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The annual Scarecrow Decorating Contest is back on the Colchester Town Green. Shown here is the Colchester K.I.D.S. Child Care Center scarecrow scene, called "Story Time" The display depicts an adult scarecrow reading the book *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* to children with smiling jack-o-lantern heads.

Scarecrows Storm Colchester Town Green

by Melissa Roberto

It looks like pumpkin heads and gigantic eyeballs have made their way back into the Town Green for the 13th annual Scarecrow Decorating Contest, making the town a bit more festive, just in time for Halloween.

Every year the Colchester Business Association (CBA) and the Parks and Recreation Department organize the contest, which accepts scarecrow entries from businesses, families/individuals, youth groups and organizations.

This year there is a wide variety of scarecrow scenes decorating the center of town from a scarecrow boxer, a centipede and a Lorax inspired scarecrow from Dr. Seuss' book and 2012 film *The Lorax*. This year there are 30 entries in total, more than double the amount of last year's entries.

This year's event was planned by Dr. Kimble Green of the Center of Wellness and Teri Damato, owner of the local Subway. Green explained that the entire event was revamped this year. The voting categories and kick-off party were changed to "breed new life" into the event and Green said that it was a major success.

Over 100 people attended the contest's kick-off party last Saturday. The party started with a

children's costume parade and provided free pizza, cookies and apples, and a bonfire followed in the late afternoon. "We really wanted to get a lot of people out there and we had a great turnout," Damato said.

The three categories for the contest are funniest, scariest and most imaginative...and imaginative they are!

Recurring themes were food and sports-related scenes.

Damato created a giant scarecrow stuffed Subway sandwich to participate in the event. The scene was called "Where's Jared" and displayed a Styrofoam Jared doll imbedded between layers of brown colored Styrofoam meatballs, lettuce made out of green yarn, yellow triangular felt pieces for cheese, and red plastic plates as tomato slices. And surprisingly, Damato said it only took an hour to create.

There was even a man made out of vegetables and his name was "The Fantastic Veggie Man" constructed by the Vegetarian Society of Eastern Connecticut. The display showed the veggie man sitting at a table assorted with fruits and vegetables that made up "the team of super nutrients." The Vegetarian Society of Eastern

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Petit Dedicates New Health Lodge

by Geeta Schrayter

Tuesday was an idyllic autumn day. Sunlight filtered through tree branches filled with brightly colored leaves, while a cool breeze sent many of them floating through the air. At the Channel 3 Kids Camp in Andover, the weather was the perfect accompaniment to the ribbon cutting ceremony and dedication of the camp's newly renovated health lodge.

The building, which was funded through a \$100,000 grant from the Petit Family Foundation, is officially called the Jennifer L. Hawke-Petit Health Lodge and is dedicated to Jennifer Hawke-Petit who was a nurse. In 2007, Jennifer was murdered along with her two daughters Hayley and Michaela during a home invasion. As a result of the crime, the Petit Family Foundation came to be. According to petitfamilyfoundation.org, the foundation has a three-part mission: to help with the education of young people, support those with chronic illnesses and help individuals affected by violence.

Father and husband Dr. William Petit Jr., was the sole survivor the day Jennifer and his daughters lost their lives. He was present at Tuesday's event with numerous family members. He said he was doing "very well," and the health lodge is "a wonderful way to remember Jennifer and honor everything that she stood for and did every day at work."

The \$100,000 grant that was given to the camp for the lodge's restoration is the first of its kind.

"Heretofore we've done grants in the \$2,500 to \$10,000 range," said Petit. He explained the foundation, which is now in its fifth year, has helped out with smaller groups, programs and projects but moving forward, they're looking to distribute one Signature Grant each year.

The original health lodge at the camp was built in 1957, and was one of the oldest buildings on the property. According to a news release from the Kids Camp, time had not been kind to the lodge, and it was "seriously deteriorating." But now, the lodge gleams and smells of fresh paint and is an American with Disabilities Act-compliant, state-of-the-art facility.

Channel 3 Kids Camp Executive Director Denise Hornbecker said there are "no words" to express how grateful the camp is to the Petit Family.

"How do you overcome something like [what happened to the family]? How do you take such a tragedy and turn it around and make it such a good thing for the community?" Hornbecker asked rhetorically.

"It's not just the Kids Camp," she continued. "They've helped with so many other non-profits. I don't know if I could do it. They're just a warm, loving, very close-knit family - very special."

Hornbecker said the partnership between the camp and the foundation seemed like it'd be a "good fit" when they were looking to get the renovation underway. It ended up being exactly that, and Petit felt similarly.

"It was wonderful to be able to pair with Channel 3 and KBE [Building Corporation] and do something this nice," said Petit. "People wanted a good way to remember Jennifer and do something she'd be proud of and she loved kids and pediatrics. This is a perfect melding of what the foundation wanted to do ... to give kids a chance to be out here at camp and be able to be taken care of if they have some needs. This is just perfect."

The renovation of the lodge is the beginning of a larger renovation and construction project with KBE Building Corporation that will make the Channel 3 Kids Camp open to children of all backgrounds and abilities.

Hornbecker said the completion of the lodge is "the beginning of providing an opportunity for Connecticut kids to be a part of one camp" where all of the children will take part in the same activities.

Moving forward, Hornbecker said the camp will also "most definitely" continue fostering ties with the Petit Family Foundation.

"We hope to continue in lots of different ways to work with the Petit Family Foundation," she said, noting the camp would be planting seeds from Michaela's Garden Project, which is designed to encourage community service.

Michaela's favorite flower was Four O'Clocks, and after her life was stolen, the Four O'Clocks she'd planted at her home with

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Another display is this replication of a tree and character from the Dr. Seuss book and 2012 film *The Lorax*. The design was created by the Krepcio/Foley family.



Scarecrow designs proved to be very creative this year for the Scarecrow Decorating Contest. Pictured left is a giant eyeball titled “Is there a hair in my eye?” created by Shattered Endz hair salon. “The Fantastic Veggie Man,” pictured right, was designed by the Vegetarian Society of Eastern Connecticut, which included assorted fruits and vegetables.

Scarecrows cont. from Front Page

Connecticut is a group that promotes a healthy, plant-based diet.

Scarecrows were also made into athletes this year. Galaxy Youth Cheerleading created their very own “cheercrows” that are made out of hay and colored pumpkin heads. The cheercrows are dressed in Galaxy Youth Cheerleading T-shirts and bright colored shorts. One of the scarecrows is sitting on top of another’s shoulders, forming a “V” with its arms.

In addition, the Colchester Homeschool Co-op created a “Field of Screams,” as two scarecrows were dressed up as baseball players, representing the Lebanon Giants and the Lebanon Cardinals. However, instead of pitching a baseball, the pitcher wound up for the pitch with his head. The scarecrow scene included a pitcher’s mound and home plate.

And Debi Rushford, owner of the Shattered Endz hair salon, and her co-worker Cindy Klaja created quite the eye-opening display with a giant eyeball scene they named “Is there a HAIR in my eye?” The massive eyeball had long colorful hair strands attached to it that were made out of hula skirts. The eye was created from a

white bean bag and red pipe cleaners to make it look bloodshot.

“I think it has a chance of winning this year,” said Rushford.

Rushford added that it took a couple days to create and mentioned how fun it was.

“We have a blast doing it every year,” she said.

Shattered Endz has won first place in previous years. One scene was geared toward “Save the Ta-Ta’s” for breast cancer awareness and another was done four years ago during the presidential election. The scene showed Obama looking into a mirror and seeing his opponent, John McCain, and vice versa.

Local businesses that also participated in the event were the Colchester K.I.D.S. Child Care center and Skyview Realty Inc. The Colchester K.I.D.S. created a large display of an older scarecrow reading a book to children. The child scarecrows’ heads were made out of orange jack-o-lantern baskets and were dressed in children’s clothing. The older scarecrow was holding an imitation of *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* by Eric Carle made out of wood, which

even included a painted picture of the green caterpillar and a sentence from the actual book.

Skyview Realty Inc. also was creative in its display, which was called “The Sky’s the Limit.” The scene includes a red and white polka dotted clown standing next to a sign that reads “Don’t clown around with your biggest purchase!” The realty business also added a spooky Halloween sign that advertised “Haunted Estates.”

Green shared that the event is great for marketing a local business. Each entry cost \$10 and it is \$30 to become a sponsor. Sponsors are mentioned in the newspaper and on the CBA website.

A special dedication was a scene dedicated to Lori Dickinson, owner of *An Enchanted Florist* who passed away on Sept. 10. The display includes pink mums in her honor. Dickinson was an active Lions Club and CBA member as well as treasurer of the Colchester Farmers Club

and a talented floral designer.

Visitors are encouraged to vote any time up to Oct. 24 at local businesses that are listed on the CBA website, cba.bz, and on a sign at the Town Green. First and second place winners of each category receive prizes. First place winners will receive a \$150 gift certificate to a local business and second place winners will receive a \$75 gift certificate to Parks and Recreation that can be used for any program offered to a facility or park rental.

While the Scarecrow Decorating Contest is always a festive event, this year it was marred by a fire. The Democratic Town Committee displayed a scene of seven scarecrows with enlarged printed faces of each Democratic candidate for the town, state and even President Obama and Vice President Joe Biden. The scene was one of the largest this year, but was torched Tuesday night; a full story about the blaze appears elsewhere in this issue.



Dr. William Petit Jr. (left) and Mike Kolakowski, president of KBE Building Corporation, cut the ribbon at the dedication of the Jennifer L. Hawke-Petit Health Lodge at the Channel 3 Kids Camp Tuesday, while Executive Director Denise Hornbecker looks on. The lodge was renovated by KBE with a \$100,000 grant from the Petit Family Foundation.

Lodge cont. from Front Page

her father were dug up and replanted elsewhere. Seeds from the original flowers have been harvested and replanted so that now, about 5,000 plants have been produced from the original garden. The seeds from the new plants are harvested, packaged and sold as a fundraiser for the foundation.

“We have some special seeds we’re going to plant in front of the health lodge,” said Hornbecker. “And we’ll have our teens work

on the garden and understand the significance of it.”

Hornbecker added the Petits are “just a wonderful, wonderful family” and said as a result of the work on the Jennifer L. Hawke-Petit Health Lodge, “we’re kind of connected now.”

For more information on the Channel 3 Kids Camp, visit channel3kidscamp.org. To learn more about the Petit Family Foundation, go to petitfamilyfoundation.org.

EH Council Appoints New Members to Fire Commission

by Joshua Anusewicz

The Town Council recently appointed three individuals to the town's fire commission, filling vacancies left by members that recently resigned.

At a special meeting of the council on Thursday, Oct. 4, the council interviewed and appointed Brett Salafia, Eric Valli and Eric Germaine to the East Hampton Fire Commission. Each term will last three years.

The three new members will join the two remaining members, chairman Richard Dufour and vice chairman Leroy Goff, who elected to stay on the commission after the resignations of Richard Brown, Dean Michelson and former chairman David Simko. Officials have not announced why the three men decided to resign from the commission, but some have speculated that personality conflicts are to blame.

Since the resignations, the town has worked hard to connect with willing volunteers to fill the vacancies, eventually garnering nine applicants. In recent weeks, the council has reviewed the applications and interviewed the candidates,

eventually settling on the three new members.

Councilor Barbara Moore, a member of the council's appointments subcommittee, said Wednesday that each new member is "very qualified" and brings "different strengths" to the commission. She added that the three new members were voted on unanimously by the council.

"Everything went smoothly" at the special meeting, she said.

Moore also stated the fire commission could possibly be looking for a new member as soon as next month, as Dufour's three-year term expires on Nov. 30. Dufour could be reappointed to the commission, if the council so chooses, and Moore stated Wednesday that he "is interested" in remaining a member.

The fire commission, in its newest configuration, held its first meeting on Monday night; its next meeting will be held Monday, Nov. 12, at 7 p.m. at the Co. 1 Firehouse, 3 Barton Hill Rd.

* * *

The council also held its regular meeting last Tuesday, Oct. 9, where it discussed a funding request from the High School Building Committee.

According to Town Manager Michael Maniscalco, the building committee – which was appointed to oversee the proposed high school renovation project – requested a total of \$200,080. That funding, Maniscalco stated, would go toward a range of items in "Phase 1" of the project, including an architect, a project manager, environmental management, and any legal costs associated with the project, among other items.

Moore said the funds would cover all costs of the project leading up to the referendum, where residents would vote on the project proposal. As of now, the proposed project is to renovate the existing high school facility, which would give the town a better chance of receiving state funding for a portion of the overall cost.

Maniscalco said the funding would come

from "an additional appropriation" in the town's budget, as the amount requested was not included in this fiscal year's approved budget.

Per the new "second reading policy," the matter will be discussed at the next town council meeting, where the council will vote to approve or reject the request. If approved, Maniscalco said the request would then be sent to a town meeting, where "voters can weigh in on if it's an appropriate expenditure or not," he stated.

A tentative date of Thursday, Nov. 1, has been set for the town meeting, Maniscalco said, but the council hasn't ruled out Election Day, Tuesday, Nov. 6, as a possible day for the town meeting. A decision will be made at the next council meeting, if the request is approved.

* * *

The next regular meeting of the Town Council is scheduled for Tuesday, Oct. 30, at 6:30 p.m. at East Hampton High School, 15 N. Maple St.

Marlborough Selectmen Discuss Stage Harbor Sewer Project

by Melissa Roberto

The Board of Selectmen Tuesday continued its talk on the Stage Harbor Healthcare Center sewer project.

The project includes the town extending its sewer lines to meet the new Healthcare Center sewer pump at the corner of Park Road and Cheney Road which will continue up Cheney Road, Beverly Lane and North Main Street.

First Selectwoman Catherine Gaudinski announced to the board that she met with Weston and Samson design engineers on Oct. 10, as well as members of the Water Pollution Control Authority Commission (WPCA), to talk about some concerns the board has with the past sewer project and how they can improve the process this time around.

During the last sewer project, which involved construction of the town center and part of North Main Street, there were issues raised by residents concerning installation work and property inspections. Gaudinski and WPCA members wanted to ensure that the response time to the WPCA will be done in a prompt manner if an issue arises.

"We want to avoid some of those types of issues and make sure the project moves forward in a smooth manner," said Gaudinski.

Gaudinski also announced that on Oct. 10 she signed a contract with Weston and Samson on behalf of the WPCA to do the preliminary

review for the engineering costs of the design work. This will get bid documents ready for the town's portion of the project. Gaudinski said she hopes to have that information by the end of November.

In addition, Gaudinski said she is still communicating with the bond counsel and financial advisors to obtain information about financing and legal costs related to the project. She explained that they are working on finalizing the budget and hoping to go to the Board of Finance to request a public hearing in January or February.

* * *

Also at Tuesday's meeting, Gaudinski notified board members of a prescription discount card program that provides discounts on prescriptions to residents of towns that participate in the program. The contract is with the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM), the statewide association of towns and cities. Gaudinski stated that currently 30 towns in Connecticut are participating in the program including nearby towns Colchester and Hebron.

The program was created by ProAct, Inc., an experienced discount card provider who negotiates discount rates directly with participating pharmacies. Each resident will receive a discount card in the mail at no cost and it provides discounts on prescription medications,

and also comes into effect for vision care, Lasik surgery, hearing aids and hearing testing.

Discussion of the program was moved to the next Board of Selectmen meeting agenda, giving members time to gather information about it.

In response to Gaudinski's announcement that the program is of no cost to the town, Dick Shea said, "The price fits our budget."

In addition, Gaudinski announced that the bid award for the final sidewalk project in town will be announced at the next selectmen meeting on Nov. 6. The sidewalk project is being funded through a 2012 Small Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP) grant.

The construction will start at the corner of North Main Street and Route 66 and will continue north toward Sadler's Restaurant and the Shoppes at Marlborough Barn.

Gaudinski said she thinks the project will "draw the barn area to the center of town."

The Board of Selectmen also appointed Pat Carroll to fill a vacancy on the Economic Development Commission. He has been a Marlborough resident since 1979, and said he loves the town and thinks it has a lot of potential even though he believes Marlborough's small size holds it back from commercial or residential developments.

"I'd love to see a price-competitive supermarket in town, I'd love to see a pharmacy and I'd love to see the tavern reopen and 20 new businesses in a new business park," Carroll said. "It's what Marlborough deserves and what Marlborough could do."

Carroll has retired and mentioned that he has "more time than ever" to help out the town in any way he can. His term will run until January 2014 and will be subject to renewal then.

Lastly, Gaudinski shared information and updates concerning the Marlborough Fuel Bank Donation Drive. The Fuel Bank depends completely on donations and contributions to assist Marlborough residents experiencing difficult times with paying for essential utilities (heat and electric). These funds are available solely through donations from individuals, groups and businesses.

Gaudinski announced that the town has received \$250 from people in the past week. She also mentioned that the town usually gives a 100 gallon fill up at a time for someone.

"With the price of fuel going up even over last year, I anticipate a need to help people in this area," said Gaudinski.

The next Board of Selectmen meeting will be held Tuesday, Nov. 6, at 7 p.m. at the Town Hall, 26 North Main St.

Marlborough Finance Board Reviews Costs of Stage Harbor Project

by Melissa Roberto

Last Wednesday, the Board of Finance reviewed estimated costs to fund the town's portion of the Stage Harbor Healthcare Center Sewer Project.

First Selectwoman Cathy Gaudinski and the chairman of the Water Pollution Control Authority Commission (WPCA) John Murray also attended the meeting, to explain the costs to board members.

The project was first created to benefit the health care center, which currently pumps its system daily, sometimes even twice a day. The only working system the health care center currently has in the kitchen area has started to fail within the last two months. The health care center currently pays approximately \$220,000 a year to pump the system.

Stage Harbor Healthcare Center is planning to fund its own pump system which is estimated to cost \$1.8 million. The system will be constructed on Stage Harbor Road all the way to Route 2 and at that point will cross beneath the Park Road overpass. The town will then meet the health care center's connection at the corner of Park and Cheney roads, which will con-

tinue up Cheney Road, Beverly Lane and North Main Street.

As for the town's portion of the sewer project, Gaudinski stated that the preliminary cost estimate is \$879,166. The construction alone is estimated to cost \$615,623. The construction cost is broken down into three separate expenses for each road that will be worked on: \$337,983 is going toward Cheney Road, \$170,140 to Beverly Road and \$107,500 for North Main St.

In addition to the construction costs, the cost estimate includes construction contingency at \$92,343 and financing and legal portions of the project are estimated at \$15,000 each. Part of the total cost is also broken down into fixed costs: \$60,200 for resident inspections; \$56,000 for construction administration; and \$25,000 for design and bid documents.

Gaudinski also shared the estimated interest costs for the town. Based on current bond markets, she said, the town is estimating that the interest rate will be between 2 and 4 percent. There will be two phases of interest costs, Gaudinski said. The first is the short term bor-

rowing that is needed to start a project. The second is the long term obligation bond once the construction is completed, estimated to last 20 years. Gaudinski also estimated that construction for the project should take around two years.

A 2 percent interest rate for the short term construction is an estimated \$18,433. The long term borrowing is anticipated to be \$188,247. A total of these two numbers added to the preliminary cost estimate results in a total of \$1,085,906. As the interest percentage goes up, the total does as well.

A 4 percent interest rate including the preliminary cost is estimated at a total of \$1,297,051.

The board also discussed the costs of each equivalent dwelling unit (EDU) for the project. An EDU is a base rate that factors into an individual's operation and maintenance fee that a homeowner pays every year. A home under four bedrooms is one EDU. Currently, the Owner and Maintenance (O&M) fee is \$433 per year for people that are currently hooked

up to the sewer district. This fee is determined by a budget developed by the WPCA. The O&M fee is multiplied by the number of EDUs a facility has to figure out a person's annual payment for the maintenance.

Gaudinski also shared the number of EDUs for each road that will be worked on. Cheney Road has a total of 12 EDUs and there are 5 EDUs each for Beverly Lane and North Main Street. Therefore, the total number of EDUs for the town's portion of the project is 22.

An estimated 60 EDUs will cover the health care center, resulting in a total of 82 EDUs for both the town and health care center sewer systems.

Board of Finance Vice Chairman Cliff Dennis added that he will be personally affected by the plan, as the proposed line runs by his house. He said he thinks there is not much more that can be cut back on the project.

The next Board of Finance meeting will take place Wednesday Nov. 14, 7 p.m., at the media center at Marlborough Elementary School Library, 25 School Dr.

Marlborough Dog Boarding Camp Public Hearing Postponed

by Melissa Roberto

A public hearing was to be held this past Wednesday on a proposed dog boarding camp in town, but it was postponed due to a notification technicality.

A letter was supposed to be sent to the town of Colchester prior to 30 days before the hearing but it was not received on time. Colchester needs to be notified because the desired location of the boarding camp is within 500 feet of the town.

Mark Cave, owner of Country-Dogs boarding camps, hopes to open a boarding camp for dogs in Marlborough at 15 Bull Hill Rd. This location is on a farm owned by Lynn Wolf. Cave hopes to turn the facility's riding stable into a long-term boarding facility for dogs.

First Selectwoman Cathi Gaudinski indicated some in town are concerned about the possibility of excessive barking noise and traffic. Residents have also questioned whether the proposed project is really just a dog kennel. But, she said, the camp is a "different type of a business venture, not a typical kennel."

Cave this week shared the differences between a dog camp and a kennel.

"A dog kennel is a building with indoor and outdoor runs where dogs are confined by themselves and do not have social interaction," he said. "Because they are alone, they bark and make noise. A dog camp is something we took inspiration from horse boarding. We take horse boarding facilities and we convert them for dog care."

Cave mentioned that, unlike a kennel, the dogs are kept in an insulated barn for heat retention and to restrict outsiders from hearing barking noises. He mentioned that the dogs remain inside the barn a majority of the day except for when they are brought outside for ex-

ercise once in the morning and once in the late afternoon, a total of four to six hours daily.

"As a result, the dogs' nervous energy is burnt off and they lie down and sleep all day," he said. "We have a low environmental physical footprint and people don't really know that we're there."

Currently, Cave has two Country-Dogs boarding camps, one in Virginia and one in Pennsylvania. He refers to his business as a "long-term boarding facility" where they take in dogs from surrounding major cities. The average stay for the dogs is 14 days.

A majority of the dogs in the Virginia facility are from Washington D.C. and the Pennsylvania location houses dogs primarily from New York City. The maximum number of dogs allowed in the camps is 40. Cave shared that there are currently six dogs in the Pennsylvania location and 15 in Virginia. The average number of dogs on the properties at a time is in the mid-teens.

Cave explained that Country-Dogs picks up and delivers dogs to and from major cities every Monday and Thursday. Ninety percent of the dogs they take in are picked up and delivered. The company will take dogs from anywhere but rarely ever get local clients, Cave said.

"A rural community won't really gravitate," he added, "we are not a big commercial operation but more of a doggy camp for relatively well-off folks who have well-socialized dogs."

The facilities charge \$38-42 a day to house the dogs.

Both existing Country-Dogs locations are in rural places, said Cave. He mentioned that there are neighbors in close proximity but he did not refer to them as neighborhoods. Cave also said

he has been in business for eight years and has "never had a noise complaint".

Cave also said that all dogs that remain in the Country-Dogs facilities have to pass a test.

"They cannot be loud barkers, real sickly and cannot have history of biting other dogs or people. We have that process to make sure we don't end up with crazy dogs," said Cave.

Cave said he had been looking for a camp to serve Boston dogs. Marlborough is one of three different areas he has considered; he said he chose Marlborough due to its proximity to Boston, the price of renting the property and the layout of the farm.

While the camp would be in a residential neighborhood, Town Planner Peter Hughes said a zone change would not be required. There is currently a special permit for the riding stable, he mentioned, and the town would simply have to modify it for the dog boarding camp.

The proposed camp will also be next door to the Bromley Kings Farm, a farm rented through Lynn Wolf by twin sisters, Karin and Jill. The sisters are co-owners of the Bromley Kings Farm Equestrian Company which is a therapeutic equestrian company that provides boarding services, horse care and most importantly, Karin commented, therapeutic services to groups and individuals. Their work is categorized under "equine psychotherapy," which involves forms of therapy to people with mental health issues by interacting with horses.

The two barns on the site will be split between both businesses. One barn will remain for the horses and the other for the dogs. The indoor riding rink will be shared between the two but the pasture will be separate. Horses will have their own pasture and outdoor riding rink, and the same goes for the dog boarding camp.

Cave also ensured that he is not going to change the physical part of the facility. He plans to add runs into the pasture that will connect to the pond, which will have a new fence around it, allowing the dogs to go for a swim.

The Bromley sisters are hoping to develop a partnership with Cave. Karin Bromley mentioned that they believe it will benefit their business.

"What we don't want or need is a very loud, industrious constant flow of traffic dog kennel," she said, "but that is the exact opposite of what Mark Cave is proposing."

In addition, Karin Bromley seems confident that the facility will not interfere with her business, which operates in a confidential situation.

"The last thing we want is to be running therapy groups with commotion that never ends but the dogs are contained in a large outdoor turnout so there aren't any safety or traffic issues," she said.

Karin Bromley also mentioned that one of her co-workers has assisted in dog therapy and that the sisters are dog lovers as well. She also said she does not consider the farm or riding stable to be in a very residential part of town.

"My view of 'residential' is house on top of another house, cul-de-sacs, things like that," she said. "Here, it's a combination of residential and rural."

Hughes said there are five to eight houses within 2,000 feet of the proposed dog boarding site.

The public hearing regarding Cave's proposal of the Country-Dogs boarding camp is now scheduled for Wednesday, Nov. 14, at 7 p.m., at Marlborough Elementary School, 25 School Dr. For more information on Country-Dogs boarding camps, visit country-dogs.net.

RHAM School Board Reviews Test Scores

by Geeta Schrayter

At the RHAM Board of Education meeting Monday, this year's Connecticut Mastery Tests and Connecticut Academic Performance Tests were reviewed by school officials – and found to be similar to last year's test scores.

Changes in reporting and testing of students were also discussed at the meeting. Superintendent of Schools Bob Siminski said students are presently tested, and their scores reported, based on guidelines set by the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act. But now the school will be using reporting guidelines set forth by the state Department of Education and in 2014, Connecticut will be using the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium for testing.

One of the changes as a result involves the target score for students. Students who score "proficient" or higher on the tests meet the target set under NCLB, but under the new measurement, the average target is for students to score "goal," the next level up from "proficient."

Additionally, the goal under NCLB is for 100 percent of students to reach the "proficient" target by 2014, but the new objective will be for schools to be halfway to the "goal" target by 2018.

At the high school, Principal Scott Leslie said when looking at the CAPT scores, "by and large we've maintained pretty well."

Ninety-one percent of students performed "proficient" or higher in math (meeting the target under NCLB), while 72 percent scored "goal" or above (meeting the new target). This was similar to 2011 scores, when 95 percent of students scored "proficient" and 72 percent scored at "goal" or above.

But, even though well over half of the students met goal in 2012 – thus exceeding the state's new requirement – Leslie wasn't thrilled by the scores.

"Seventy-two percent I find unsatisfactory," said Leslie. "I know the students can do bet-

ter."

Science CAPT scores were identical to the math scores, with 91 percent scoring "proficient" or higher and 72 percent reaching "goal" or above. By comparison, in 2011, 92 percent scored proficient in science, while 67 percent met goal.

In reading, 90 percent scored "proficient" and 65 percent reached "goal," compared to 93 percent and 64 percent the previous year.

Leslie said students did "exceptionally well" in writing. He explained it was an area that was being focused on across departments and the subject students have the most practice with. Ninety-four percent of students scored "proficient" or above while 81 percent scored "goal." The same percentage scored "proficient" in 2011, but the number who scored at "goal" increased from 71 percent.

At the middle school, Principal Mike Seroussi said scores were "holding steady" in math. He said 96.2 percent scored "proficient" on the seventh-grade CMTs, down from 97.6 percent, while 85 percent made "goal," a decrease of three percentage points. Ninety-eight percent of students scored "proficient" on the eighth-grade CMT math and 89.2 percent made "goal," up from 95.8 percent and 84.3 percent in 2011.

In writing, Seroussi said the scores "went up slightly," and the school "made some gains." In the seventh grade, 93.2 percent scored "proficient" or above while 80.4 percent reached "goal." Both numbers are an increase from the previous year, when 90.3 percent scored "proficient" and 77.5 percent reached "goal." Eighth-graders had slightly higher scores, with 94.4 percent scoring "proficient," and 89.2 percent making "goal." The prior year, 93.5 percent scored "proficient" and 84.1 percent scored at "goal" or above.

Seroussi continued on to say reading was

"holding pretty steady" along with math, and shared 95.9 percent of seventh-graders scored "proficient" while 90.3 percent scored at "goal" or above. Last year, the scores were 94.8 and 88.6 percent, respectively.

In eighth grade, 93 percent scored "proficient" and 87.9 percent scored at "goal" in 2012, compared to 94.1 and 89.5 percent, respectively, the previous year.

Eighth-graders are tested on science as well as the above subject areas, and Seroussi said the numbers have dropped – but it's difficult to determine which areas need work, he said, because the CMTs don't offer a thorough breakdown of scores.

In science, 87.7 percent of students scored "proficient" or higher in science, while 74.8 percent scored at "goal." By comparison, in 2011, 90.6 percent of students reached the "proficient" level, while 78.2 percent scored in the "goal" range.

Special Education Director Eric Protulis said there was improvement with students in his department, but it's important to look at the different types of disabilities students have, the number of hours paraprofessionals work with them and how to improve the strategies in place to assist them.

Fifty-six percent of seventh-grade students scored "proficient" in writing, while 28 percent reached "goal" or above. In the eighth grade, 63 percent reached "proficient" while 33 percent scored "goal." The previous year 45 percent of seventh-graders scored "proficient" in writing, while 16 percent reached "goal." Sixty-one percent of eighth-graders scored "proficient" and 32 percent hit "goal."

Reading saw higher scores, with 78 percent of seventh-graders scoring "proficient" or higher and 66 percent scoring "goal." Among eighth-graders, 55 percent scored "proficient" and 48 percent scored "goal." In 2011, 61 per-

cent of seventh-graders and eighth-graders scored "proficient" while 31 percent of seventh-graders and 45 percent of eighth-graders reached "goal" or above.

In math, 74 percent of seventh-graders scored "proficient" or above and 57 percent reached "goal" followed by 65 percent of eighth-graders who scored "proficient" and 23 percent who scored "goal." The previous year 81 percent of seventh and 69 percent of eighth-graders reached the "proficient" level while 23 percent of seventh-graders and 30 percent of eighth-graders scored "goal" or above.

Lastly, 51 percent of eighth-grade special education students scored "proficient" or higher in science, while 31 percent scored "goal." These numbers are an increase over the previous year, when 34 percent of eighth-grade special education students scored "proficient" and 17 percent scored "goal."

As far as CAPT scores, 73 percent of special education students scored "proficient" in writing while 34 percent scored "goal." This represented a substantial gain from the 2011 performance of special education students on the CAPTs, which was 53 percent "proficient" and 9 percent at "goal."

In reading, 59 percent of students reached "proficient" in reading and 24 percent made "goal" or above. This was also an increase over the prior year, when 50 percent of students were "proficient" and 9 percent met "goal."

In math, 58 percent scored "proficient" while 27 percent reached "goal" compared to 54 percent and 21 percent in 2011. Lastly, in science, 56 percent of students scored "proficient," while 19 percent scored at "goal" or higher, which was also an increase from the 2011 scores of 48 percent "proficient" and 16 percent "goal."

"There was movement; there was growth for the students," said Protulis.



There were activities abound last weekend at the 13th annual Portland Agricultural Fair, including a dog costume contest, left, put on by Marvelous Mutts, which included a pumpkin and a security guard. There were also various pulling and racing activities, like the tractor pull, seen right, where lawn tractors attempted to pull large — and heavy — farm equipment through the mud. Other fair staples like food, rides, games, and entertainment were also big with fairgoers, who celebrated the fair's return after a year hiatus.



Portland Fair a Hit in Its Return

by Joshua Anusewicz

All was fair in Portland last weekend, as the Portland Fair was back for its 13th year, making a triumphant return after a year hiatus.

The weather for the weekend was up and down, which was actually an improvement from last year's conditions that caused the fair to be canceled. Don Bascom, president of the fair, said this week that attendance was "great" on Friday and Saturday but down on Sunday, when the *Rivercast* was there to take in the festivities.

A strong, chilly wind blew across the Exchange Club Grounds, which neighbor the Connecticut River, making for a fitting partnership with the icy grey sky that threatened rain for most of the morning. Being used to the unpredictability of New England weather, fairgoers were prepared for the elements with warm jackets, pants, and boots that provided warmth from the cutting gusts. A brief rain that fell the previous day made the boots necessary, as tracts of mud dotted the grounds.

Other than wearing the appropriate clothing, the patrons of the fair didn't seem to notice the poor weather, as those in attendance crisscrossed the grounds, hopping on rides, playing games and visiting the various food vendors for a quick bite to eat.

The midway, Bascom said, was a big hit this year, with "extra rides" brought over from Coleman Bros. of Middletown. Two of the rides

that Bascom predicted would be popular — the Ferris wheel and the Ring of Fire — were just that, as patrons young and old lined up for a quick spin. The Ferris wheel, rising close to 100 feet in the air, was the biggest the Portland Fair has ever had, Bascom said, with bright, flashing lights that lit up the nights during the weekend.

Sunday also featured the popular pulling events, which included souped-up lawn tractors pulling huge pieces of construction equipment. The loud engines of the trucks and tractors could be heard all weekend, as they pulled and raced their way through the mud, all in hopes of winning the competition.

Keeping with the fair's traditional agricultural theme, fairgoers were treated to exhibits of various animals throughout the weekend, provided by local farms across the region. A quick spin through the animal tent gave the eager viewers a peek at all types of farm fowl — turkeys, chickens, ducks — as well as goats, sheep and even a pair of llamas.

Those who wanted to get a little closer to the animals had a chance to visit the petting zoo or take a ride on a pony, which many of the youngsters of the fair heartily enjoyed.

Located in the center of the grounds were a variety of booths, hawking any number of goods that ranged from T-shirts to candles to window

installation. Many of the town's organizations had booths, as well, in hopes of raising funds that support their endeavors. Some of the booths sought support, like the Republican and Democratic committee booths; outside of the Democrat booth was Christopher Phelps, the candidate for the state's 33rd Assembly District, who clutched a warm coffee as he happily greeted and chatted with interested passersby.

As fairgoers traversed across the grounds, it was hard not to notice the persistent array of scents that stimulated the senses, particularly the aroma of the Yukon Kettle Corn booth that seemed to be the strongest of all. But popcorn wasn't the only culinary choice at the fair, not by a long shot: pizza, pierogies, baked potatoes, Italian sausages, Thai food and French fries were all available, some handed out by organizations like the Portland Volunteer Fire Department and the Exchange Club itself.

For those happily munching on the delicious food at one of the picnic tables, entertainment was available on the small stage, where Joe Milardo and his band serenaded the crowd with snappy jazz tunes. Entertainment was, of course, a main theme of the weekend, with close to 15 different acts performing throughout the fair.

Bascom said one of the most popular groups

was the local outfit Great Hill Mountain Band, as well as newcomers the Glamour Girls. Bands like Small Town Roots, Michael Cleary Band and even the Portland High School Band performed for the enthusiastic crowds, all giving the acts a great response.

The fair, as a whole, received a great response in its return, Bascom said, as many fairgoers thanked him throughout the weekend for bringing the fair back. After last year's weather-related cancellation, the future of the fair was in jeopardy of ever returning, as a lack of funding created a possible nightmare for fair coordinators.

With the help of generous sponsors, donations, and volunteers, the event was back up and running this year, though, back to its original glory. Bascom admitted that the event "wasn't a banner weekend" — exact attendance numbers have yet to be calculated — but that the return of the Portland Fair was a success.

"It went well," Bascom said. "People were happy to see it back."

And with its return this year, you can bet the fair will be back next year, possibly bigger and better than this year's edition. For those who wonder how it could get better — more food? more sun? a bigger Ferris wheel? — you'll just have to come back next October to find out.

Portland Selectmen Discuss Generators, 'Yellow Bags'

by Joshua Anusewicz

The Board of Selectmen Wednesday discussed the possibility of purchasing backup generators for several municipal buildings in the town.

In light of last year's catastrophic storms, which left much of the town without power for an extended period of time, the town has discussed whether or not backup generators would be feasible — or necessary. At the present, the municipal buildings that are considered the most important to the town — the police department, town hall, and high school/middle school, among others — are capable of being equipped with generators when the town is without power.

Seven other facilities in town are not equipped with emergency generators, including the public library, the senior center, and the town's three primary schools: Valley View, Gildersleeve and Brownstone.

Earlier this year, the Board of Selectmen discussed the idea of including funding in the budget for a new portable emergency generator for roughly \$45,000 that, according to Public Works Director Rick Kelsey, "could be used to temporarily provide power to buildings and serve as a backup for existing permanent generators in the event of a power outage."

By temporarily providing power to the buildings, Kelsey said it would prevent the buildings from freezing and causing significant damage; he recalled that in 1973, the lack of a generator at the former high school caused over \$60,000 in damage due to freezing.

In July, however, Kelsey approached the council with the idea of purchasing a used "military surplus generator" from a vendor in East Hampton for only \$8,500. Kelsey said he inspected and tested the generator, enlisting the help of the town's generator service contractor, and testified that the used generator "would be a good value."

Kelsey also added that to equip the seven buildings with "manual transfer switches" that would make each building compatible with the generator would cost between \$3,000-5,000 per building.

At Wednesday's meeting, Kelsey recommended that the town purchase the used generator, as well as consider replacing some of the town's older generators, such as the units at Fire Cos. 1 and 3 that are over 50 years old. He also recommended that, in the future, the town should install new, permanent generators at the town's most important buildings that serve as "a shelter or operations center."

First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield suggested that the selectmen not make a decision on the generator at the meeting, adding that a discussion needed to take place on where the funding would come from. The board agreed and tabled the matter until its next meeting.

Bransfield also announced that the town recently received an interesting request from the Mohegan Tribal Nation in Uncasville.

According to Bransfield, she was contacted

by the tribe regarding a grove of cottonwood trees in the town, located near the banks of the Connecticut River. The tribe is focused on one tree in particular, which selectman Carl Chudzick described as "huge," with over 30 feet of smooth trunk and thick enough that three people together couldn't get their arms around it, he said.

Why? To make a canoe out of the tree for the tribe's reserve.

Bransfield said that because the tree has few knots and soft wood, the cottonwood trees have traditionally been used by the tribe for the construction of canoes. The tribe would hold a sacred ritual, she stated, where the tree would be cut down, carved, and then hollowed out with burning rocks to create the boat.

In speaking with the tribe, Bransfield said there could be enough wood available for another boat to be constructed, perhaps by a local youth group to learn about the sacred rituals of the tribe. Bransfield suggested that the project could be included within the school district's fourth grade curriculum, which covers Native Americans.

In compensation for the tree, Bransfield said the tribe discussed the possibility of providing funding for a local youth group or education, as well. "It's really a generous offer," she said.

The selectmen agreed, unanimously approving the donation of the tree to the tribe.

Wednesday's meeting also included an update on the issue of "yellow bags" from *The*

Hartford Courant, which are regularly left on the property of residents throughout the town. At a recent meeting, one resident came forward to ask the selectmen to take action on the yellow bags, which are often thrown in intrusive areas on properties and are reduced to litter in a short time.

After the resident's complaint, Bransfield sent a letter to Denise Carr, client services and direct mail manager of *The Hartford Courant*, requesting that the yellow bags, which contain various circulars, be placed in an "appropriate location" rather than thrown on residents' properties.

In a letter sent to the town on Monday, Carr informed Bransfield that the newspaper employs a delivery service, which has its own "quality assurance employees" that monitor the delivery process in each town. If the process is not up to the company's standard, Carr stated that various penalties and fines are levied against the employees that deliver the bags.

Carr also advised any residents with concerns, or those who would prefer the delivery cease, to call 800-472-7377 or 860-525-5555.

Bransfield said she will "continue to research" the issue if the problem persists.

The next regular meeting of the Board of Selectmen is scheduled for Wednesday, Nov. 7, at 7:30 p.m., at Portland Library, 20 Free-stone Ave.

Hebron Elementary Students Go Greek

by Geeta Schrayter

On Sept. 30, a group of Hebron Elementary School students became a part of history as they joined in the opening of the first authentic Greek amphitheater in the country.

The amphitheater, which is located behind the Greek Studies Center at the University of Connecticut, is the result of 10 years of work by the Greek Studies Program at UConn and the educational non-profit organization Hellenic Society Paideia.

The group of 20 elementary students from Hebron were the only elementary aged kids to take part in the occasion. Dressed as various Greek gods and goddesses, the students performed an authentic Greek dance at the opening and added a bit of mysticism to the event.

Although the preparations for this particular gathering began in the beginning of September, it could also be said the opportunity was ten years in the making. Retired Hebron Elementary School teacher Virginia Valace oversaw the preparations for the event, and she explained she was asked if she could put together a group of students to participate since she'd been involved with the Hellenic Society Paideia due to a trip to Greece she'd taken nine years ago.

Valace said she responded that she could "absolutely" do it.

As a second grade teacher, Valace explained she had a unit of study that focused on Greek culture. As such, she knew she'd be able to reach out to some of her former students who already had some knowledge of the culture and would be interested in taking part.

"We had a principal who asked every teacher to do a unit of study on some foreign culture" about 10 years ago Valace explained. "I chose Greece because my husband was from there so I knew a little bit about the country."

As the years continued that unit of study was no longer a requirement at the school, but Valace said she chose to continue the program since it was "incredibly successful and meaningful." And it was that decision which then brought her to mind when UConn was looking for individuals to participate in the opening of the amphitheater.

"I was the only one the University knew who

taught young children like that, so they asked if I could get a group together and bring them to the procession to then dance for the public," said Valace.

She added since she'd just started her retirement last June she had the time that'd be required, and since UConn had given her "the gift" of traveling to Greece and becoming more involved she "absolutely volunteered to do this."

Valace reached out to students who were once a part of her Greek studies program, and ended up with a group of 20 kids. For four weeks, the students met with Valace after school and sometimes during lunch to brush up on their knowledge of Greek culture, have a "quick study" of Greek mythology and prepare for the event.

Each student was assigned a particular god or goddess to represent and learn about; from Zeus to Hades, Pandora and Apollo. They then had to create a costume and a medallion containing "artistic renditions" of the various symbols relating to their particular god or goddess. In addition, they had to learn the Greek dance they'd perform at the opening.

"In four weeks' time they really did a wonderful job with the after school program," said Valace, adding the students were "quite taken" with the amphitheater when they saw it, and each of them took pride in the work they put into the costumes and medallions. She shared all of the girls said they felt beautiful dressed as Grecian goddesses.

On Thursday, Oct. 4, the students gathered in the music room at Hebron Elementary School and helped create an ambrosia salad and nectar punch for a celebration of their accomplishment that was fit for the gods.

The ambrosia salad contained ingredients such as "billowy white clouds of Zeus" (marshmallows), "summer fruits of Demeter" (fruit cocktail) and the "golden crescent moons of Artemis" (Mandarin oranges), while the nectar contained the "magical nectar of spring flowers of Persephone" (apricot nectar), "ocean bubbles" of Poseidon (ginger ale), and the "swirling iridescent rainbows of Iris" (sherbet).

As the kids enjoyed their creations they reminisced about the performance and shared some of the things they enjoyed the most. For Hermes, who was played by Joey Kasper, it was



A group of Hebron Elementary students recently performed at the opening of the first Greek amphitheater in the country. Pictured, back from left, are Virginia Valace, Megan Lukowski, Julia Lord, Patty Brosseau, Arianna Morelli-Wolf, Joy Patel, Deep Patel. Second row: Joey Kasper, Julianna Quattrocchi, Annabel Richard and Rebecca Ristow; front from left, Amelia Boardman, Joey Brosseau, Lauren McHugh, Jason Herington, Hannah Mangiafico, Riley Lord, Olivia Siracusa, Natalie Baker, Audrey LeMassurier and Caroline Boardman.

the amphitheater he liked best.

"I liked sitting on the marble of the amphitheater," he said, adding he also liked learning the different symbols of Hermes, the Herald of the gods.

Iris, the Goddess of the Rainbow, portrayed by Natalie Baker, said she liked the amphitheater as well.

"It was really pretty" she stated, and Hannah Mangiafico, who represented Aphrodite agreed.

"I liked seeing the amphitheater," she said, sharing the most difficult part was remembering her lines – but now that she'd done it, they wouldn't easily be forgotten.

"I am Aphrodite the Goddess of Love and Beauty and I can make anybody fall desperately in love with me and I was born out of a shell in the ocean," she recited proudly.

For Poseidon, the God of the Sea played by Joey Brosseau, the hard part was creating his costume which included a trident built from a broom handle and "a lot of aluminum foil."

But "I liked the performance," he said, and overall preparing for the event was "fairly easy."

For Artemis, the Goddess of the Hunt played by Rebecca Ristow, learning the dance was slightly difficult but "a lot of fun."

Ristow added she also liked learning about Artemis. For example, the Goddess' arrows, she explained, could cause disease or healing depending on the circumstance.

"They could kill an animal for food or heal," she said.

"It was very, very rewarding to be able to work with a group of my students again," said Valace, adding she liked seeing "how much they carried over from the former culture studies" along with their enthusiasm and "how much love they had for the culture and the dance."

"It was just an awesome beginning to my retirement," said Valace, who also noted the students would be coming together once more at a future date to present their Greek dance to the school.

Hebron Seniors Meet the Candidates

by Geeta Schrayter

Election Day is fast approaching and, in an effort to provide Hebron's seniors the opportunity to listen to this year's hopefuls, a Meet the Candidates event was held last Thursday, Oct. 11, at the Russell Mercier Senior Center.

Candidates present at last week's event were Congressman Joe Courtney, state Senate hopefuls Chris Coutu and Cathy Osten, state Rep. Pam Sawyer and her opponent Richard Marzi, and state comptroller Kevin Lembo, representing U.S. Senate candidate Chris Murphy (who was busy preparing for that night's debate against Linda McMahon).

The candidates present touched on a variety of issues. Courtney was the first to speak, directing his words to an audience of less than a dozen people. He commented on the nation's health care and said the smart way of lowering costs "is to make sure we're getting the most efficient use of our dollars."

He also shared his thoughts on the Farm Bill. Courtney said the "good news" is it passed in the Senate with a bipartisan vote. He added his hope was that "we can at least get the vote in the House" and then "let the process work." Courtney said the bill would cut the deficit by \$23 billion over the next five years.

Courtney was also asked about the tension over Iran's alleged nuclear weapons program. He said there was "no question" that Iran was violating nuclear non-proliferation law. As a result, Courtney said a coalition of countries came together to punish Iran with various sanctions including the loss of access to certain financial institutions.

"Iranian currency, just in the last few weeks, has crashed" he said, and the sanctions which have been put in place to punish them for not complying "are having some bite."

They're putting "severe pressure" on the country, he added, and said they've caused a food and fuel crisis, riots and an explosion in the black market.

"My hope is that we keep the coalition together and really, basically give them no way out other than simply to follow the rules and follow the law," Courtney said.

After Courtney finished (Courtney's opponent, Paul Formica, didn't attend the event),

Lembo spoke. Murphy, a Democrat, and McMahon, a Republican, are battling for the U.S. Senate seat being vacated by retiring Sen. Joseph Lieberman.

Lembo chose to focus on Medicare and the prestige behind the Senate seat.

"There's a lot at stake" this election, he said. Lembo stated giving individuals the option to decide whether or not they wanted to put money into Medicare and Social Security wasn't a good idea because "the whole system is built on ladders," he explained: one generation is paid for by another.

"If kids get to pass and get to disappear, this thing goes upside down very quickly," he said.

"To destabilize it is a big deal," he added. "We know it's a flawed program; we know that. But the answer isn't to blow it up."

Lembo continued on to say whoever gains the majority in the Senate is going to make a lot of decisions "that will impact all of us." He added Connecticut has a "wonderful, rich history" and Lieberman's seat was once the seat of Roger Sherman and William Samuel Johnson, signers of the United States Constitution.

"This is big stuff," Lembo said. "We've got deep roots as a state. We need to think really hard about 'what message are we sending when we send that person to office?'"

After Lembo, Coutu, a Republican who's running against Democrat Osten for the 19th State Senate seat being vacated by retiring Sen. Edith Prague, spoke about the importance of a balanced delegation.

Coutu said he had a "big fear" at the federal level if there is one-party dominance. At the state level, he said Connecticut has "Malloy and his team, and we've seen his 'vision,'" citing record tax increases.

"I don't get it," said Coutu, adding "I don't think the public gets it either."

Coutu said something drastic needs to be done to ensure there's more balance, and the way to do that is to have more senators and House members who aren't in the majority.

"I believe the future of Connecticut can be bright – it can't be much bleaker [than it is

now]," he said, stating taxes, spending and borrowing were all increasing and "it's unsustainable."

He added he planned to work night and day to represent seniors, middle class families and small business owners.

"Know I will question things," he said. "I will look at the budget. I will question why we're borrowing and why we're spending."

Osten was the next to speak. She expressed her support of the JOBS Bill, and said the state needs someone in the Senate "who shows a boatload of common sense and good governance."

The JOBS Bill, she said, provides for small businesses, gives tax credits to veterans and supports the restoration of farmland and agriculture. In addition, the bill provides seed money to small manufacturers.

"The JOBS Bill is vitally important," Osten furthered. "We need to do what we can to retain and create new jobs. That's my number one priority: job creation and job retention."

Osten added she planned to follow in the footsteps of Prague regarding senior issues.

"No one understands senior needs better" than Prague, Osten said. "Each and every day I look to the people and what their needs are – and that's what I would do as your state senator."

Sawyer, who is seeking re-election to her 55th Assembly District seat, also spoke about what she considered to be the dire state of Connecticut, sharing that when she was on the street waving to the public recently, more than one individual stopped and told her they were leaving the state once they retired.

"Connecticut is the worst state in the nation to retire," she said. "You can retire more cheaply and live in Hawaii than the state of Connecticut."

Sawyer added Democrats had control of the House and Senate for the last "36 years minus two" and said Connecticut is in a "financial mess." She noted the state is still in a deficit despite all the increased taxes because the state continues to increase spending. And the things they're spending on, she said, "makes me

cringe."

"It's wrong, ladies and gentlemen," Sawyer said. "We're going in the wrong direction."

Sawyer said in order to turn things around there wasn't one "golden arrow" but she mentioned the tax structure needs to be changed to make the state more appealing to move to and more desirable for companies to set up shop. She added lowering the gas tax would make a difference as well, noting the price for gas in Tennessee was recently \$3.37.

"We aren't competitive," she said.

Sawyer's opponent, Marzi, was the final candidate to speak. He said one thing he shared with Sawyer is "a passion to the communities." He explained he moved to Hebron from New Britain a year ago in order to be closer to his sons, and the first thing he asked after arriving was "How can I help?"

In the short time he's been a resident, Marzi shared that he started volunteering at the senior center and has helped at the food bank when needed. He added he became a justice of the peace, joined the American Legion and the Hebron Lions, and also joined the Democratic Town Committee.

Marzi said he's a very strong advocate for public education, supports strong and clean economic development and "smart growth."

In addition, he said, "We can do better for enhancing senior programs" and the quality of life for seniors.

Marzi said he has "the time and the passion and the drive," and will work "24/7 and burn midnight oil to get things done" as state representative.

The 55th District covers Andover, Hebron, Marlborough and Bolton. The 19th District, on the other hand, is currently an 11-town district that includes Andover and Hebron. Due to recent redistricting, what Coutu and Osten are running for is a new, 10-town district, which will feature for its *Rivereast* towns Hebron and Marlborough. The revised districts will take effect following the election.

Voting will take place on Tuesday, Nov. 6, from 6 a.m.-8 p.m., at Hebron Elementary School.

Cruz Reviews CMT Results with Hebron School Board

by Geeta Schrayter

Superintendent of Schools Ellie Cruz presented the results of this year's Connecticut Mastery Tests at last Thursday's Board of Education meeting – and noted changes will soon be afoot.

Cruz explained there was going to be a “paradigm shift” in terms of how the results will be discussed moving forward, since the CMTs will be replaced by a new assessment called Smarter Balance in 2014. She said conversations shouldn't be entirely about the number of students who score at “goal” on the tests at present, but how students are being prepared for the assessment change going forward.

“We have the challenge of meeting test scores,” she said, “but also trying to provide an all-around education.”

Cruz noted there are certain areas the school currently performs well on, “but that doesn't mean we should be complacent,” she said. “We always have the gold standard.”

The goal for Hebron students, explained Cruz, is to significantly decrease the percent of students who score at the “basic” and “below basic” level and increase the percent who reach “goal” or higher.

In the third grade, 80.5 percent of students scored at or above “goal” in math for 2012, along with 79.4 percent of fourth-graders, 84 percent of fifth-graders and 88 percent of sixth-graders. In 2011, 77.8 percent of third-grade

students, 74.3 percent of fourth-grade students, 85.1 percent of fifth-grade students and 92.8 percent of sixth-grade students met or exceeded “goal.”

“Over the last few years, math scores have remained significantly improved,” said Cruz. She added the cohort of students is different each year, “so we have to be careful comparing year to year.” But she stated the scores were “consistently above state average.”

“We have really good, solid math students,” she said.

In regards to reading, Cruz explained the district has always had good readers, noting literacy starts early – in preschool and kindergarten – and the effort put in can be seen in the results.

In reading, 80.5 percent of third-graders scored at or above “goal” along with 83.2 percent of fourth-graders, 83.9 percent of fifth-graders and 95.1 percent of sixth-graders. The scores were relatively steady compared to the previous year, when 81.9 percent of third-graders, 85.2 percent of fourth-graders, 85.2 percent of fifth-graders and 93.7 percent of sixth-graders scored at or above “goal.”

“We have tremendously strong readers,” said Cruz.

The performance on the writing portion of the test has seen more fluctuation, Cruz continued. She stated a gender gap remains, and

finding ways to integrate writing into the curriculum every day “has been a challenge.”

“We continue to struggle and work on how we can integrate writing,” she said.

In the third grade, 85.1 percent of students scored at or above “goal” in writing, along with 80.8 percent of fourth-graders, 81 percent of fifth-graders and 87 percent of students in the sixth grade.

Cruz added staff had gone through some “extensive” training, and some after school workshops had been implemented as ways to address and improve writing in the school.

“I think that we're starting to see some progress,” she said. “We were not seeing scores like this, so we think our efforts have really born fruit.”

All of the writing percentages for 2012 are an increase over the number of students who scored at or above “goal” in the prior two years. In 2011, 77.2 percent of third-graders, 80.6 percent of fourth-graders, 81 percent of fifth-graders and 73.7 percent of sixth-graders scored at or above “goal.”

Gender-wise, Cruz said she was happy to report there were fewer male students at the “below basic” level in writing and more students at “goal.”

“We have more boys meeting ‘goal’ than we ever have before in writing,” she added

Around 80 percent of third-grade males

scored at or above “goal” in writing compared to about 90 percent of females. In the fourth-grade, around 75 percent of males scored at or above “goal” compared to a little over 80 percent. A little more than 70 percent of fifth-grade males scored at or above “goal” compared to close to 90 percent of females. Finally, around 80 percent of sixth-grade males scored at or above “goal” in writing compared to more than 90 percent of females.

Cruz furthered when the scores of the same group of students are examined over time, some gains can be seen in different areas. For example, there is a “gradual progression of improvement” in the math scores from 2009-12.

In 2009, 83.6 percent of students (then in third grade) were at or above “goal” in math. The following year that number dropped to 74.1 percent but in 2011 the number for the same students rose to 85.1 percent. Then, this year 88 percent of that same group of students (now sixth-graders) scored at or above “goal.”

“This shows us that our instructional strategies are working, our curriculum is solid and we're on the right path,” said Cruz.

She furthered that the students did a good job, but that didn't mean the school would stop pushing forward.

“Know that we're not going to rest on our laurels,” she said, “but our students did a super job.”



The Democratic Town Committee's scarecrow scene on the Town Green burned Tuesday night. The scene, shown at left, consisted of scarecrows featuring the faces of various state and national Democratic candidates. It was the only of the 30 scarecrows on the green damaged. At right is all that was left of the scene Wednesday afternoon.

Colchester Democrats' Scarecrow Display Catches Fire

by Melissa Roberto

Residents and town officials this week expressed sadness at the possible torching this week of the Democratic Town Committee's scarecrow display on the Town Green.

The display was part of the 13th annual Scarecrow Decorating Contest, which lets local businesses, organizations, youth groups and individuals/families design scarecrows on the Town Green. The Democrats' display consisted of several barrels of hay, scarecrows and campaign signs. Each scarecrow wore an enlarged laminated picture of the face of one of the state and national Democratic candidates. The Democrats' scene was one of 30 entries – and the only one destroyed.

The Colchester Hayward Fire Department said it received a call at 8:21 p.m. Tuesday reporting a fire on the Town Green. Firefighters arrived to the scene within three minutes and they found that one of the displays was burning. It took firefighters 25 minutes to put out the blaze.

Resident Trooper Supervisor Sgt. Marc Petruzzi said Thursday he cannot declare the fire arson as there needs to be “conclusive evidence” the blaze was intentionally set. He said police continue to investigate the incident.

State Rep. Linda Orange, a Democrat seeking re-election, expressed appreciation for the firefighter's prompt response to the call. She believes their timely manner prevented the fire from spreading.

“With all of the hay it could have spread to other displays and we could have had a terrible fire down there which would have ruined the green,” she said.

In the 13 years of the Scarecrow Decorating Contest, this is the first time a display has ever been destroyed by fire, organizers of the event have said.

“It's just unfortunate that such a positive thing for the town turned into that,” said Teri Damato, co-chair of this year's contest.

Chairman of the DTC Dorothy Mrowka was saddened to hear the news.

“It's really sad,” she said. “Our freedom of speech was violated and I can't imagine why someone would have done something like that.”

Mrowka said the scarecrows in the display were wearing the clothes of her late husband, who passed away earlier this year.

Mrowka said the Democratic Town Committee has been putting up scarecrow scenes for

the last 10 years, and this is the first time one has ever been vandalized.

Many DTC members helped put up this year's Democratic scarecrows. Member Tim Gilman said it took about three and a half hours to set up, and that his 4-year-old and 8-year-old sons even helped out. Gilman said it was hard to communicate what happened to his sons.

“You don't want to explain to children that the scarecrows they helped build and were proud of were ruined,” he said.

Gilman said there was nothing but positive energy as people put up their displays.

“It's a really community-oriented thing,” he said. “The people around us were helping us and we shared our tools with them as well.”

Republican Town Committee member Brenden Healy said he was appalled by the news. Healy was last year's Scarecrow Decorating Contest chairman.

“I'm very familiar with the event,” he said. “A lot of work goes into it and a lot of people put a lot of work into their scenes, and that makes it really painful.”

Healy went on to say that he certainly hopes it was not someone on the Republican side be-

hind the incident.

In a press release, Board of Selectmen members Rosemary Coyle and James Ford – both Democrats – referred to the fire as “an act of political intolerance.”

The selectmen also said they expressed shock at the lack of concern by the First Selectman Gregg Schuster, a Republican, regarding the fire. They wrote that Schuster posted about the blaze on his Facebook page Tuesday night, saying, “Minor Fire on the Town Green tonight. Apparently, the Democrats' scarecrow was lit. At the time, I was in a meeting with over a dozen people that will confirm it wasn't me.”

Schuster has been out of the office since Tuesday, and has appointed Stan Soby to act as first selectman until Oct. 23. However, on his Facebook page Wednesday, Schuster wrote, “I of course hope whomever responsible is caught.”

As for now, the CBA has proposed a \$250 reward to anyone who communicates information of the parties responsible for the crime. In his Facebook post Wednesday, Schuster said he would “personally match” that reward, and encouraged others to join him.

Feedback Positive for Colchester Middle School/Senior Center Project

by **Melissa Roberto**

Renovation plans for the William J. Johnston Middle School/Community Center/Senior Center building project are still in the preliminary stages, but the building committee behind the project is informing the public of its early plans – and so far, it said, the response has been positive.

The project would combine the middle school, senior center and youth center in one building, which would allow for expanded programs. First Selectman Gregg Schuster has said the youth center, located across from Town Hall on Norwich Avenue, is inadequate in size. The senior center is currently housed in a rented building elsewhere on Norwich Avenue.

Committee members were pleased to announce the positive feedback they have received about the project after proposing the design at five open houses, the 57 Fest and the Pumpkins 'n Pooches event.

“A significant number of people were really excited about it,” said Irene Malsbenden, a member of the committee.

After the 57 Fest, the committee received 20 written comments from residents and 17 of those suggested adding a pool to the project.

“That is an overwhelming and consistent theme of comments,” building committee chairman Thomas Tyler said of the pool requests.

No cost estimate has been decided yet. The Building Committee’s first step is to reach out to the public and see how residents react.

The project plan includes a renovated existing building and new additions. The committee passed out brochures of the proposed site plan at these events that describe the future use of each building.

After the proposed renovation, the existing middle school would house the sixth grade in the western wing of the building and the new Senior Center will be located in the former cafeteria wing. As stated in the brochure, the new senior center would be “taking advantage of the existing kitchen, cafeteria, large classrooms and loading dock.” The center would include a variety of services: a bistro/café, gift shop, lounge, counseling space, library, health room, hair salon, fitness room, offices, restroom and storage.

The existing gym on the west end of the school will be reused and the library will stay in its current location.

The existing building will also house a Com-

munity Center, which would include the Parks and Recreation, Social Services and Youth Services Departments.

Parks and Rec. would use the existing gym and there would be space used for activities and equipment. A health room and waiting area would also be located next to the Park and Recreation offices.

The Social Services Department would be located on the first floor of the existing middle school and it would include a large food-bank area and storage.

Youth Services would be located in the former building east of the gym and would include a game room, technology room, lounge, counseling room and library.

The eighth-grade wing, which was built in 1954, will be removed and will provide room for new sports fields and even a track.

The new addition will include both seventh- and eighth-grades on the second and third floor. General facilities including administrative offices, conference rooms and a faculty dining/workroom will take place on the first floor of the addition as well as a new kitchen and cafeteria. The first floor of the addition will also

hold support services, such as health and wellness, psychology/social work, school counseling and English language learning.

Special education services will be located throughout both buildings and one or two classrooms will be placed in each grade wing.

New parking lots for the middle school and the Senior Center will also be added.

The architect of the project is Marco Tommasini of Tecton Architects in Hartford. He was chosen out of 27 other firms.

Town Facilities Director Greg Plunkett said the earliest time frame to have a public vote on the project would be in the late winter or early spring.

“But it really is up to other people to make that decision, like the Board of Selectmen or the Board of Finance,” he said. “The committee is planning on having their work completed so that if they decided to have a vote in that timeframe that they would be able to.”

The building committee will hold a town information session Thursday, Nov. 15, at 7 p.m. at William J. Johnston Middle School, to present the project and provide tours of the middle school.

Colchester Police News

10/9: State Police said Nathan Carrier, 23, of 2A Westchester Hills, lost control of his vehicle and struck a guardrail while traveling west on Route 2, a half mile east of Exit 16. He was transported to Marlborough Clinic with possible minor injuries, state police said.

10/10: Hector Cosme, 40, of 64 Rowe Ave., Hartford, was charged with operating an unregistered motor vehicle, improper use of license, insurance coverage fails minimum requirements, operation of motor vehicle when license is suspended, and failure to drive in proper lane on a multiple lane highway, during a traffic stop on Route 2 west, state police said.

10/12: Robert E. Bergeson, 59, of 28 Witter Rd., Salem, was charged with second-degree harassment, state police said.

10/13: Anthony Sola, 19, of 84 Lawlor St., New Britain, was charged with DUI, failure to

carry license and unsafe passing, state police said.

10/13: Robert Watson, of 36 Hathaway Rd., West Hampton, Mass., was charged with DUI, State Police said.

10/13: Joseph Phinney, 21, of 59 Burnt Hill, Chichester, N.H., was charged with DUI, State Police said.

10/14: Christopher A. Kotyk, 28, of 10 Phillips Rd., Lisbon, was charged with second-degree failure to appear, after his vehicle broke down on Route 2, State Police said.

10/15: Christopher M. McIntyre, of 611 Ocean Ave, New London, was charged with third-degree larceny, State Police said.

10/15: Sandra Dennis, 44, of 108 Gill St., was charged with breach of peace, third-degree assault and threatening, State Police said.

Hebron Police News

10/10: Joshua Deeter, of 102 Wellwood Rd., Amston, was charged with possession and drug paraphernalia, state police said.

10/14: Stephanie Maturano, 31, of 12 Gristmill Rd., was traveling west on Route 66 when she swerved to the right and hit a mailbox at a home on Route 66. She continued to drive west until she was stopped and charged with DUI, evasion of responsibility in operation of a motor vehicle and improper turn, state police said.

Andover Police News

10/14: Wilfredo Quinones, 23, of 73 High St., Willimantic, was charged with operation of a motor vehicle when registration or license is suspended, speeding and DUI during the course of a motor vehicle stop, State Police said.

Portland Police News

9/5: Two 15-year-old male juveniles were each arrested on two counts of third-degree burglary and two counts of fourth-degree larceny, Portland Police said.

9/15: Xavier Tate, 19, of 38 Pepperidge Rd., Kevin Wicke, 19, of 122 Pepperidge Rd., and Myles Winiski, 19, of 179 Jobs Pond Rd., were each charged with simple trespass, police said.

9/15: Jeffrey Nolan, 37, of 60 Spellman Point Rd., was charged with DUI, traveling too fast for conditions and failure to drive in proper lane, police said.

9/16: Jessica Jordan, 33, of 16 Sorries Court, Meriden, was charged with DUI and traveling unreasonably fast, police said.

9/20: William Senesac, 41, of 1503 Portland

Cobalt Rd., was charged with three counts of failure to appear, police said.

10/10: Eric Majia, 22, whose address was listed as homeless, was charged with third-degree assault and disorderly conduct, police said.

10/11: Jamie Murano, 37, of 23 Lincoln St., West Haven, was charged with third-degree forgery, criminal impersonation and third-degree larceny, police said.

10/12: Kyle Stolz, 39, of 340 Main St., was charged with third-degree assault, second-degree threatening and disorderly conduct, police said.

10/17: A 17-year-old juvenile male was arrested for third-degree assault and referred to juvenile court, police said.

Marlborough Police News

10/9: State Police said Dylan Dukette, 18, of 20 Fairy Lake Rd., Salem, lost control of his vehicle, struck a guardrail and spun across both travel lanes while traveling on Route 2 east, five-tenths of a mile west of Exit 16. He continued on Route 2 and was located on Route 11 southbound, when he was arrested for DUI, State Police said.

10/15: Erica A. Harrington, 30, of 6 Fox Hill Lane, Enfield, was charged with DUI and failure to move over, state police said.

East Hampton Police News

10/7: Linda M. Smith, 48, of 25 Loomis Rd., Colchester, was arrested for DUI, East Hampton Police said.

10/7: Sherri Taylor, 43, of 24 Hilltop Rd., was arrested for third-degree assault and disorderly conduct, police said.

Obituaries

Hebron

Edward E. Tluck

Edward E. Tluck, 50, of Hebron and formerly of Manchester, beloved husband for over 27 years of Joan E. (Cartwright) Tluck, continued his journey into heaven Saturday, Oct. 13, at his home with his family at his side after an inspirational fight against brain cancer. Ed was born Oct. 18, 1961, in Manchester, son of Margaret (Gally) Tluck of Manchester and the late Andrew Emil Tluck.

Ed attended Verplanck Elementary, Bennet Junior High and was a 1979 graduate of Manchester High School. He went on to earn his bachelor's degree in business management from UConn with the Class of 1983. Ed's 26-year career as a mortgage loan officer had him working for several banks and mortgage companies, and most recently with Webster Bank. He was well-respected in his field and owned his own mortgage company for several years as well.

In addition to his wife and mother, he is survived by and was a loving father of three, twin boys Alex C. Tluck and Connor E. Tluck and daughter Kayla M. Tluck, all of Hebron. He also leaves his sister, Linda Ott and her husband Richard and their children, Dean and Eric Ott all of Manchester. Ed also leaves two sisters-in-law: Patricia Daniel and her husband Dean of Coventry and Judy Calvert and her late wife, Leslie MacLeman of Vernon. He also leaves a brother-in-law, George Cartwright of Florida. He is survived by several loving and loved nieces, nephews, great-nieces and great-nephews. "Uncca Ed" will truly be missed.

Ed had countless close friends and neighbors whom he treasured. He enjoyed time spent with friends, meetings with "The Wildcats", traveling, camping, skiing, biking, campfires (the bigger the better) and mostly recently became a devoted runner who completed a 5K just this past Aug. 5. Ed was an active and faithful member of Gilead Congregational Church, where he was affectionately known as the one and only "Chef Ed". He served on the Board of Deacons and was chairperson for a number of years. He was also instrumental in starting a men's fellowship and served as chair and co-chair for many years. Ed loved every minute coaching his children in basketball and baseball in their younger years.

Funeral services were held Wednesday, Oct. 17, at the Gilead Congregational Church, 672 Gilead St. (Route 85), Hebron. Burial will be private in the Church's Garden of Remembrance. Calling hours were held Tuesday, Oct. 16, at the Holmes Funeral Home, 400 Main St., Manchester.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to the Team Tluck Educational Fund, P.O. Box 711, South Windsor, CT 06074 or to the Gilead Congregational Church Garden of Remembrance Fund, 672 Gilead St., Hebron, CT 06248.

To sign the online register book, go to holmes-watkinsfuneralhomes.com.

East Hampton

Frank T. Strzepek

Frank T. Strzepek, 76, of East Hampton, beloved husband of Mary Ellen (Provasoli) Strzepek died Friday, Oct. 12, at Hartford Hospital. Born Oct. 21, 1935, in Chicopee, Mass., he was the son of the late Walter and Aniela (Szpara) Strzepek.

Frank received his undergraduate degree from Holy Cross and his master's degree from Springfield College. He had worked for Gerber Scientific in human resources, where he was the director of personnel. Frank had served his country in the U.S. Army Reserves.

Besides his wife Mary Ellen, he is survived by his two sons, Francis Strzepek of Rochester, N.H., Gary Strzepek and his wife Sandi of Gilmanton, N.H.; his daughter Christine Webster and her husband Ted of Guilford, N.H.; four stepsons, Gregory, Daniel, Glenn and Paul Tousignant; and his six beloved grandchildren.

A funeral liturgy was celebrated Tuesday, Oct. 16, in St. Patrick Church in East Hampton. Burial will be private at the convenience of the family. Friends called at Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton, on Tuesday morning.

To leave online condolences, visit spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

Colchester

Michael Smith Celebration of Life

Michael J. Smith, 54, beloved husband of Loriann (Kernozeck) of Colchester, passed away Saturday, Sept. 15. His obituary appeared in the Sept. 21 *Rivereast*.

A Celebration of Life pig roast will be held at 1 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 20. All are invited to join the family at the pavilion in Devil's Hopyard State Park located in East Haddam.

Portland

Katharine Sandalls

Katharine "Anne" (Flood) Sandalls of Weston, Mass., died Wednesday, Oct. 10.

She was the beloved wife of William T. Sandalls Jr., and devoted mother of William T. Sandalls III of Culver City, Calif., the late Benjamin F. Sandalls, who died in 1987, and Katharine A. Sandalls of New York, N.Y.; sister of Ellin Murphy of Plymouth, Mass., Mary Flood of Portland, Elizabeth Flood of Manchester, Timothy Flood of Portland, Patrick Flood of East Calais, Vt., William Flood of Queen Creek, Ariz., and Joseph Flood of Guilford. She was predeceased by her brothers, Michael, John and Thomas. She also leaves 18 nieces and nephews and 9 grand-nieces and nephews.

She was born in Middletown on July 18, 1946, to the late Thomas W. and Mary Kennedy Flood. She graduated in 1968 with an AB from Albertus Magnus College, New Haven, and received an MA (Demography) in 1970 from Georgetown University, Washington, D.C.

Funeral from the George F. Doherty & Sons Funeral Home, 477 Washington St. (Route 16), Wellesley, Mass., was held Monday, Oct. 15, and was followed by a Funeral Mass in St. Julia's Church, Weston Center. Visiting hours were Sunday, Oct. 14. Interment was in Linwood Cemetery, Weston.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Ben Sandalls Memorial Fund c/o Weston Education Enrichment Fund Committee, Weston Public Schools, 89 Wellesley St. Weston, MA 02493.

Online guestbook and directions at gfdoherty.com.

Marlborough

Kathleen M. Kennedy

Kathleen M. Kennedy, 56, of East Hartford, passed away Monday, Oct. 8, surrounded by her loving family. She was born in Hartford, daughter of the late Thomas Kennedy and Eileen (Meara) Arnini.

Kathleen is survived by her loving daughter, Heather L. Napolitano and her husband Jason of Coventry; her loving son, Matthew Kennedy of East Hartford; her three sisters, Eileen Atkinson and her husband Steven of East Hampton, Joan Stringer of East Hartford and Gina Burns of Marlborough; two treasured grandchildren, Joshua Radko and Caydon Raiola; several nieces and nephews and Brandon Harris.

In addition to her parents, she was predeceased by her brother, Thomas Kennedy.

The family would like to thank the staff of Marlborough Health Care Center for their loving care of Kathy.

Kathleen's Liturgy of Christian Burial was held Tuesday, Oct. 16, in St. Rose Catholic Church, 33 Church St., East Hartford. Burial followed at Mt. St. Benedict's Cemetery in Bloomfield. There were no calling hours.

In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to St. Rose's Food Pantry, 33 Church St., East Hartford, CT 06108.

For more information, visit newkirkandwhitney.com.

Marlborough

Mary Raicik

Mary Raicik, 94, of Middletown, wife of the late Frank Raicik, died Monday, Oct. 15, at Marlborough Health and Rehabilitation Center, Marlborough. She was born in Middletown, daughter of the late Walter and Anna (Barniski) Stepczyk. Prior to retirement, Mary was employed at North & Judd. She was communicant of St. Mary of Czestochowa Church.

Mary is survived by her daughters, Gail Johnson and her husband Burton of Colchester, and Linda Buehler and her husband Harold of Bristol; five grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren; also several nieces and nephews.

She was predeceased by two brothers, a sister and great-grandson, Kyle Frank Johnson.

Mary's family is thankful to Carmen, Roseanne, Penny and Marcy at Marlborough Health and Rehabilitation Center, for the thoughtfulness and compassion shown to their mother.

The funeral liturgy will be held today, Oct. 19, at 11 a.m., at St. Mary Church, Middletown. Burial will be in Calvary Cemetery. Friends may call at Biega Funeral Home, 3 Silver St., Middletown, today from 9:30-10:30 a.m. prior to the liturgy.

In lieu of flowers, those who wish may send memorial contributions to a charity of their choice.

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

Portland

Dorothy N. Case

Dorothy N. Case, 90, of Portland and Newington, passed away peacefully Friday, Sept. 28, at Birchwoods at Canco in Portland.

Dorothy was born Jan. 9, 1922, in New Britain, the daughter of Blazy Dul and Nellie (Drososkaya) Dul. She was a graduate of New Britain High School and Morse Business College in Hartford. Despite her height of 5'4" and because of her boundless energy she was the center of her college's basketball team.

After college, she married the love of her life, Delvyn C. Case Sr. They had 67 wonderful years of marriage until his passing in 2011.

Dorothy retired from the Defense Supply Agency of the U.S. Government after 25 years of service. While there she rose from typist to area manager. However, she was a devoted wife, mother and homemaker most of her adult life. She had the gift of hospitality and her bubbly personality was cherished by many as she hosted numerous social events and family gatherings in her beautiful home. She was a wonderful cook and excellent gardener and got great pleasure from dedicating herself to the comfort and support of others.

Dorothy loved coming to Maine to watch her son's dramatic presentations at church and her grandchildren's track meets, lacrosse games, concerts and plays. As her son said, "She was always there, always in the stands, cheering." She was devoted to caring for her son Raymond, who had special needs Dorothy and her husband enjoyed traveling, bowling, golf and bridge, participating actively until their late 80s.

Dorothy lived a full and active life. She made friends easily and was loved by many, including her new friends from Birchwoods where she lived for the last one and a half years. Dorothy will be deeply missed by her family and friends, especially her easy and enthusiastic laugh.

She was predeceased by her husband Delvyn Case, her son Raymond, and her grandson Delvyn's wife, LK Case.

She is survived by her son, Dr. Delvyn C. Case, Jr. and his wife Carole of Cumberland Foreside, Maine; grandchildren, Dr. Delvyn Case III of Quincy, Mass., Dr. Wendy Kjeldgaard and her husband Nicholas of Washington, D.C., and Keith Case, of Cambridge, Mass.; two great granddaughters, Alexandra and Madeline Case of Quincy, Mass. She is also survived by Chester Kostus of Southington and Mrs. Helen Bochnik of Meriden, siblings of her husband with whom she was especially close.

Relatives and friends called Friday, Oct. 12, at Newington Memorial Funeral Home, 20 Bonair Ave., Newington. Calling hours were followed by a Mass of Christian Burial at St. Mary's Church, Newington. Interment was in Sacred Heart Cemetery, New Britain.

Arrangements are under the care of Jones, Rich & Hutchins Funeral Home 199 Woodford St. Portland, ME 04103. Condolences can be made to the Family at jonesrichandhutchins.com.

East Hampton

Pamela Mills

Pamela (Barber) Mills, 64, of East Hampton formerly of East Haddam, received her angel wings Thursday, Oct. 11. Pam was born in Middletown, daughter of the late John M. and Dolores (Chelifoux) Barber. She was the kitchen manager of the East Haddam Elementary School.

"Mom, your 'fabulous four' thank you for being such an inspiration. Your strength, courage, wisdom, compassion and love have given us everything we need to go on. Thank you for living your life for us and our children. Your granddaughters will live a full life because of the way you have touched their hearts. You will forever be in all of our hearts."

Pamela is survived by four daughters, Michelle Mills of East Hampton, Monica Mills and her husband Michael Birch of Salem, Marissa Mills-Burt of East Hampton, Megan Mills of Colchester; six granddaughters, Devin Birch, Haley Birch, Faith Burt, Kendall Burt, Reagan Burt, Joey-Lynn Mills; two brothers, Jack Barber of East Haddam, Joseph Barber of East Hampton; five sisters, Carol Thody of Hadlyme, Martha Goodspeed of East Haddam, Laura Davis of East Haddam, Theresa Parady of East Haddam, Cheryl Gagen of Hadlyme.

She was predeceased by a brother, Frank Barber.

In lieu of services, Pam has requested the presence of anyone whose life she's touched to join her family and friends in a celebration of her life. Please join us Saturday, Oct. 27, at 5 p.m., at the Pattaconk Yacht Club, 61 Dock Rd., Chester.

Biega Funeral Home has care of the arrangements. To share memories or express condolences online, visit biegafuneralhome.com.

Portland

Jean Harris

Jean Harris, 90, of Portland, passed away Sunday, Oct. 14, 2012 at Middlesex Hospital. Born Feb. 5, 1922, in Brooklyn, N.Y., she was the beloved daughter of the late Dr. Augustus L. and Olive L. (Perry) Harris.

Jean was an artist and had a great love for paintings and antiques. She also adored poodles.

She leaves her greatniece, Monica Schmidt of Wallingford and many dear friends. She was predeceased by a sister, Virginia Hill Harris and by a greatniece, Linda Brainard.

Graveside services will be held Saturday, Oct. 20, at 11 a.m., at Riverview Cemetery North Main St., Essex. Relatives and friends may call today, Oct. 19, from 3-4 p.m., at Portland Memorial Funeral Home, 231 Main St., Portland.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Alzheimer's Association CT Chapter 2075 Silas Deane Hwy., Suite 100 Rocky Hill, CT. 06067.

To send an online expression of sympathy, visit portlandmemorialfh.net.

Colchester

Marcel Blanchard

Marcel "Ducky" Blanchard, husband of the late Teresa Blanchard, passed away peacefully Wednesday afternoon, Oct. 10, at Harrington Court, surrounded by his loved ones. He was born July 11, 1923, in Magog, Canada, the son of Albert and Albina Blanchard. Marcel and his family moved to the United States when he was a young boy and settled in Jewett City. He graduated from Griswold High School in 1941 and proudly became a naturalized citizen in 1944.

Honorably serving in the U.S. Army, Marcel was stationed in Greenland during World War II. Staff Sgt. Blanchard served with the Army Corps of Engineers at a crucial refueling airbase and eventually became responsible for all refrigeration on the base.

After the war, he enrolled in the Massachusetts Trade School in Boston. Upon completion of his studies Marcel returned to Connecticut and was hired by Pfizer Pharmaceuticals as an electrician where he remained for 35 years until his retirement. He was a lifelong member of the Elks and the Maennerchor Club where he was a past president.

On April 3, 1948, Marcel was married to Teresa Jarvis and enjoyed 48 years together before her death in 2004. A devoted family man, he was always the first to help his family and make everyone smile.

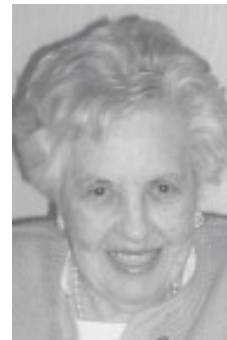
Marcel is survived by two daughters, Carolyn Doutre and her husband Timothy, and Janet Palermo; four grandchildren, Sarah Palermo, Jennifer Doutre and her husband Corey Morrison, Nathan Palermo and his wife Soulinda, and Jeff Doutre and his wife Susan; and five great-grandchildren, all of whom adored their "Papa."

A special thank you is extended to the staff at Harrington Court and VITAS Hospice Care for the wonderful support and care they provided Marcel during his stay with them.

All were invited to attend a Mass of Christian Burial at Sacred Heart Church, Taftville, Monday, Oct. 15. Burial of remains followed in St. Joseph's Cemetery. There was no visitation.

Arrangements are by Godere Funeral Home, Taftville.

In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to the American Heart Association.



Portland

Kathleen Swanson

Kathleen (Whitehead) Swanson, 66, of Portland, beloved wife of George H. Swanson, Jr. passed away peacefully on Wednesday, Oct. 10, in the comfort of the Middlesex Hospital Hospice Unit. Kathy was born Dec. 4, 1945, in Middletown, and was a lifelong resident of Portland.



Kathy loved to give back to her community by being involved. She was involved in organizations such as the Boy Scouts of America as a Cub Scout Den Mother, committee chairperson for BSA Troop 49 and also chairperson for BSA Sea Scout Ship 480. She was a member of St. Mary's Church and taught CCD classes there and was a member of the Ladies Guild. She was also past president of the American Legion Post 69 Auxiliary and an officer at Hemlock Grange 182.

She was very passionate about teaching children about life as she worked as a para-professional at Gildersleeve Elementary School before she retired and was a good friend to her co-workers and students. She was a graduate of Portland High School, Class of 1963.

Kathy is survived by her beloved husband, George H. Swanson Jr.; her son, Erik Swanson, his wife Paulette and Kathy's cherished granddaughter Chloe, her "little monkey-doodle." She is also survived by her father, Robert Whitehead and Irene Summa of Torrington; her sister Debbie Bougor and her husband Randy; her niece and nephew, Lindsay and Matthew Bougor.

She was predeceased by her mother, Cecelia (Sally) Whitehead.

Friends and relatives called at D'Angelo Funeral Home, 22 S. Main St., Middletown, on Tuesday, Oct. 16. The Mass of Christian Burial was held Wednesday, Oct. 17, at St. Mary's Church in Portland, followed by burial at Connecticut State Veterans Cemetery on Bow Lane in Middletown. A reception followed the burial at Hemlock Grange 182, 17 Sage Hollow Road in Portland.

Kathy's family would like to extend a special thanks to all the doctors and medical staff that assisted her at Middlesex Hospice Unit and at the Connecticut Oncology Group. A few of her last words were, "I had a good time." May we all be so lucky. We all love her very much and will miss her.

To share memories or express condolences online, visit dangelofuneralhome.com.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in Kathy's memory to The Kathy Swanson Memorial Campership Fund, attn: Michael Tierney, 22 Rogers Rd., Portland, CT 06480, or to your preferred breast cancer charity.

Colchester

Dorothy Irene Bianco

Dorothy Irene (Schwalbach) Bianco, of 65 Church St., Middletown, passed away Saturday, Oct. 13, at Harrington Court; she was 94 years young.

She leaves on earth her sons, Richard, who lives in New York, Ralph and his wife, Jeanette (JJ), living in Colchester, Jeff and his wife, Sallie, living in Middletown; also her six grandchildren, (Scott, Robin, Debi, Chris, Rafael and Bessie) and eight great-grandchildren (Amanda, Cayleigh, Catherine, Cassandra, Cristen, Kathryn, Seth and Elijah).

Besides her husband Raphael, she was predeceased by her son, Alan.

Dorothy was born in Bronx, N.Y., met the love of her life, Raphael Bianco, married him and raised four boys in the Bronx. Raphael and Dorothy moved to Church Street in Middletown in 1979. After her husband's passing in 1986, she became quite active in volunteering at Middlesex Hospital, visiting the Veterans' Home, and becoming a member and past president of the local chapter of the Ladies Auxiliary for the Union Soldiers.

It was the desire to keep busy, helping others and enjoying life, which allowed her to carry on without her wonderful husband. She always had a smile for those she met and will be missed by many in the Church Street community, including her fellow parishioners at the First United Methodist Church as she so enjoyed the community spirit and the many wonderful people of her church.

While in the Bronx, she belonged to Tremont Presbyterian Church, where she was a member of the Sunshine Club...whose credo was "not to criticize nor condemn, but to encourage and build up. The object of this club is to scatter sunshine and to promote good fellowship." We believe she lived up to the Sunshine Club standards and will be missed by one and all who knew her. She truly loved her family, four sons, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

As James Patterson wrote, "Love means you can never be apart," so although she leaves behind these wonderful people, they will never be apart.

There will be a memorial service Saturday, Oct. 20, from 2-4 p.m., at Biega Funeral Home, 3 Silver St., Middletown.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to The First United Methodist Church, 24 Old Church St., Middletown, CT 06457 or to Harrington Court Genesis Health Care, 59 Harrington Court, Colchester, CT 06415.

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

From the Editor's Desk

Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

The leaves are falling, political campaign signs litter people's lawns, and that old abandoned Blockbuster Video down the street is now a Halloween store. Yes, the harbingers of fall are all around us. And in Andover, there's another sign:

The dueling Entertainment Books.

Every year at this time, the Friends of Andover Library start selling Entertainment Books, which are hand-held books that contain literally hundreds of coupons for discounts at scores of places in the area, ranging from restaurants to car rental places to movie theatres and more.

And also every year at this time, supporters of Andover Youth Basketball sell the exact same books.

Simply put, there are no losers here. Both the library and youth sports are good causes to support. And I remember having to sell those books myself when I was in high school – there are some good deals in there.

The books still cost \$30. To order from the Friends of the Library, call the library at 860-742-7428. To order from supporters of Andover Youth Basketball, call 860-646-4467 or 860-742-0188 ext. 2.

* * *

It's been quite the hot topic around Connecticut as of late, but I haven't yet weighed in. So, since it's my party and I'll opine if I want to, let me just say this: I know he's since changed his mind, but the mayor of Bristol never should've banned his firefighters from wearing pink to begin with.

In case you hadn't heard the story, here's a brief recap: October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month and, to show their support, Bristol firefighters wanted to wear pink shirts this month, as many firefighters across the nation and right here in Connecticut are also doing. Bristol Mayor Art Ward said no dice. His reasoning, quite frankly, stunk: he was worried about a precedent being set, and potential "difficulties" in the future.

"We all want to stand up for the cause that's dearest to us," Ward, who lost his own mother to breast cancer, said at a City Council meeting last Tuesday. "The potential exists for conflicts in which causes each department will select at a given time."

So, seeking to avoid future conflicts, Ward ordered the firefighters to continue wearing their blue uniforms.

Now, granted, I lost my grandmother to breast cancer four years ago, so I'm sympathetic to the cause of breast cancer awareness and research; I admit I may be a little biased here. But Ward should've set aside worries about setting precedent – which I really don't believe it would've done – and recognized this was a cause close to the firefighters' hearts, and let them wear pink. (And it's not just simply raising awareness; according to the *Hartford Courant*, in most of the communities where firefighters are wearing pink this month, they buy pink T-shirts for \$20, with the proceeds going toward breast cancer research. Many communities also sell the pink T-shirts to the public – often from firehouses – to raise even more funds.)

After several days of heated debate – during which the story went national – Ward decided last Thursday to let the firefighters wear pink, saying, "I have decided that I will not allow this controversy to become more important than the cause."

So, good on Ward for reversing course. But it was a course he never should've been on to begin with.

* * *

I've been mostly quiet lately on the presidential race (although regular readers would guess I'm pro-Obama, and they'd be right; a Romney-Ryan victory would be, well, rather scary), but I've got to speak up about one point. Obama has been hammered repeatedly over the price of gasoline, and how it's risen dramatically during his time in office. In a letter to the editor in last week's *Rivereast*, Hebron resident Chuck Corso – not exactly Obama's No. 1 fan to begin with – wrote that Obama "is to blame for gas prices in our country because he stopped the Keystone pipeline, because he won't drill for oil in America which has more oil than Saudi Arabia, because his 'green policies' are killing jobs along with the coal industry."

Really now. If Obama's to blame for gas prices being so high, then why were they just as high – higher in fact – under George W. Bush? Have we all forgotten what gas got up to in the summer of 2008? The average price in the area was around \$4.25 a gallon. While gas has been hovering around \$4 for a while now, it has yet to get quite that high.

Now, in the last couple of months before the 2008 election – after hitting that \$4.25/gallon peak – the price of gas (conveniently?) began to drop, like a stone, and continued to do so even after the election, eventually falling below \$2 a gallon in many places. But it was unreasonable to expect it to continue at that level. Gas eventually started to climb again.

Look, do I like paying this much for gas? No way. This time a decade ago I'd fill up my tank – at the fancy-shmancy Mobil stations to boot – at around \$1.50 a gallon. I'd love it if it were still that low, but it's not. And it's unfair to blame high gas prices on Obama when the prices are simply what they were a little more than four years ago.

* * *

And speaking of politics, as Election Day draws ever closer, here are some guidelines for letters to the editor. Next week, the Oct. 26 issue, is the last week for people to send in letters to the editor attacking other candidates or raising new issues. This is because the following week, the Nov. 2 edition, will be the last chance for candidates to defend themselves before Election Day. Political letters submitted for the Nov. 2 issue should be endorsements only, or positive in nature.

In other words, if you want to be nasty, you've got one more week in which to do it. If you want to be nice, you've got two weeks left.

* * *

See you next week.