumped at it" and volunteered. Roger said he wanted to take a turn so that other soldiers could return home.

"It has to make you proud when you hear that," said Jackie. "He's doing what makes him happy, and it really makes us proud."

Missing from the ceremony was Navy Commander Michael Flatley, who was the first soldier welcomed back by the Yellow Ribbon Welcome Home Program on June 30. Flatley was scheduled to cut off his ribbon at the ceremony, but was unavailable. McLaughlin said that Flatley will cut off the ribbon soon, as he will be moving to Texas later this month.

McLaughlin got the inspiration for the program from her grandson Sgt. Arron McLaughlin, a member of the U.S. Army Reserve and Purple Heart recipient. She was all smiles at Saturday's ceremony, proudly wearing a yellow ribbon that read "chairman." She only had a few words for the crowd, but thanked the members of the Ladies Auxiliary for all of their help. She also responded to a question someone asked her earlier in the day, which she saw fitting to share.

"Someone asked me, 'How long is this program going to go for?'" Ann said. "When all the yellow ribbons are off the tree!"

Former East Hampton Resident Found Dead in Hartford

by Joshua Anusewicz

A Hartford Police detective and former East Hampton resident was found dead on Monday morning.

Seth Condon, 34, was found dead by his girlfriend around 8:30 a.m., according to published reports. Autopsy results are still pending, according to the state medical examiner's office, and could take up to eight weeks.

Condon was a major crimes detective for the Hartford Police Department, working on high-profile cases such as the 2008 murder of Ashley Peoples. According to published reports, in January 2009 Condon contacted the TV show *America's Most Wanted* and asked producers to feature the suspect in the case, Darryl Crenshaw, who was a fugitive. Crenshaw was later found in Mexico and sentenced to 78 years in prison for the crime.

According to Condon's obituary, he grew up in East Hampton and worked as a volunteer for the East Hampton Fire Department. He attended Xavier High School in Middletown and the Fire Science Academy in Montgomery County, MD. While at the

academy, Condon received a special recognition for saving someone from a high-rise building in Washington, DC.

After graduating from the academy, Condon joined the New York City Fire Department. He also worked as a dispatcher for the Troop K State Police Barracks in Colchester, before moving to the Hartford Police and working his way up to detective, the obituary said.

According to published reports, Hartford Police had recently opened an internal affairs investigation of Condon after he allegedly used illegal drugs. The status of the investigation has yet to be announced.

Hartford Police Chief Daryl K. Roberts would not comment on the investigation or the death of Condon.

Condon no longer lived in East Hampton, the obituary said, but his mother Nancy and stepfather Richard still reside in the town. A service was held at Spencer Funeral Home in East Hampton yesterday.

Condon's full obituary appears on page 14.

LifeStar Called After Crash in East Hampton

by Joshua Anusewicz

A one-car crash on Tuesday night required a LifeStar helicopter to transport the driver to the hospital, said Sgt. Garritt Kelly of the East Hampton Police.

Robert McGinn of Portland was traveling on Middletown Avenue (Route 16) near the intersection with Main Street. According to a witness that was driving behind McGinn, the vehicle crossed the center line and went off

the road, crashing into a tree. No other cars were involved and McGinn's vehicle had no passengers, Kelly said.

Kelly said that McGinn suffered "moderate injuries" and that LifeStar was brought in "as a precaution." McGinn was transported to Hartford Hospital, police said; on Wednesday, a representative at the hospital would not release any information on McGinn.

Two Teens Charged in Car Break-Ins in Portland

by Joshua Anusewicz

Portland Police have arrested two juveniles in connection with a string of car break-ins in the downtown area over the past two months.

Lt. Ron Milardo said Wednesday that two Portland juveniles, ages 15 and 16, were arrested for larceny and criminal trespassing earlier this week. The arrests are part of an investigation into roughly 25 break-ins in the area between Main Street and High Street. Milardo said that the thieves have been targeting unlocked cars and stealing things like computers, jewelry, and change.

Milardo said the investigation is still ongoing and that "more arrests are currently pending." He said there were "several groups" involved in the crimes.

Milardo asked that residents continue to secure their vehicles and report any unfamiliar people in their neighborhood. He added that although the break-ins have been occurring in the downtown area, residents throughout town should continue to take the proper precautions to prevent break-ins.

Portland Horse-Riding Instructor Gets 21 Months in Prison

by Joshua Anusewicz

A horse-riding instructor who was convicted of violating his probation by attending a horse show in October 2010 was sentenced on Monday to 21 months in prison.



Johnson

Robert L. Johnson was convicted of sexually assaulting a 14-year-old in 2001 in Portland, served nine months in prison and then was placed on probation for 10 years. His probation discharge date was extended to January 2015 when he was found guilty of violating his probation for not complying with "sex offender treatment."

According to a representative at the criminal clerk's office at Middletown Superior Court on Tuesday, the sentence is for 63 months sentence, suspended after 21 months; after his release, he will be put on probation for 10 years. After the sentencing, Johnson was immediately transported to Hartford Correctional Center.

Johnson is the former owner of Quarry Town

Stables in Portland, where Johnson was accused of sexually assaulting a 14-year-old girl multiple times in 1999. After being found guilty of the offense in 2001 and serving his nine-month sentence, Johnson was placed on probation that stated he was to have "no contact directly or indirectly with the victim." It also stated that Johnson could not "leave the State of Connecticut without permission from" his probation officer, James Morrison III.

According to an arrest warrant on Middlesex Superior Court, on Sept. 24 of last year, Johnson received permission from Morrison to attend the All-American Quarter Horse Congress in Ohio, where his wife would be competing. Morrison ordered Johnson to return by Oct. 7, as Morrison had been told by the victim that she would be attending the event on Oct. 9.

On Oct. 7, Johnson confirmed with Morrison that he had returned to Connecticut, but on Oct. 9, Morrison received a call from the victim stating that "two of [her] clients observed Robert Johnson" at the event. The victim then informed Ohio State Police that were at the location of the situation, and the police questioned Johnson. Ohio State Police then contacted Morrison

and said that they were questioning Johnson, who then told Morrison that "he thought he could get away with" going back. Johnson returned to Connecticut on Oct. 10 and submitted to electronic monitoring and was put under house arrest.

After several days of litigation, Johnson was found guilty of violating his probation last Wednesday, July 27.

Johnson's attorney, Thomas Luby, said this week that the sentence was "longer than what Mr. Johnson hoped for, but less than he feared it might be." Luby said the maximum sentence would be the full 63 months, and that the prosecution had asked for 40 months. Luby said his client asked for leniency during deposition, stating that Johnson "was given the opportunity" to explain his reason for going back to Ohio, which was to support his wife in her competition.

Luby said the explanation was "very important" to Johnson, whom Luby said is now "very concerned for his wife and mother, who will now be running his farm." Johnson and his wife Michelle own and operate Johnson's Working

Performance Horses in Woodstock, where the two now live.

The sexual assault conviction was not Johnson's only encounter with the law. In 2008, Andrew Srb filed a civil suit against Johnson, alleging Johnson had sexually assaulted him in 1987, while he was a student at Quarry Town Stables in Portland. In April 2010, a six-member jury awarded Srb \$1.27 million in damages, and Judge Mary-Margaret Burgdorff later added another \$400,000 in additional damages. But since Johnson's farm was facing foreclosure and he was uncertain if he could pay the fees, an agreement was reached that granted Johnson's property to Srb.

Last August, when Srb took possession of the property, he found it heavily damaged, with windows smashed, hateful messages spray-painted and horse manure and garbage spread throughout the buildings. Johnson admitted to the *Rivereast* he "left a mess" for Srb. However, Portland Police said last week that Johnson was never charged with vandalizing the property.

CIRMA Awards Portland Nearly \$24,000

by Joshua Anusewicz

On July 25, the Connecticut Interlocal Risk Management Agency (CIRMA) presented First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield with a \$23,964 check for Portland's prorated share of the agency's \$3 million Members' Equity Distribution.

The award comes from a nine-year capitalization effort by CIRMA to build Members' Equity, which has grown 150 percent to \$80 million.

According to Bransfield, who also serves on the CIRMA's Board of Directors, the award is essentially "a rebate." Bransfield said the agency has "done well" over the past decade and the board decided to begin giving equity back to its members.

CIRMA serves 343 municipalities and public schools in the state and is the state's largest municipal insurer, providing both workers' compensation and liability-auto-property coverage. The non-profit company is member-owned and governed.

"We are very pleased to provide this distribution of equity to our members," said Bruce Wollschlager, CIRMA's president and chief executive officer. "This distribution is made possible by the commitment and collaboration of our members, our strong capital position and our stable financial performance."

Wollschlager said that the distribution is "un-

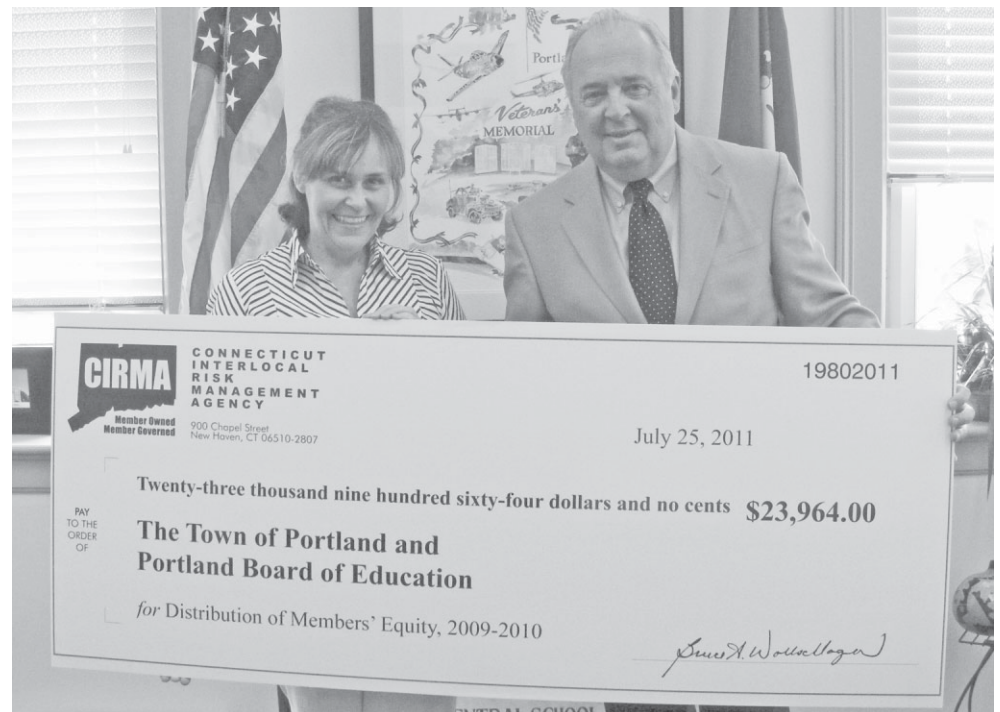
restricted" and is presented as a check rather than a credit, which allows "each member [to] use it as they need."

Bransfield said Tuesday this is the first distribution CIRMA has done. She added that the amount that each member is given is based on the size of the town and how much each entity has paid.

To be eligible, the member has to have had "continuous participation" in programs that generated contributions to the agency during the past three fiscal years.

"The Members' Equity distribution is an extraordinary accomplishment built on CIRMA's sound financial management and its members' successful risk management efforts," said Frank Chiaramonte, CIRMA chairman and first selectman of Harwinton. "When so many towns are faced with reduced sources of funding, we're pleased that CIRMA is able to make this distribution."

Bransfield said that the Board of Selectmen plans to discuss what to do with the award at their next meeting on Wednesday, Aug. 17. Members of the Board of Education, which also makes contributions to CIRMA, will be in attendance, as well. Bransfield said the money is in the town's general fund "for now," but said the money was never budgeted because the town "didn't know the amount" they would receive.



The town recently received \$23,964 from the Connecticut Interlocal Risk Management Agency (CIRMA). Shown here are First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield, left, and CIRMA President and Chief Executive Officer Bruce Wollschlager.

Hebron Town Manager Moving On?

by Courtney Parent

Hebron may soon be in the market for a new town manager, as current manager Bonnie Therrien was recently named one of the top four candidates vying for the position of town manager in Falmouth, MA.

Therrien and three other candidates were presented by a three-member screening committee to the Falmouth Board of Selectmen as the top candidates last Monday, July 25.

Therrien said Wednesday the decision to apply for the out-of-state position was based upon one main factor: retirement.

As it has always been a dream of both herself and her husband to retire in an area on the water, Therrien said she wanted to "investigate the opportunity" when the position in Falmouth became available.

While Falmouth's town manager position would essentially serve the same purpose as her current position, Therrien said it would focus on "different issues," with the combination of a larger population and the tourism aspect. (Therrien said Falmouth has a population of approximately 30,000, which can rise to nearly 90,000 with summer tourists. Hebron's current population is 9,000.)

Another big difference that Therrien pointed to would be in regards to annual budget composition. Specifically, she pointed to Proposition 2 1/2, which is a Massachusetts statute that limits property tax increase by municipalities to 2.5 percent.

Board of Selectmen Chairman Jeff Watt said Wednesday that Therrien had informed the board of her candidacy "a couple weeks ago," and from an "opportunity standpoint" he could understand that it would be hard to pass up.

In addition to the increased population and opportunity to live on the water upon her husband's upcoming retirement, Watt said there would also be a substantial pay increase.

"If they've got the opportunity to make maybe \$30,000 more...I can understand that," said Watt.

Therrien started as Hebron's town manager in April 2010. She took over from a three-member town manager team composed of Public Works Director Andy Tierney, Executive Assistant Donna Lanza and Town Planner Mike O'Leary. The three had been sharing the town manager duties - in addition to their own full-time jobs with the town - since Jared Clark's departure in 2009.

Watt said that if Therrien is selected for and accepts the position in Falmouth, her time as Hebron's town manager would've been "about the norm."

Watt said the town has seen multiple short-term and interim managers in the years following Robert E. Lee's departure. (Lee served as Hebron's town manager from 1989-2004). A year-and-a-half term as town manager is normal, said Watt.

As of Wednesday, Therrien said she had one interview with the search committee under her belt and the next step would be a secondary interview with the "elected bodies" later this month.

Therrien said a decision is anticipated to be made by the end of the month. But, she added, "[I] know how those things go," and it may take longer.

"I just wanted to investigate the opportunity," said Therrien. "I don't know what's going to happen. I could still be here."

"She's in the final four now," said Watt, "so if that's something she really wants to do, we give her our full support."

Falmouth Board of Selectmen Chairwoman Mary Pat Flynn did not return calls for comment.



Town Manager Bonnie Therrien is currently in the running for the same position in Falmouth, MA.

Hebron Public Works Brings Home the Bronze

by Courtney Parent

The Public Works Department took third place in the 2011 Connecticut Creative Solutions competition late last month. The award – for an automated watering system – was the handiwork of Fleet Manager Jeff Robitaille.

The purpose of the watering system was to increase the safety and efficiency of the department's street sweeping procedures.

According to Robitaille, in order for Public Works to sweep the streets, they must first water them down to ensure that any dust which might stir is settled. However, the water tanks used in the street sweeping process had to be turned on manually, meaning that drivers would have to pull off the road and exit their vehicles at each location. Robitaille said this not only meant a "loss of time," but also an "unnecessary loss of water."

The invention is "air-powered," utilizing the air pressure system that would normally be used to open the tailgate to turn the water on and off. (The tailgate is removed to place the water tank on the trucks anyway.)

According to Director of Public Works Andy Tierney, the Creative Solutions competition is an annual event open to public works departments in all 169 towns in the state. This year, Tierney said more than a dozen towns entered a "creative solution." Tierney said that while Hebron has entered the competition in past years, they have never placed, but did receive an honorable mention once.

According to the Connecticut Creative Solutions Award Program website, t2center.uconn.edu/solutionsaward, the purpose of the competition is to "recognize the initiative and innovative thinking of public agency transportation staff in the development of tools, equipment modifications, and processes that increase safety, reduce cost, improve efficiency and improve the quality of transportation."

The program also intends to identify and help distribute ideas created in the field so that other towns can implement them and promote continued improvement within the state.

Tierney credited the safety factor of the invention as an "extreme" one, which takes his crew out of harm's way. Rather than having drivers constantly exiting and entering their vehicles while on main roads, they can operate the water valve from the safety of their truck's cab.

"Nine out of 10 times the guys are on major roads where traffic is continuing to pass by...maybe at an unsafe pace," said Tierney. "They could end up with anything from a twisted ankle or leg injury to getting run over in the worst-case scenario."

According to Robitaille, the automated watering system not only makes the job safer, but it is also more efficient in terms of water usage.

"It's more conservative on water," Robitaille said, "and since no water is lost in the process the guys won't be wasting time going to re-fill

the truck as frequently."

Prior to his creation, Robitaille said the Public Works Department was likely using an extra half tank of water during each daily excursion. Normally, Robitaille said the tank is filled twice daily. (One of which is at the end of the day to get the truck ready for the next morning).

Robitaille added that the sweeper truck also has a water tank that is utilized while the large water tank is being re-filled. However, the sweeper water tank is only approximately half the size.

Tierney added that along with saving time and water, the new contraption also prevents dust and other materials from turning into mud and therefore, making it too heavy to sweep.

In addition, Tierney said that Robitaille's creation takes the "miserable" out of the job. Normally, Tierney said there is one person driving the dump truck, another on the sweeper truck and a third person on the water truck – and the one on the water truck typically would feel as though they were "being punished," Tierney cracked. But now, he said, everyone is on a level playing field and "the guys love it."

The creation of the new water system came as a result of Robitaille's investigative nature; as he described it, he is "always thinking of something to make or redesign or remake."

According to Tierney, Robitaille is an "out of the box" thinker, always concocting new

ways to improve existing operations to make them better.

"In this economy, that's the kind of employee we're looking for," said Tierney. "He's just a great person to have on your crew."

Despite winning third place, Robitaille said that he never planned on entering the competition and it was actually his "boss," Tierney, who entered him. In fact, Robitaille said he created the automated watering system over a year ago and this is Public Works second year using it.

In regards to receiving news of the achievement, Robitaille said that it caught him "off guard" as it was what he referred to as a "kind of simple project," which took approximately one hour to create. Robitaille modestly expressed his excitement by simply saying, "Andy told me I got third...so that was good."

According to the Creative Solutions website, winners will be honored at the annual Technology Transfer Center graduation ceremony, at which time they will receive the "Connecticut Creative Solutions" award. Other winners included the town of Vernon for a winter weather education outreach program and the city of Bridgeport for a gantry lifting device, said Tierney.

The winning projects, including Robitaille's, will also be featured at the state's Technology Transfer Expo in September and an article will be published in the Technology Transfer Newsletter about the "creative solution."

'Really Disappointed' DTC Co-Chair Steps Down in Marlborough

by Bailey Seddon

Russell West has resigned from his position as co-chairman of the Marlborough Democratic Town Committee, saying, "It's time to pass the baton, time to move on and get some more people in there."

West resigned following last Monday's caucus. At the caucus, he had nominated Linda Higgins for first selectman. When she was not chosen, West felt that the time had come to resign. He had shared the chairman title with Richard Banbury, who now becomes the sole chair; however, West will remain a member of the Democratic Town Committee.

While he resigned following Higgins' non-nomination, West said this wasn't a spur-of-the-moment decision; he had been thinking about it for a while.

"I have been really disappointed in the citizens of Marlborough," West said, "So few citizens are willing to step up to the plate and serve their town." He said he had talked to Republicans in town and they have been having the same problem of finding people to fill in the positions on the boards the town needs.

Over the last eight or so months, West said he spent a lot of time pursuing candidates to try to fill the Democratic slate and had found very few. He had looked for people who were both Democrats and unaffiliated to promote interest in serving the town. He was, however, mostly unsuccessful. To this extent, he wrote a July 6 letter to the editor in the *Rivereast*. In the letter, West tried to promote citizens interests by urging them to get involved, writing, "if you care about the future of your community...then consider getting involved."

West expressed similar thoughts this week. "We so often find people in the town who are disappointed with things," he said. "If you are disappointed step up and do something."

West said he felt many people in Marlborough are using their disappointment as

an excuse not to help the town. This is a "cop-out," he said.

West has been the DTC co-chair for the past three years, and said he feels "it's always a few people doing the work for most." He admitted, though, that he understands people are busy with their jobs, children and other activities. He mentioned that he himself waited until he was retired to be most active on the boards in town.

However, this does not excuse that fact that there are few people willing to serve the town, West said.

West referenced town members who have recently announced they won't be seeking reelection, such as selectman Joe La Bella, who has said he needs to spend time with his family and pursuing other interests. He said he feels the people who care about town, those who have complained about issues the town is having, have an obligation to now step forward to fill those vacancies.

During the budget process, West said, there was a very hostile atmosphere. Many people would attend one budget meeting, where they would complain and "be vicious," but then these same people would not show up to vote, he said. West said he would even call some of those that had complained to try to find out why they had not come, and typically they would respond that they were too busy. West also criticized those with children in school that want to complain but do not want to get involved with the Board of Education or any of the other organizations in town.

One of the biggest issues many residents have with town is the ongoing sewer project. West said there are a lot of complaints about the system but when he tries to get any of the complainers on the Water Pollution Control Authority, no one was willing.

"Big on complaints, short on action," West

said of the issues.

West has had a lot of experience with politics and the town of Marlborough. He was on the Lake Advisory Board for eight years, from 1999-2007. After leaving that board he ran – unsuccessfully – for the RHAM Board of Education. He has also been busy during election seasons, doing work ranging from signing voters in on Election Day to making phone calls on behalf of Joe Courtney during his campaigns.

"I liked that," West said of his volunteer work. While he needs a break, West is not done with the town; in addition to remaining on the DTC, he is also a placeholder on the Board of Finance slate until someone more permanent can be found.

He was put in as a placeholder because, "they know I'm a hustler," West said, laughing. The committee has until September to find a permanent Board of Selectmen candidate, since West is not ready to be on another board at this time.

"I have been kind of burnt out by it," he said. He is going to follow other pursuits, such as relaxing on the lake in his canoe, when he is not going to committee and board meetings. While he is giving the committee a little break, he says there is a good chance he might come back at some future point, as more than just a member.

"Whether it's the failure of myself" or the town to blame for people not getting involved on boards or commissions, West said he is not sure. But either way, he said, he needs a respite, as some of the work has been very unrewarding, since there are so few people heeding his call to serve.

Higgins said this week that, during his time as co-chair, West worked really hard, but lately it just hasn't been as exciting for him, due to people's reluctance to run for any boards. "It put him in a place of doing really hard work,"

that was no longer fun, she said.

Higgins, like West, wants to see some changes on the committee.

"There is no great energy and excitement... it's just not there," she said. "Maybe the whole model of how we do this just doesn't work anymore."

Higgins also was critical of how "nasty" people on different committees and boards can be toward each other, saying it is inappropriate.

"We need a sense of being a unified town," she said. "We don't have it."

Banbury had as many good words about West as Higgins did, saying, "Over my 20 years on the Democratic Town Committee in Marlborough, he is the hardest worker we have ever had."

Banbury agreed that it has been very difficult to get people to serve on boards and commissions, but does not think Marlborough is unique in this regard. In the future, as the chairman, Banbury is hoping "for less partisanship in this town," he said. Banbury said he felt this could be illustrated by the fact that they have cross-endorsed three Republican candidates: Mike Turner for the RHAM Board of Education, Barbara Murray for town treasurer and Nancy Dickson for town clerk.

"They are really good, dedicated servants of the town," which is why the Democrats are endorsing them, he said.

There was a lot of work to do running a town committee, Banbury said, and West worked hard to make sure it all got done well.

"He's just a dynamo and dedicated," he said. Because he is still on the committee, Banbury hopes West will continue to work, because he has a lot of energy and cares about the committee.

"He's the top of the list," Banbury said.

Old Firehouse in Colchester to Become Museum

by Bailey Seddon

The Colchester Hayward Volunteer Fire Department is looking forward to turning the old firehouse into a museum for historical fire equipment.

The exterior of the old firehouse, located on 54 Old Hartford Rd., was restored last year, and has a historic look to it.

"It really became an eyesore" and it was time to do something, said company president Dave Martin, hence the restoration.

Martin, who has been with the department for 19 years, said there were not many other options the fire department considered. A museum for the growing amount of memorabilia and the limited amount of space at the current firehouse seemed like a great idea to everyone. This way everyone can appreciate the old firehouse and the old mementos that the town has gathered over the years, such as a 1936 federal fire engine, that the company used to use.

"It's an idea fit for the property," said Art Standish, who has been with the department for 25 years.

"It's the most practical use for the property," Martin added.

While the outside looks like new, the inside needs work. Established in 1854, the historic building stopped being used in 1988, and since then has been used for storage of different town possessions. There is a lot of work to be done as the building has no water, heat, sheetrock and other such essentials to make it useable as a museum.

Martin offered the town a formal proposal in May, at a Board of Selectmen meeting and the board approved of the concept. From here it is just working on the details before the final proposal is officially approved. "We've got a ways to go," said Martin.

Besides the 110 volunteers the Hayward Fire Department currently has, the department is planning on doing fundraisers to raise donations to obtain the materials they will need for the project.

"We have all the tradesmen we need," said Standish, such as electricians, plumbers and carpenters, who are all volunteers at the firehouse. The current firehouse was 90 percent built by volunteers. It is the materials that are most needed to do the job. "It's still waiting to be donated," Standish said.

"We have some history of getting things constructed and completed," said Martin.

Once the museum is up, it will be a great recruitment aid for the fire department. Because of its location, right next to the historic Bacon Academy schoolhouse and on one of the main streets in town, the department is hoping the opening will get more people interested in vol-

unteering. They are anticipating being busiest when the green next door at Bacon opens up for summer events.

The department is also hoping that the fundraising may bring people forward with any firehouse souvenir they may have.

"I'm sure there are pieces of Colchester history out there," Martin said.

There are two floors in the old firehouse, but the first floor is the only one that will be having any work done. In order to register as a historic museum there would have to be an elevator, to fit requirements of being handicapped accessible, something that the department will not be able to afford until a later date.

"There are a lot of restrictions because of the federal grant money," Standish said.

Another one of these limits is a 10-year restriction that the exterior cannot be changed, which is the life of the grant term. The museum will also have to be open for 12 days out of the year, but this is not a restriction the department anticipates as being a problem.

"I think we will attract a lot of people over there," said Standish.

According to First Selectman Gregg Schuster, the grant was a Historic Preservation Grant, which was awarded to the town because the building was almost falling down. (Fifty thousand dollars was given, and an additional \$50,000 was matched by the town.)

"Overall, it's a win-win," Schuster said about the upcoming restoration. Since not a lot can be done with the property, "this makes perfect sense," he said.

Martin, Standish and Dan Rowland, who has been with the department for 41 years, all stood in the old firehouse earlier this week and discussed what it used to look like. There were two wings which were added to the side of the building but luckily, in Martin's opinion, they were taken down. Only two fire trucks could fit inside, several had to be outside and needed heaters in the winter to keep the engines from freezing. The firehouse also used to be half the size, a second garage door was built for another truck to be fit in.

"Towards the end it got pretty tight in here," Standish said, laughing.

Rowland agreed, "We had quite a bit going on in this little building," he said.

The upstairs was where the volunteers went to meet; the room was even used for town meetings at times. According to Rowland there was "all kinds of room to work," upstairs. This included a kitchen and a desk for the police officer to sit at.

Looking around the room it was easy to see, with a little work, how the building could be



The Colchester Hayward Volunteer Fire Department is making plans to transform its old firehouse into a new museum. Shown here is the firehouse as it currently looks.

turned into a museum, with a look of the time period in which it was originally built. More than anything there is plenty of space on the walls for big prints to be held.

"We've got a lot of memorabilia," Rowland said.

The project should take more than a year and a half to complete, Martin said. Some of the first and crucial things needed are insulation, sheetrock, lighting, plumbing and an alarm system.

"It's an ongoing project," Rowland said.

There is no cost estimate for the project yet, nor are there any fundraising dates yet, because the project has yet to get its final approval. However, the men said they are not worried about the people of Colchester pitching in. Anyone with old memorabilia or pictures they would like to donate is asked to do so, as it would add to the future museum.

"We are always looking for donations and help," Martin said.

Schuster couldn't be happier with the old firehouse becoming a museum. "I'm thrilled that the volunteers are stepping up to do this project," Schuster said, because he feels having a historical building is going to add to the historical aspect of the town.

"It is always important to remember the town's historical roots," said Schuster. With the restoration of the old firehouse, it will remind everyone what the town's firefighters have been through throughout the years, he said.

"The volunteers [in Colchester] are second to none," said Schuster, "they give back to the town in remarkable ways."

The Hayward Volunteer Fire Department has done a lot of different work around town, Schuster said. This includes the building of a training facility, in Schuster Park. There they have a "burn house" with three or four stalls made of metal shipping containers, which are built into different rooms so volunteers can be trained to fight fires and learn to control the environment of the fire. The volunteers used to have to go out of state for this kind of training but can now do it locally, said Schuster.

Schuster, like the fire department, is hoping that the town of Colchester will get even more volunteers during the fundraising construction of the museum. "Recruits are the life blood of the organization," he said, and are very valuable to the town. Colchester is getting to be a bigger town, said Schuster, and "we rely on those volunteers" when it gets busy for full-time firefighters, he said.

New Colchester Board of Ed Member Looking Forward to Term

by Bailey Seddon

John Reeve had not planned on being on the Board of Education. However, at a friend's suggestion, he decided to go for it.

"I thought this would be an interesting way to learn about the workings of the board," Reeve said.

Reeve had attended Board of Education meetings over the years, and, when board member Elizabeth Ciccone resigned and her position needed to be filled, he decided to see what it would be like from the other side of the table. He submitted a letter of intent and sat before the panel, where he was interviewed. At least one other person was approached for the position on the board, but in the end it was Reeve who got the job. He was appointed at a July 12 Board of Education meeting.

Reeve, a Republican, has lived in Colchester since 1995, and his three children are all currently in the Colchester school system. He has also served on the Colchester Youth Soccer Board. Professionally, he is an executive recruiter at RJS Associates, where he recruits scientists for other companies. As a partner in his business, Reeve brings experience to the board.

"I know how to look at a business, look at things from a fiscal point of view," he said. This is a skill that can be very important which the

Board of Education would find useful, Reeve said.

How the board runs is also important to Reeve. He said the board is a committee and should run as such. "I'm not going in saying I have a personal agenda," he said. "If I am able to contribute in any way, I am willing to do that."

Reeve acknowledged that it can be hard to be on a board such as this one because members have to balance the needs of the kids with the needs of the town. But this is a balance he intends to do his best to maintain.

"The schools have to do what is right and what is best for the kids," but also for the taxpayers in town, Reeve said. He also said the board has to have a broad view to look at all the decisions.

He admitted there could be a lot of personnel issues on a board because everyone might have a different notion of what is right. However, Reeve said in dealing with the board, it is important to take everything into account. He said there are a lot of good administrator's and teachers in the town of Colchester, and keeping these people in their school system should be a priority.

When asked if he worried about being on the board in such tough economic times Reeve said, "I don't think I would have gotten involved

if I didn't think if I could do it." He said he wants to give back to the community and this is a good way for him to do it. Even though he was not aware that he would be nominated so quickly, Reeve said he is looking forward to being on the board and running in the upcoming elections. He will be running in November, with the other candidates, for his two year spot on the board.

"I'm excited," said Reeve, "there is a talented group in place...I'm looking forward to learning."

Board of Education Chairman Ron Goldstein said one of the reasons Reeve was picked was because of his interest in the Colchester school system.

"John clearly has a passion for education," Goldstein said. He also said Reeve had a level of involvement in the community. His current job was also a factor in the decision to choose him for the board.

Reeve, said Goldstein, "brings some HR expertise to the board," which can help the board in future decisions. Goldstein is glad to have him on the board and is looking forward to having him in the future. He is hoping that Reeve, like all board members, will be actively involved.

"We use every source of information and resource we can," and Reeve could be one of



John Reeve

these, Goldstein said.

The vacancy Reeve is filling is for the remainder of Ciccone's term, which runs through November. Reeve will then seek re-election, for another two-year term.

Asklar Sewer Extension Underway in Marlborough, After All

by Bailey Seddon

Just two weeks ago, Joseph Asklar had said he would not be going through with his sewer extension as originally thought, saying there were fees he had not been told about ahead of time.

If Asklar had known about the fees – which were going toward an inspection fee and for a flag person and a traffic patrol car for policeman during the time of the work – “then the project could have been budgeted properly,” he said at the time.

The Board of Selectmen, however, felt that Asklar should have known about the fees. “The information is there and available,” First Selectman Bill Black said at the time.

Now, however, Asklar will go ahead with the work. Asklar had been frustrated with the Board of Selectmen but was not ready to be done with the job so he contacted the board in hopes of being able to figure out a way he could still go through with the extension. He met with the board and together they worked the numbers out and they managed to “bring it into budget” Asklar said.

Asklar said the project was originally going to take two weeks, but he reorganized the work so it could be completed in less than a week. Black, Asklar and the project contractor then recalculated fees and the project came together to benefit everyone.

“We looked at the figures and the project was able to come into budget,” said Asklar. He felt

the board was willing to help him because “the town realized that it would be in their advantage to endorse the project,” as town officials felt it was positive for the town.

Asklar was happy with the way the meeting went saying, “We had an excellent meeting and found a way to make the project work.”

The sewer extension started last Friday, July 29, and workers continued all day Saturday and Sunday. Asklar said the project is moving quickly and efficiently, the paving is being done in a short time. Asklar and the town timed the sewer extension work to start when the milling on North Main Street was done, this way they did not mill the roads, repave them, and have to rip them back up for the extension. When milling, the road is stripped down to its base and built up again. Sometimes it is built up again using what they stripped off, or new material to resurface; depending on what is best. The mill contractor and the sewer contractor have worked together to make sure everything runs smoothly, Asklar said.

“Both projects were able to work out without any problems,” he said, “It is nice to have everybody on the same page.” The work is scheduled to be done either Wednesday night or Thursday.

“It’s nice to get it done,” Asklar said.

The work has gone exactly as he had planned, thanks to Asklar working out the details with the contractor. Asklar said the time frame and

the budget were acceptable to him and all the approvals had been on time, he just needed to meet timing and safety concerns.

Selectman Joe La Bella was happy that Asklar was able to go through with the project. He said Asklar was asked to coordinate with town efforts because the town didn’t want to resurface the road and have it dug up again. And since the road is being stripped anyway, Asklar would not need to do quite as much work.

“We are happy to have Joe’s business...happy they are going through with the project,” La Bella said. He said he felt that the work was beneficial for both Asklar and the town.

“We are happy other residents are going to be able to connect as well,” La Bella said.

La Bella said Asklar had planned to finish everything in two weeks, and was happy to hear that the project was moving along at an even quicker pace. The laying of a sewer line, La Bella said, is no different than what the town’s contractor did, so the quick work is a good thing for everyone, he said.

The existing sewer line is being extended about 200 feet, according to La Bella, so that it can reach Asklar’s property. Other residents in that area will be able to connect through lateral piping towards their houses. There are around three or four such properties, La Bella said.

“Our main concerns are twofold,” he said, “safety during the project,” such as why it must

be run the same way the town project was run, “and what the road looks like,” he said.

“We learned a lot for the town doing the project...we did not ask more of Joe’s contractor than we asked our own contractor” who had previously put sewer lines in, La Bella said. “We were able to draw on that experience” for Asklar’s situation, to figure out what would be best and safe for the residents.

La Bella added that the selectmen were happy when Asklar asked the town’s permission to work on Sunday, to get the work done even quicker.

Bill Black said the meeting between the Board of Selectman and Asklar went well, and did not feel that there was ever ill will between the board and Asklar.

“I never saw it as an issue,” he said.

Black was also pleased that Asklar could go through with the sewer extension. “It’s a good balance for the sewer commission,” he said.

Black said that the work was able to go through because of Asklar’s budgeting, “They determined they could get it done in five days, and that equated to savings,” he said. Black said the sewer expansion is good for people inside the sewer district because it gives those who need it access, and good for those outside the district because more residents inside will be paying for the sewer system, which is more cost-effective for everyone.

Andover Selectmen Debate Veterans Day Observance

by Courtney Parent

Wednesday’s meeting of the Board of Selectmen once again focused on a Veterans Day celebration and a possible committee needed for it.

During the initial approval of July 6 meeting minutes, questions rose over the wording in regards to the Veterans Day topic being tabled until this week’s meeting. At the request of selectwoman Julie Haverl, the wording was changed to say that “a motion was made to table the appointment of a Veterans Day celebration committee to dedicate the Andover Veterans Monument Park on 11/11/11.” The previous minutes had stated that the motion made was to appoint members for a “sign dedication.”

From there, the ball kept rolling and the confusion continued. When board members reached the Veterans Day line item, wording and terminology continued to play a key role.

Rather than adopting a committee specifically for the 11/11/11 celebration, Vice-Chair Jay Linddy proposed creating a committee for not just the upcoming Veterans Day, but for Veterans Days in future years as well. Linddy also questioned the timeframe of 11 a.m., which had been previously suggested for this year’s celebration.

“It’s a shame, but people do work on Veterans Day,” said Linddy. “Maybe do something at five or six o’clock, maybe have hot dogs and hamburgs...”

First Selectmen Bob Burbank supported Linddy’s idea for a permanent Veterans Day Committee, noting that in previous years, there have been problems due to the lack of one.

“In past years we were rushing around last minute because people who said they’d set up a wreath and decorations didn’t,” said Burbank. “It’s an important day to honor our veterans, dead and alive.”

Haverl jumped in reading a letter that had been submitted to the Board of Selectmen by local resident Dianne Grenier. The letter stated that per the selectmen’s request she was submitting the names of individuals willing to serve on a Veterans Day Committee for the 11/11/11 celebration. However, the names submitted and the need for a committee in general, had been tabled at selectmen’s July meeting.

Selectwoman Elaine Buchardt addressed Haverl’s comments, saying that the board knew that those names and that committee was for a “particular day and for a particular celebration.” However, Buchardt said that the board feels that there should be a Veterans Day Committee, as there is a Memorial Day Committee; recognizing the veterans every year and not just for 11/11/11.

Selectwoman Cathy Desrosiers followed up by proposing that selectmen adopt a committee, asking people to volunteer and officially select committee members at a later date.

The idea was not well-received by Haverl, who said there was one major “flaw” with the idea. Haverl explained that Grenier, who she said is a “dedicated volunteer in this town” had already done research, gathered information and produced the names of individuals to serve on the committee.

However, Burbank noted that though individuals had agreed to serve on a committee, they had agreed to a Veterans Day Committee specifically for 11/11/11 and had not agreed to serve on a permanent committee.

“It makes no sense to tell a dedicated volunteer to submit a committee and then go back and have [the individuals on the committee] agree to it,” disputed Haverl.

“We first have to form a committee,” said Burbank, “We can’t appoint people to it until we form it. The first order is to form a permanent Veterans Day Committee.”

Finally, there was some sense of agreement, as members unanimously voted in favor of forming a permanent Veterans Day Committee.

Unfortunately, the basic formation of the committee did not provide a happy ending for the discussion. From there, Haverl suggested that the first appointees for the committee come from the list previously submitted by Grenier. However, Linddy argued the point that those individuals were selected specifically for an 11/11/11 celebration and not for a permanent committee.

A back-and-forth debate between Haverl and Linddy continued for several minutes, with Desrosiers making several attempts to break up

the argument. Finally after Haverl expressed a desire for selectmen to address Grenier, who was present in the audience, they did.

Grenier explained that because there was “some angst” after last month’s meeting, she had informed selectmen that she would be willing to change the name of the event from the “dedication of the park” to a “Veterans Day observance.”

“Now what I am looking for is that group of people to serve on a committee for 11/11/11,” said Grenier. “I personally have no interest in serving on a permanent committee.”

Buchardt stated that the board was “in error” asking for a committee specifically for the proposed 11/11/11 celebration. Addressing Haverl, Buchardt said the selectmen had realized that at their July meeting when she said it didn’t make sense to have a committee just for one day.

After another short debate broke out, Desrosiers asked why it wouldn’t be possible to hold the proposed observance day on 11/11/11 and still move forward with a permanent Veterans Day Committee.

Burbank concurred with Desrosiers, saying that Grenier and the individuals she proposed could hold the 11/11/11 observance as volunteers, and that would be separate from the Veterans Day Committee, which was adopted earlier in the evening.

Burbank’s comments stirred more controversy, as Haverl continued to push for the board to adopt Grenier’s previously-proposed committee. However, Linddy again pointed out that the committee that had already been adopted was a permanent Veterans Day Committee, and not for the 11/11/11 occasion.

“Julie, I don’t think you understand,” said Burbank. “Officially under FOI, [Grenier’s proposed committee] would have to post meetings and minutes and do everything the same way we do. If they are an individual volunteer group, they can do anything they want.”

Upon turning to Grenier for comment, she advised selectmen that the committee was originally their suggestion, not hers, and that all she needed was to officially get permission.

“All I want is permission from selectmen to

organize a group of volunteers and have a celebration,” said Grenier. “I need to have you say yes because with that comes liability insurance. If I gather people and someone were to get hurt I need that insurance.”

As was the common practice of the evening, selectmen again had difficulty reaching a consensus. Burbank agreed that the group could move forward, but didn’t believe the board needed to make a motion as they were volunteers.

“We are tripping over each other,” said Haverl, “and I think it’s silly, when all we need to do is make a motion.”

Finally, after much heated discussion, selectmen made a motion to allow Grenier to hold a Veterans Day Observance on 11/11/11.

Earlier in the day, Burbank said the bids had opened for the Andover Fire Department’s 1952 forestry truck that the board had voted to put up for bid at their July meeting. Burbank said there were 10 bidders and the high bidder, coming in just 20 minutes prior to the bid closing was Carolann Nettleton of Meriden. Nettleton’s bid was in the amount of \$5,240. The board unanimously voted to accept the high bid of Nettleton.

Following with an additional truck update, Burbank addressed the 1996 dump truck from Coventry that the town was looking to buy to replace a 1994 plow truck that the frame was broken on during the harsh winter.

Burbank explained at selectmen’s July meeting that it would’ve cost in excess of \$30,000 to make the 1994 plow truck “safe and roadworthy.” Burbank said that pending final approval from Coventry, they would be able to purchase the truck for \$9,500, \$200 less than originally anticipated.

The next meeting of the Board of Selectmen will be Wednesday, Sept. 7, at 7 p.m. in the Town Office Building. There will also be a special selectmen meeting with Celtic Energy, which conducts building evaluations for energy efficiency, held on Thursday, Sept. 8, at 7 p.m., also in the Town Office Building.

Obituaries

Colchester

Stephen M. Wroblinski Sr.

Stephen M. Wroblinski Sr., 62, beloved husband of Marcia Brothers of Colchester, passed away Friday, July 29, at the Windham Community Hospital. He was born on Aug. 28, 1948, in Providence, RI, of the late Henry and Sarah Porter Wroblinski.

Stephen grew up in Andover, attended RHAM High School, and enlisted in the U.S. Navy. He loved fishing and shared that passion with his sons and granddaughters. His favorite place to fish was Jamestown, RI and he loved snowmobiling with his sons.

Besides his loving wife Marcia, he leaves two sons, Stephen M. Wroblinski Jr. and Joshua Brothers and his wife Holly; two daughters, Stacey Wroblinski and Tracy and her husband Joe Berube; two sisters, Penny and her husband John Rorrio and Lori Majewicz; a brother, Tom and wife Paula Wroblinski; six precious granddaughters, several nieces, nephews and cousins, and his pet dog Damien.

He was predeceased by a brother, Walter T.

Visitation was held Tuesday, Aug. 2, at the Belmont/Sabrowski Funeral Home, 144 South Main St., Colchester, followed by a funeral service. Full military honors took place after the service. Interment was private.

Colchester

Rita Ann Michalsky

Rita Ann Michalsky, 73, wife of the late John P. Michalsky, formerly of Colchester and of Hebron, passed away Thursday, July 28, at Hartford Hospital. She was born on June 17, 1928, in Rockville, daughter of Chester and Veronica Rofinski Butler Sr.

Surviving are two daughters, Kim E. Michalsky and Julie A. Hasek; her brother and sister; five grandchildren; one great-grandchild; her beloved friends, Gaylene, Maggie and Mildred.

She was predeceased by a daughter, Paige Tarallo.

Mass of Christian Burial was held Wednesday, Aug. 3, at St. Andrew Church on Norwich Avenue. Burial followed in New St. Andrew's Cemetery. Visitation was private.

Belmont/Sabrowski Funeral Home of Colchester is in care of arrangements.

Portland

Robin D. Thomas

Robin D. Thomas, 45, husband of Eileen Arico Thomas, of Susan Lane, Portland, passed away Saturday, July 30, at Middlesex Hospital after a short illness.

Born in Hartford on Dec. 30, 1965, a son of Bronislaw "Ben" and Georgette Thomas of Bradenton, Fla., he was a lifelong area resident. He was a self-employed floor sander and refinisher for many years and had been a member of Trinity Episcopal Church.

Besides his wife, Eileen, and his parents, he is survived by his sons Leo Thomas, Max Thomas and Zachary Thomas, all of Portland; his sister Ellen Jacquard, her husband Jesse, their daughter Bridget Rose, all of New York; his brother Jeffrey Thomas, his wife Eileen, their son Ben, all of Lafayette, LA; his sisters-in-law Margaret "Peg" Arico of Middletown, Mary Frattura and her husband Aurel of Lexington, MA, Ann Salinsky and her husband Jeff of Portland, Jane Olson of Middletown and Emily Robakiewicz and her husband Peter of Durham, and many nieces and nephews, as well as his beloved cat "Ohmidge."

His family received relatives and friends in the Portland Memorial Funeral Home, 231 Main St., Portland, Wednesday, Aug. 3. Funeral services were held Thursday, Aug. 4, at Trinity Episcopal Church. Rev. Steven Ling, priest-in-charge, will officiate. Interment will be private.

In lieu of flowers, gifts in Robin's memory may be sent to the Humane Society of the United States, 2100 L St., NW, Washington, DC 20037 or to the Portland Little League P.O. Box 91 Portland, CT 06480.

For directions, or to leave an online expression of sympathy, visit portlandmemorialfh.net.

East Hampton

Seth Mitchell Condon

Seth Mitchell Condon, 34, of Killingworth, formerly of East Hampton, passed away Sunday, July 31, peacefully at home. Seth was born June 17, 1977, in Middletown. He was the son of Nancy Condon Paladino and the late Mark Condon.

Seth grew up in East Hampton and was a volunteer firefighter in East Hampton for many years. Firefighting was the love of his life and where he made lifelong friends here in East Hampton. Seth graduated from Xavier High School in Middletown and attended Fire Science Academy in Montgomery County, MD. While attending Fire Science Academy, Seth received many awards, including special recognition for saving someone's life in a high-rise building fire in Washington DC.

After his graduation, he joined the NYC Fire Department. Seth then went on to work as the dispatcher for the Colchester Police Barracks Troop K and then joined the Hartford Police Department where he worked his way up to Detective of Major Crimes. Seth had a generous heart for anyone he met that was in need and helped many people during his life.

Seth is survived by his mother and stepfather, Nancy Condon Paladino and Richard Paladino of East Hampton; his loving companion and mother of his child, Paula Vargas; his beloved son, Mark Anthony Condon; his two beloved aunts, Phoebe Rockwell and Bonnie Smith; and his grandmother, Judith "Gruzy" Rockwell.

He was predeceased by his father, Mark Condon, and his grandparents, Charles and Helen Condon.

Friends called at the Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton, Thursday, Aug. 4. Funeral service and burial were private at the convenience of the family.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the education fund established for Seth's son, Mark A. Condon, c/o Liberty Bank, 2 West High St., East Hampton, CT 06424.

To leave online condolences, visit spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

Amston

John Chester Wolanin

John Chester Wolanin, 52, loving husband of Lynn Bunnell Wolanin and beloved father of Elizabeth Rose and Michael Wesley, went peacefully into the arms of his heavenly father Monday, Aug. 1, after a short illness.

John is predeceased by his father, Chester Wolanin, and leaves his mother, Florence Wolanin of Delray Beach, FL; his sisters, Susan (Ronald) Kennedy of Barkhamsted, Joyce (William) Kevetos and Jane (Ronald) Consiglio of Delray Beach, FL, and his brother, David (Jane) Wolanin of Manchester, as well as several nieces, nephews and many friends.

John was born Nov. 27, 1958, and grew up in Wethersfield. After high school, he served in the Coast Guard as a Radioman First Class aboard Ice Breakers in the Arctic and Antarctic Oceans. After his tour of duty, he obtained a finance degree from Central Connecticut State University and worked as a financial planner, and for the Internal Revenue Service. He later obtained a master's in taxation from the University of New Haven and opened his own tax practice, Wolanin Tax Associates.

He was an avid Red Sox fan and enjoyed golfing, mountain biking, skiing, camping, and hiking with his two best friends, Labrador retrievers Sophie and Zoe. Most importantly, he will be remembered by his family for the love and care he gave to them and for his fun loving nature.

Calling hours will be held today, Aug. 5, from 5-7 p.m., at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., in Colchester. A funeral Mass will be held Saturday, Aug. 6, at 10 a.m., directly at the Church of the Holy Family, 185 Church St., in Hebron.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that you donate to your favorite charity in John's memory.

For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

Colchester

Mildred C. Mooney

Mildred C. Mooney, 90, beloved wife of Bob, of Colchester and formerly of Hoboken, NJ, passed away Tuesday, Aug. 2, at the Apple Rehab Center in Colchester.

Born April 6, 1921, in Hoboken, NJ, she was the daughter of the late Alfonse and Pauline (Turso) Sperone. Mildred attended the University of Bridgeport and graduated with a BA in interior design.

Mildred married Robert Sheridan Mooney on Dec. 8, 1946, at St. Ann Church in Hoboken, NJ. He survives her. She enjoyed cooking and baking, and was a communicant of St. Andrew Church in Colchester.

She is survived by her loving husband of 64 years as well as a son, Gregg and his wife Mary Ellen Mooney of Marlborough; three grandchildren, Andrew, Rebecca and Caroline; and numerous extended family and friends.

Calling hours were held Thursday, Aug. 4, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. A funeral service followed at the funeral home. Burial followed in New St. Andrew Cemetery.

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

For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

Colchester

Edward Stephen Bogue

Edward Stephen Bogue, 59, of Colchester and formerly of Newington, passed away unexpectedly Monday, Aug. 1, at his home. Born April 14, 1952, in Hartford, he was a son of the late Clarence and Mary (Nemeth) Bogue.

Edward attended schools in Newington and graduated from Newington High School. Eddie enjoyed playing cards and fishing. He will be sadly missed by his family and friends.

Survivors include a brother, Dr. John Bogue and his wife Diane of Chepachet, RI; a sister, Rosemary Luka of Niantic; five nieces and nephews, Ronald, Ryan, Rebecca, Norman and John; four great nieces and one great nephew.

Funeral services will be held privately. The Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home of Colchester has been entrusted with arrangements.

For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

Portland

Clyde Bates

Clyde Bates of Madison, formerly of Portland, peacefully passed away Thursday, July 28. Born Sept. 16, 1916, he is survived by his wife of 70 years, Jeanne Bresee Bates.

In addition, he is survived by children Peter Bates (Linda) of Glastonbury, Bonnie Bates Davidoff (Brian) of Los Angeles, devoted niece, Virginia Wassell (Gary) of Portland, many other nieces and nephews as well as grandchildren and great grandchildren. He was loved by many and will be in our hearts forever.

Interment was in Oneonta, NY, on Monday, Aug. 1.

Memorial contributions may be made to the First Congregational Church, 26 Meetinghouse Lane, Madison, CT 06443, earmarked for Lay Caring Ministry or to the charity of your choice.

Arrangements are with the Hawley Lincoln Memorial, 1315 Boston Post Rd., Guilford.

Colchester

James Chester Wiemann

James "Jim" Chester Wiemann, 75, passed away Saturday, July 30, in Colchester at Harrington Court. Jim was born Aug. 31, 1935, in Ledyard.

In his lifetime, he was known as a "jack of all trades." In his earlier years, his hobbies consisted of racing cars at the Waterford Speedbowl, working on diesel trucks, and repairing helicopters in the Army National Guard. He had a passion for Diamond-T trucks and helped digitize manuals for the Diamond-T Classic website.

Jim had a love for mechanics and working with his hands throughout his life. He built two homes, one in Preston and the other in Lowell, VT. He was always there for anyone and everyone who needed a helping hand as the kind-hearted man we all knew.

Jim worked and retired after 30 years from Old Saybrook Door Co., and was also honorably discharged in November 1990 from AVCRAD National Guard after 21 years of service.

He is survived by his loving wife of 53 years, Ethel Wiemann; and three daughters, Susan Reau and son-in-law, Randall Reau, Barbara Cedio and son-in-law, Michael Cedio, and Karlene Wiemann and partner, Joseph Delesio. He is also survived by six grandchildren and a great-granddaughter.

Condolences to the family may be sent to P.O. Box 173, Uncasville CT 06382. Services will be private.

May you rest in peace, Jim.

Colchester Police News

7/22: Evan Ogren, 22, of 11 Tartia Rd., East Hampton, was at Backus Clinic seeking treatment when it was discovered he had a warrant for failure to appear, State Police said.

7/26: Donna Nicholas, 60, of 159 South Main St., was transported by the Colchester Hayward Fire Department to Marlborough Clinic for chest pain, after she was involved in a two-vehicle accident on Old Hartford Road, State Police said.

7/26: Eric Gotay, 20, of 84 East St., Apt. 20, Willimantic, was charged with second-degree breach of peace, third-degree assault and disorderly conduct, State Police said.

7/26: A 14-year-old was transported by the Colchester Hayward Fire Department to Backus Hospital, for minor injuries after he was in an accident involving his dirt bike and another car. The teen was issued a verbal warning for failure to drive right, State Police said.

7/26: Gerald Hoffstot, 68, of 60 Linwood Ave., was charged with DUI and failure to drive right, State Police said.

7/27: Raymond Wachtarz, 22, of 18 Hickory

Rd., was transported by the Colchester Hayward Fire Department, to Backus Hospital for head pain after he struck a tree on Westchester Rd., State Police said.

7/28: Michael Sobielo, 34, of 22 North Pond Rd., Amston, was charged with DUI, after he was involved in an accident with his motor vehicle, Colchester Police said.

7/28: Eric Garthwait, 47, of 27 David Dr., Middletown, was charged with DUI and making an improper turn, State Police said.

7/29: Police are investigating the robbery of several woodstoves, tools, electronics and office supplies, stolen from More Than Stoves, LLC, at 116 Parum Rd. In addition to the theft, damage was done to the exterior doors and windows of the building where the suspect(s) broke in, Colchester Police said.

7/30: Christopher Dean, 23, of 466 Ash St., Apt. 104, Willimantic, was charged with third-degree criminal mischief, State Police said.

7/30: Roy R. Goyette, 54, of 28 Peck Ln., was charged with disorderly conduct and third-degree assault, State Police said.

Marlborough Police News

7/27: State Police are investigating a robbery at Prudential Reality, located at 27 North Main St. An unknown suspect(s) stole and smashed the Prudential Reality sign on the front lawn of the office. The value of the sign is approximately \$500, State Police said. Anyone with information is asked to contact Trooper Keith Maynard at Troop K in Colchester at 860-537-7500.

Andover Police News

7/25: Jonathan B. Northrop, 56, of 241 Zion St., Apt. 3, Hartford, was charged with DUI and failure to maintain lane, State Police said.

Portland Police News

7/19: Justin Slater, 21, of 204 Jobs Pond Rd., was arrested for possession of narcotics, Portland Police said.

7/29: Scott Palmer, 33, of 102 Marlborough St., was arrested for third-degree assault, police said.

East Hampton Police News

7/22: Michael Birner Jr., 47, of 139 Bill Hill Rd., East Lyme, was arrested for fifth-degree larceny, East Hampton Police said.

7/24: Norbort J. Heil, 22, of 136 Wopowog Rd., was arrested for second-degree breach of peace, police said.

7/28: Kyle Strong, 18, of 88 Main St., was arrested for disorderly conduct and third-degree assault, police said.