

RIVEREAST

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MSG Dan Henderson, who recently returned home after spending 11 months in Kandahar, Afghanistan, stands next to his dog and the tree used for the yellow ribbon ceremony on the Colchester Veterans Green. Henderson tied a ribbon in honor of his fiancée, Lt. Emily Hein, a convoy commander in Kandahar.

Yellow Ribbon Event Comes to Colchester

by Melissa Roberto

The abundance of American flags, singing of national songs and a three-shot salute all added to the patriotism that was exhibited on the Veterans Green last Sunday during the annual Veterans Day Ceremony which included Colchester's first-ever Yellow Ribbon Ceremony.

Attendees appreciated a nice change of high temperatures on Sunday with a windy breeze that helped American flags held by the Veterans of Foreign Affairs (VFW) Post 6990 wave distinctly in the air.

Joining the VFW were also members of the American Legion Post 54, Colchester Antique Veterans, Patriot Guard Riders, Colchester Veterans Color Guard, St. Andrews Choral Group, Colchester Girl Scouts, Parents of Soldiers Together CT (POST-CT) and the Yellow Ribbon Committee that all participated in making the event a success.

The ceremony was kicked off by Commander of the VFW Ray Ryan and included speeches from First Selectman Gregg Schuster and Master Sergeant (MSG) and Commander of the American Legion Dan Henderson who recently arrived home in September. Henderson was deployed for 11 months in Kandahar, Afghanistan, in the 82nd Airborne Division. He expressed his thanks for Colchester's support during his time at war and added that it was something he often talked about to his fellow soldiers.

"I would tell these guys from Fort Bragg where they had more people in an army post than we do in our entire town," Ryan said, "how

I would get calls from people I've never met before asking me what I needed while I was deployed."

While serving overseas for almost a year, Henderson said he is currently facing the "toughest job of all" since he returned home: staying home while his fiancée, Lieutenant Emily Hein will serve in the same location as he did. Hein is a Convoy Commander of the 1048th Transportation Company, and Henderson said it is a high rank "she earned." Hein is one out of five women in a predominantly male division.

"I understand now full well that it is much easier being deployed doing a job that I've been trained to do for over 20 years," said Henderson, "it is much more difficult being home worrying about that loved one and supporting them in any way you can."

Christine Bell, founder of the POST-CT non-profit organization that helped bring the yellow ribbon event to Colchester, first contacted Henderson while he was overseas and he accepted the opportunity to be a part of Sunday's

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Early Deadline Next Week

Due to the Thanksgiving holiday, the *RiverEast* will go to press one day early for the Nov. 23 issue. All copy for that week's issue – including news releases and letters to the editor – **must** be submitted by noon Monday, Nov. 19.

No exceptions will be made.

Portland Board OKs All-Day Kindergarten

by Joshua Anusewicz

At a special meeting Tuesday, the Portland Board of Education approved a motion to move forward with the installation of all-day kindergarten at Valley View School for the 2013-14 school year.

The roughly 75 residents that were in attendance – mostly parents of Valley View students – were given a presentation on the proposed shift from half-day to full-day kindergarten, an idea that has persisted throughout the school district for a number of years. Over the past year, the conversation of all-day kindergarten has gained steam, with Tuesday's meeting seen as a way to gauge community support for the proposal.

For Valley View Principal Deb Graner, who Superintendent of Schools Dr. Sally Doyen called "a major impetus" for the proposal, the turnout at the meeting showed parents were interested in making the shift. "This shows a lot of community engagement," Graner announced.

The meeting featured a presentation, given by the school's three kindergarten teachers: Laurie DiMauro, Corinne Scrivano and Kathryn Tomlinson.

According to DiMauro, the school district faces "an urgent need" for the shift, as teachers are currently tasked with meeting the state's common core standards with a half-day curriculum. Because there is less time for instruction that would help meet these standards, DiMauro said that 63 percent of schools in Connecticut have switched to all-day kindergarten.

"We really feel that it's time for Portland to join that movement," she opined.

Scrivano said that with a half-day schedule as it's constituted in Portland, kindergartners have 497.75 hours of instruction per year; with a full-day schedule, they would receive 1,010 hours of instruction in subjects like reading, writing, math, and phonics. Tomlinson added that there would also be more time for the teacher to interact with students one-on-one,

as well as additional time for students to interact with each other.

"It would be a more developmentally appropriate program for your children," DiMauro explained. Scrivano added that on top of improved academic achievement as the students' progress through the district, all-day kindergarten has been shown to improve attendance, increase school readiness, and provide social and emotional benefits for the children.

After the presentation, those in attendance had the opportunity to weigh in on the proposed shift, and it didn't take long for the subject of cost to come up. To that end, Doyen said that there were two major cost issues: staffing and supplies/materials.

Doyen presented a handout that explained two possible options for addressing staffing. The first — and, according to Doyen, the board's preference — would be to reassign three teachers from grades 2-5 to teach kindergarten, creating six kindergarten sections. This, Doyen

said, would not affect the staffing costs of the district, but would have a minor impact on class size; Doyen estimated that if three teachers were reassigned, the class size for grades 2-5 would be, on average, between 18-22 students, a substantially lower number than other schools in the area.

"I would not recommend this approach if it would jeopardize other grade levels," Doyen added.

The other, less desirable option for the school board would be to hire three new staff members. Doyen said that for an average teacher with a master's degree, the salary is \$48,000. That teacher would then require roughly \$20,000 in insurance, leaving the cost at around \$68,000 per teacher. If the district were to hire three, the town would be on the hook for \$204,000.

The other major cost issue — supplies and materials — would include additional classroom

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Large American flags were on display when the Pledge of Allegiance was read during Sunday's ceremony.

Yellow Ribbon cont. from Front Page

event. Although he said he had never met Bell prior to the event, he was not surprised by the town's plans to support its veterans as well as those currently serving.

"It's typical Colchester kind of stuff, it's a small community and I think this is what we do best," said Henderson, "we don't necessarily know each other or be on a first name basis in order to extend yourself for someone on their behalf."

Bell explained that POST-CT was created as a support group for parents whose children are overseas defending the nation. Her friend Angie Bogush is also a member of the organization that assisted in the yellow ribbon event this year.

"We just jumped on it with our hearts pushing behind us and we've gotten nothing but love and support from this town," said Bell.

POST-CT has monthly meetings with guest speakers that help parents understand the legal aspects of their children at war while also sending care packages each month.

The Colchester Yellow Ribbon Committee was formed to plan the event and include it in the annual Veterans Day Ceremony. The committee drew its inspiration from East Hampton's Yellow Ribbon Committee, which is spearheaded by Ann McLaughlin of East Hampton. During the ceremony, a yellow ribbon is tied around a tree to represent each soldier in town fighting in war and an additional celebration will take place when the soldiers return home and untie their ribbons.

McLaughlin, who attended and spoke at the event, said it was a success. "I do want to thank the town of Colchester who is very fortunate to have so many wonderful veteran organizations working to honor you."

McLaughlin said her inspiration for creating the Yellow Ribbon Ceremony came from her willingness to make East Hampton residents aware of her grandson's role in the army, Sgt. Arron McLaughlin is a member of the U.S. Army Reserve and a Purple Heart recipient.

Sunday's ribbon event was a part of the over-

all Veterans Day Ceremony that takes place in Colchester every year. Members of the Colchester Yellow Ribbon Committee were all smiles as they pinned their children's ribbons on the tree while watching other families do the same.

Thirteen yellow ribbons were tied by Colchester families Sunday.

"For a small community, that's a lot," said leader of the Yellow Ribbon Committee Sean O'Leary. O'Leary tied a ribbon on behalf of his son Matthew O'Leary who is currently serving in Afghanistan in the 143rd Military Police Unit with the CT Army National Guard until July.

McLaughlin said 12 were tied in East Hampton last year and since then eight soldiers have returned home and untied their ribbons. She turned to Schuster and said, "They're a symbol in the town, if one of them fall down you're gonna get the phone call!" while laughing.

"That's fine, I look forward to it!" responded Schuster proudly.

Following the ceremony was a potluck feast at the St. Joseph's Polish Club in town. Bell said that the club donated the space for the event and the Colchester Lions Club helped set it up.

Bell confirmed that POST-CT's efforts will not stop anytime soon. The group plans on hosting a cookie drive on Saturday, Nov. 24 for anyone willing to bake or donate cookies that will be sent to troops. POST-CT members have partnered with a similar organization in Enfield, the Enfield Hooah which is hosting a "Cookies for Camouflage" event to send care packages full of cookies to troops.

Yellow Ribbon Committee members said they hope to see the Yellow Ribbon event as a part of the Veterans Day Ceremony each year and that this year's success was reached by the community's efforts.

"I think it was the biggest one we've had in years," said Ryan on the ceremony as a whole.

Kindergarten cont. from Front Page

supplies, furniture, and books, as well as furnishings for the classrooms like shelving, flooring, and bathrooms. Doyen said this would cost roughly \$86,000; she added, however, that a savings of \$45,000 would be found with the exclusion of noon busses, which would bring that cost to roughly \$41,000.

Doyen added that any costs could be partially alleviated by a grant from the Gildersleeve Fund, an education trust that is provided exclusively for Portland schools. Doyen said that the district has applied for a grant that would cover the cost of the supplies and materials, and that the three kindergarten teachers would be making a presentation to the fund's trustees on Thursday night, after press time.

All of the information seemed to sit well with those in attendance, as every individual who spoke seemed to be in support of shifting to all-day kindergarten. Many of the parents described the half-day schedule as "rushed" and "stressed," which was prohibitive to the children learning.

Resident Rebecca Burke, the mother of two children with special needs, called the half-day schedule "overwhelming," and that a full-day schedule would benefit students with or without special needs. "I think this gives us the best chance we have for our kids," she said.

Chris Stone, the father of a student in Tomlinson's class, said that his family originally looked into sending their child to a magnet school, but settled on Valley View after being "very impressed" with the instruction and curriculum. He added that he has a daughter that is currently in preschool and could benefit from a full day of kindergarten.

"Hopefully, we get this in place for next year," Stone said.

Michael O'Rourke stated that he's seen the benefits of a full-day curriculum at a young age, as his child with special needs has attended full-day preschool for the last year. "The growth has been exponential," O'Rourke related.

With seemingly resounding support from parents, the school board felt that they had no choice but to support the proposal. "I've heard

nothing but positives. As far as I'm concerned, it's our job to move this forward," said board member Andrea Alfano to applause from the audience.

Board of Education Vice Chairwoman MaryAnne Rode responded to the applause with a bit of levity. "Now it's your job to come vote and approve our budget," Rode said. "Tell your friends."

Rode admitted, though, that her statement had gravity to it. "As a town, we all want the best for our kids. But the best costs money," she said. "We have to support this with funding. What's difficult is reaching these higher expectations with less funding."

With budget season closing in, the cost of all-day kindergarten and how it will be funded will be front and center during deliberations. The Board of Education has been able to present few budget increases in recent years, but adding all-day kindergarten would make an increase seem inevitable. For Chairman Christopher Phelps, though, if the funding improved the quality of education for students, the juice would be worth the squeeze.

"We always try to be wise when going over our school budget and our decisions," Phelps said. "I think this is as wise a decision as we could make."

The board then voted 5-1 (Rosemary Waitowitz was not in attendance) to approve the motion that would move the proposal forward and allow the board to discuss which option would be the best to take. Board member Betsy Smith cast the lone dissenting vote, opining that the board should table the matter until its next meeting, in order to review the proposal further.

The approval drew more applause from the audience, and drew Graner out of her seat and into the arms of her three kindergarten teachers for a group hug.

* * *

The next regular meeting of the Board of Education is scheduled for Tuesday, Dec. 4, at 7 p.m. at Portland High School, 95 High St.

East Hampton Residents Show Support for HS Building Project

by Joshua Anusewicz

A crowd of over 200 residents came out on Thursday, Nov. 1, to support – and ultimately unanimously approve – a funding request from the committee overseeing the proposed renovation project at East Hampton High School.

After passing through the Board of Finance and the Town Council over the last month, the residents got their chance to weigh in on the request for \$200,080 from the town’s “unassigned General Fund balance,” which will go to “pre-referendum project costs” related to the project. This would include costs for architectural, engineering, project management, construction management, and legal fees, among other expenditures.

This phase of the project is considered “Phase 1” of the renovation project, which is expected to be an extensive upgrade of the high school facility, particularly in the areas of science and technology. The need for a renovation was highlighted in a 2007 report from the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC), which is tasked with putting schools through an accreditation process over 10 years.

Now, with the district halfway through the accreditation process, the district has had to show NEASC that it is taking considerable steps toward reaching its accreditation in 2017. To meet the requirements, the Board of Education formed the High School Building Committee earlier this year to oversee the operations of the proposed project, which must be designed and planned before heading to a town-wide refer-

endum for approval. The proposal, along with an approval from the town’s voters, must be submitted to the state by June 30, 2013, to possibly receive state reimbursement.

The meeting was the first real chance for residents to weigh in on the proposed project, with several residents taking advantage of the opportunity. The first resident to speak, Board of Education member Don Coolican, was, coincidentally, the only resident to show strong opposition to the project. Coolican started by thanking the building committee, but quickly warned that they weren’t “going to like what I have to say.”

“NEASC wants us to build more lab space; they didn’t ask us to remodel the entire high school,” said Coolican. “All of this money will be borrowed money.”

He said that the high school is “a good school,” relating that out of the 129 Advanced Placement (AP) tests taken in 2011, 70 percent of students passed. He added that despite shortcomings in the schools science labs, 12 of the students taking AP Biology passed the test.

Coolican also looked at the situations others school districts were in.

“There are bad schools in Connecticut and not one of them has been put on probation by NEASC,” he said. “I don’t think we should panic.”

Building Committee member Cindy Abraham agreed with Coolican to a point, stating the “academics at the school are fabulous.” Abraham did, however, point out that the

NEASC report didn’t only point out deficiencies in science labs, but also in technology, health and safety, and infrastructure.

Resident Dawn Jameson, the parent of young children in the school district, also rebuffed Coolican.

“I don’t think we should be comparing ourselves to school districts that are lower than us,” she stated. “We should be comparing ourselves to schools that are better than us and strive towards them.”

Resident Jen Friday related that, with parents she had spoken with, a real concern for residents is whether they will stay in East Hampton to raise their children, and the quality of the high school will be a major factor in that decision. A teacher at a magnet school in Hartford Friday said that parents will be more willing to go to other schools in the area if the high school facility doesn’t provide the students with the necessary resources to succeed.

“I would hate to see East Hampton suffer, based on the fact that our high school is a fading facility,” Friday said.

The strongest words of the night, though, came from Thom Cordeiro, a father of three students in the district and former Town Council member. Cordeiro related that he had graduated from East Hampton High School in 1986 and hadn’t seen much change in the facility, never thinking he’d “send [his] kids to basically the same exact school.” He added that the

school facility wasn’t just a resource for high school students, but as a community building for local organizations, town events, and as an emergency shelter.

Needless to say, he supported the funding request. “Let’s do this right, let’s be prudent, and let’s do it responsibly. Let’s get this done,” Cordeiro said, to loud applause.

Tabbing herself as “probably the oldest resident in attendance,” local Fran Klein also weighed in with support for the funding request. Klein said that she “doesn’t know a parent who hasn’t gone into debt to educate their kids,” and added that waiting until the last minute to complete the project could have negative consequences.

“We should do it now, because the cost could be prohibitive to us if we wait,” Klein said.

With an enthusiastic bunch of “aye” votes, the motion to approve the funding request passed, much to the delight of building committee Chairman Sharon Smith, who lauded the “great turnout” and “overwhelming” support of the project. “It’s time,” Smith said happily.

As for the next steps the building committee will take, Smith said that the committee will now work toward securing the architect, SLAM out of Glastonbury, and working with the Capital Region Education Council (CREC), the project manager for the renovation, to develop the plans to bring to a town referendum. If all goes smoothly, Smith said that the town should be able to hold a referendum by the end of the calendar year.

Hebron School Board Selects Search Firm for New Superintendent

by Geeta Schrayter

At its Nov. 8 meeting, the Board of Education selected a search firm to aid in the hunt for a new superintendent. But not every member was keen on the idea.

The need to fill the position arose after Superintendent of Schools Ellie Cruz announced in August she’d be leaving the district to take over the same role in Plymouth. In October, the board unanimously decided to make Dr. Kathy Veronesi, the current principal at Gilead Hill School, acting superintendent upon Cruz’s December departure. But her position isn’t permanent, and a full-time superintendent needs to be in place by July 1, 2013.

By a vote of 5-2, the school board selected Cooperative Educational Services (CES), at a cost of \$8,500. CES was one of three firms the board had considered for the search; it also looked at the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education, which presented to the board in October, and the New England School Development Council, which presented at the beginning of last week’s meeting, along with CES lead consultant Kaye Griffin.

Griffin presented the services CES offered and explained the firm has a four phase process for conducting a search. The first phase is the research phase, where a “community-wide needs assessment” is conducted utilizing focus group activities and surveys. Griffin said different groups such as teachers, parents and senior citizens would be asked for their input as to “what are desirable attributes and characteristics of a superintendent and what their idea of responsible leadership is.”

The information gathered is then compiled and presented to the board as a report.

“It is your responsibility as a board to hire the new superintendent – that is your duty,” said Griffin. “But your decisions are better decisions

typically when they’re informed by thoughts and preferences of the community.”

The second phase in the process is the recruitment phase, which Griffin said was “all about posting the position and getting the word out.”

Next is the selection phase, which Griffin said is “primarily the work of the Board of Education.” She explained CES will do preliminary screening of each applicant: go through all of their paperwork, spend time on the phone with each one and acquire background information. The firm will then come to the board with a recommendation as to which applicants appear to be the best fits based on the gathered criteria and which are not. However, Griffin stressed the board has the option of going through all of the applicants and deciding for themselves who they’d like to interview.

“The decision is ultimately yours to make,” she said. “I am not the decision maker.”

The final phase in the process, which Griffin said is a phase other agencies don’t necessarily include, is the transition phase. CES will work with the incoming superintendent, the board and everyone else involved “to make a smooth transition.”

Griffin said the CES process is guaranteed and the firm will remain involved throughout the first year.

“We want you to be successful. We want to be successful. We want your new superintendent to be successful – and that’s our guarantee, is that you will be, and if you’re not, just like at Wal-Mart, you take it back,” Griffin stated, adding if, for some reason, the new superintendent doesn’t work for the district during that first year, CES will go through another search at no cost. She said CES has only had to do that once, not because there was a problem

with the selected superintendent, but because there was a “circumstance that made them have to leave.”

Griffin said CES’ track record was “extra good in terms of a success rate,” and the contracts for “100 percent of the people put in place have been renewed.”

“We’re pretty satisfied with that track record,” she said.

When the board began to discuss which firm they preferred, the merits of CES were immediately mentioned. However, some members expressed disapproval with selecting *any* firm.

Board member Dominic Marino said residents want Veronesi to take over as full-time superintendent.

“It makes complete sense to them, and they wonder why we have to do this superintendent search,” he said. Marino continued on to say employees who have shown loyalty to the town should be rewarded.

“I’m not voting for any search firm because my constituents don’t want it,” he said. “It makes sense in America, when you do a good job and show loyalty you get rewarded. We want to have trust and all these things. I think you’re jumping the gun with a search firm.”

Board member Stephanie Raymond also was less than thrilled with the concept.

“To me it’s a complete waste of money. I just have a hard time with it, but I understand why we have to do it,” she said.

Raymond said it felt “irresponsible” not to have a search committee, especially considering the Board of Selectmen recently received some flak for making Interim Town Manager Andy Tierney the full-time manager without going through the search committee process.

But other board members said hiring a search firm assured transparency and “due diligence,”

and while there was hope Veronesi would apply for the permanent position, there was also no guarantee.

“I think most people on the board are hopeful Kathy will apply,” said Board of Education Chairwoman Kathy Shea, “but the reality is what if she decides she doesn’t want to, or gets a better position somewhere else, and it’s June or July and we have no search firm, no candidates, no superintendent?”

“There’s transparency here,” added board member William Moorcroft. “There’s a cost associated with it, but it’s not an exponentially unreasonable cost to go out and reach out to the community and use the avenues and processes that they say – and when all is said and done, Dr. Veronesi may apply, she may not, but if she doesn’t we’re not stuck.”

Board member Amy Lynch-Gracias also thought a search was the way to go.

“I think we should hire a search firm, hoping [Veronesi will] be among the candidates. I think we need to do due diligence,” stated Amy Lynch-Gracias. “I think we need to give our children, whom we’re tasked with educating, the very best candidate we can come up with.”

However, Lynch-Gracias added she was in favor of using NESDEC for the search. She said she preferred the questions NESDEC indicated it would ask of the public in focus groups. Also, she liked that NESDEC offered a two-year guarantee as opposed to CES’ one.

The board made a motion as to whether or not to hire a search firm in general, and the motion passed 5-2 with Raymond and Marino against. The board then voted 5-2 to accept CES, with Marino and Lynch-Gracias voting against it.

Bacon Added to the AP District Honor Roll

by **Melissa Roberto**

Due to its high number of excelling students, Bacon Academy now finds itself in rather exclusive company, Superintendent of Schools Jeffrey Mathieu told the Board of Education Tuesday night.

Bacon Academy has been added to the Advanced Placement District Honor Roll by Colchester Board, a not-for-profit organization whose mission, according to its website, “is to connect students to college success and opportunity.”

Mathieu said Bacon is one of just 539 school districts across the U.S. and Canada that achieved AP District Honor Roll status. He said the honor is due to increased student enrollment in AP courses, as well as the students continuing to do well on AP tests.

Each May, AP exams are given to test a student’s ability to perform at a college level. The number of AP tests taken at Bacon has significantly increased in recent years. In 2008, Mathieu said, 71 AP tests were taken; by this past May, he said, there were 333. He also explained that students maintained an “extremely high” average of 3 and above which is considered passing on the AP tests.

A change in the school’s policy, which took

effect in the 2008-09 school year, allowed an increase in AP enrollment and test-takers. Mathieu explained that there used to be required prerequisites before students were allowed to take AP classes, but the classes are now open to everyone.

“Research shows the more AP classes you take the more ready you are for college,” he said. “We’ve opened those doors and we’ve maintained that average.”

Emily Boucher, a student member of the board, said she has taken four AP classes in the last two years, including AP English, and told the board her SAT reading score increased 130 points.

Board of Education Chairman Ron Goldstein responded, “That’s the best evidence of all.”

A special ceremony took place the following day, Nov. 14, to honor students who did well on the test and the school for its accomplishment.

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Also at Tuesday’s meeting, the board celebrated the achievement of Jack Jackter Intermediate School (JJIS) Media Specialist Carol Benson, who successfully created a summer reading partnership with Cragin Memorial Li-

brary a few years ago. The program offers students to check out and return books over the summer. Benson has put together multiple copies of books at Cragin so that it encourages students to read during the summer months.

Colchester Elementary School (CES) Principal Deb Sandberg announced that last year an “incredible amount” of students participated in the summer program, a total of 184. She explained 77 third-grade students, 58 fourth-grade students and 49 fifth-grade students participated in the program. Another goal Benson challenged students to achieve was to read 1,000 minutes or more during the summer months. Sandberg communicated to the board that 34 third-grade, 31 fourth-grade and 29 fifth-grade students achieved that goal last summer.

Awards were given to students who participated in the program and an Amazon Kindle was offered to a randomly-chosen student in each grade that also wrote a book review over the summer.

“This is a perfect example of partnership between the school, parents and the community,” said Goldstein.

In addition, Benson was also recognized for giving a bag of books to students who may not

be able to get to a library during the summer and the creation of the Rainbow Readers program she started last fall which rewards students with a colorful bead for each new genre they read.

The school board Tuesday also approved new state-required school climate surveys that will be given to students of one grade per school as well as all parents and staff of those schools every year, starting with the current school year. The surveys are issued by the state to all schools, and information from them will be added into the climate plans for Colchester schools.

The board also announced it recently received four donations: \$1,000 from Bob’s Discount Furniture to William J. Johnston Middle School; a \$1,000 anonymous donation for CES library books; and donations of \$23 each from the Thomas and Burton families of Colchester toward the grade four scholarship field trip student activity fund.

* * *

The next Board of Education meeting will take place Dec. 11, 7 p.m. at the Jack Jackter Intermediate School, Room 120, 216 Halls Hill Rd.

State Police Dispatchers on the Move

by **Geeta Schrayter**

In a move designed to improve efficiency and put more troopers on the road, dispatchers from state police Troop K in Colchester are consolidating with three other troops at the Troop C barracks in Tolland.

And while state police public information officer Lt. J. Paul Vance said Troop K and the other affected barracks will remain open and fully operational after the merger, and that residents wouldn’t notice any change, not everyone with the state police is so sure.

Connecticut State Police Colonel Danny Stebbins discussed the move Nov. 5 with a room full of state police officers and dispatchers from Troop D in Danielson along with State Police Union President Andrew Matthews.

The merger – which is still months away – will be similar to one that has already taken place in the western half of the state. Last year, dispatch operations at state police troops A and B in Southbury and North Canaan, respectively, merged with Troop L in Litchfield. The consolidation means all area calls to the state police now go through Troop L.

The upcoming merger will relocate the dispatch operations for Troop K (which covers four *Rivereast* towns: Colchester, Marlborough, Hebron and Andover), Troop D and Troop E in Montville to Troop C in Tolland.

At each of the dispatch centers around the state there is a desk trooper and a dispatcher, Vance said in September. The desk trooper is in command of the operations, while the dispatcher receives calls, reports accidents, dispatches the appropriate patrol trooper and provides any necessary backup. By consolidating centers the number of desk troopers needed will decrease – allowing more trained officers to be on duty.

“We had a trooper at each location manning individual desk operations, and now one trooper

is assigned to oversee all three desk operations,” Vance said of last year’s consolidation.

Vance explained Troop E is busier than the other three troops, and goes from “call to call” but as a result of a consolidation, the dispatchers from the other troops would be able to assist Troop E’s dispatcher when they’re not as busy. The dispatcher for each troop will still be responsible for answering his or her own calls, but it will be more of a team effort.

Vance was adamant in explaining the consolidation would mean radio and phone communications would move to Tolland, but each police barracks would remain open. He added response times would not be affected, because the troopers on patrol will remain the same and each location will still be open 24 hours a day.

But prior to the Nov. 5 meeting, Matthews expressed concern over the mergers and how rapidly they were occurring. He said some of the things Vance referred to as positive changes are actually reasons for concern.

Matthews said it wasn’t entirely true each barracks would remain open, saying there was the “potential” the building would be locked. He said alarm systems were being installed along with call boxes at each of the barracks, and “the reason for those would be only if the building was expected to be empty at times.”

Vance had commented on the installation of the boxes, saying that if an emergency took place in the early morning near one of the barracks, the boxes would allow the trooper on duty in that location to lock the doors, respond “and be there quicker than the responding trooper or back-up.” If an individual happened to come to that barracks during the same time to make a report or speak to a trooper, the call box would immediately connect them to someone.

Vance had said if the consolidations weren’t announced “no one would even notice,” but

Matthews didn’t agree.

“When you see that blue phone,” he said, “there’s a difference.”

Matthews said the overall purpose of the consolidation – freeing more troopers up for the road – wasn’t necessarily a good thing.

“They’re saying the purpose is to get troopers off the desk but troopers are important at the troop because people walk in,” he said.

While Matthews said there are no statistics regarding how many people walk up to a particular barracks with complaints, the Danielson troopers said at the Nov. 5 meeting it was a frequent occurrence at Troop D.

“They’re saying the changes won’t affect services, but if people can’t get into the building or a hold of someone, services are being affected,” Matthews stated.

He added the idea the dispatchers could help each other with calls is based on the theory that “not a lot happens at once,” but he called this a “critical mistake” and said you can’t predict when crime will happen. He added if a dispatcher is helping someone else, they may not be paying full attention to their own phones, which could result in unanswered calls.

Matthews said he was concerned for the safety of both the union members and the public.

“Our members understand this puts us at risk,” he said.

But Stebbins assured troopers at the Nov. 5 meeting there would in fact be someone in the barracks “at all times.” He said the staff at each barracks would remain the same, but the alarm system was designed for when there was a need for “all hands on deck.” The consolidation, he said, gave the barracks “more flexibility.”

“Statistics show we’re answering all calls better and faster” due to the consolidation, he

said. He added the troopers “won’t be doing anything more than normal” but this is a “more efficient way to do business.”

Although Vance had said in September that the consolidation would also provide some cost savings, Stebbins said “we’re not saving any money by doing this – it’s about efficiency.”

In fact, Stebbins said the cost for the consolidation would be about \$1.1 million – and Matthews shared another frustration of his was that legislatures and the public didn’t have a say in the matter, especially considering “they’re the ones paying.”

“How is it Stebbins and [Commissioner Rueben] Bradford can make decisions for everyone?” Matthews asked rhetorically. “Why are there no public debates? No hearings?”

But despite all this, Matthews acknowledged the consolidation was going to go forward.

“They’re going to do this,” he said.

Stebbins stated operations as a result of the first merger were “still not 100 percent” but discovered weaknesses and lessons learned – like the best equipment setup – from the consolidation of Troops A, B and L would be taken into account as DESPP moves on to the next merge. And in preparation for that, the dispatch area in Troop C is being redone and new equipment is being installed in. Conservatively, this was expected to take about three months. Then, “sometime in early spring,” Stebbins said three rounds of meetings on the impending merge will be held with the various troops, the “town fathers” and the media, after which the consolidation would take place.

Stebbins added last year’s consolidation brought “more good than bad,” and said it was about “making good use of our sworn officers and better use of our unsworn” personnel, such as the dispatchers.



Swimmers of all ages lined the shores of Lake Pocotopaug last Saturday morning to raise money for the East Hampton Food Bank at the third annual Turkey Plunge, eagerly awaiting the countdown to the splashdown. As the splashes began, shrieks and yells soon filled the air, as many plungers quickly retreated to the warmth of towels, sweatshirts, and hot chocolate in the Sears Park pavilion. Braving the frigid water was worth it, however, as \$22,000 was raised for the cause.

East Hampton Locals Take the Plunge for Food Bank

by Joshua Anusewicz

On Saturday morning, an unseasonably warm November day, the mood at Sears Park on the shore of Lake Pocotopaug could best be described by a small sign, toted around by a young girl who patrolled the beach, surveying the waters she would soon be swimming in.

“If we can survive [Hurricane] Sandy and a nor’easter in the same week, then we are brave enough to plunge for a great cause,” the sign read.

Over 200 brave souls agreed with that sign, turning out in great numbers for the third annual Turkey Plunge, an event which raises money for the East Hampton Food Bank. This is the second year that the event was organized to benefit the food bank, with last year’s event drawing over 150 plungers and raising over \$16,000.

This year’s event topped that, event organizer Tom Crean said, with \$17,600 raised from mostly cash donations.

“The generosity of this community and their willingness to help out their neighbors in need is just amazing,” Crean said this week.

Crean and his wife, Alexis, along with their neighbor Mary Ann Aitken, are the impetus behind the Turkey Plunge, which has grown exponentially from a small, fun event to an an-

nual community gathering. A few years ago, the three residents were sitting on the Creans’ porch overlooking the lake, and wondering what they could do to help their community. So, the three devised a plan that they said would combine the town’s two best resources – the lake and the people.

From that conversation, the Turkey Plunge was born. And as Alexis put it on Saturday, the event has turned from “a crazy little idea into a huge crazy idea.”

Those that attended last year would certainly agree that this year’s event was a little more “crazy.” What started as a few individuals wearing costumes and silly get-ups last year has turned into a full-blown costume party, with many plungers perhaps recycling Halloween costumes that didn’t get displayed enough due to the hurricane. Some people went with the Thanksgiving theme, dressing as turkeys and Native Americans, while some went off the reservation, so to speak, with HAZMAT suits and Ms. Piggy costumes.

However, most of the plungers – and perhaps the bravest of the lot – went in their traditional bathing suits, mustering up the courage to enter the water as if it were mid-summer. And as the countdown began and the plungers

lined over 100 feet of shoreline, there was no fear or worry, just smiles and anticipation.

With a series of giant splashes, the 200 or so plungers dashed into the water, shrieking and yelling, some quickly turning and heading for warmth, some diving and wading out deeper into the lake. Appropriately, as this was occurring, the band Foreigner’s hit song “Cold as Ice” blared over the PA system, reminding the plungers of what they already knew: this was some cold water.

“Much colder this year,” said a shivering, but smiling, Crean after the plunge.

Being able to raise money for those in the community in need made it all worth it, said Crean, who admitted that he’s had a lot of people come up to him and thank him for organizing the event. But while he accepts the thanks, he doesn’t see himself as the person who should receive the gratitude.

“I just provide the avenue for them to do this,” Crean explained. “I tell them, ‘You’re the ones who do all of this. You make this happen.’”

And what they made happen was a donation that will help the food bank well into the next year. The \$17,600 total is outstanding, but the number will rise even further, as the East Hamp-

ton Rotary Club and Liberty Bank have partnered to pledge a 25 cent donation for every \$1 raised. According to Crean, that will put the total donation to the food bank over \$22,000.

For their hard work, some of the plungers, like last year, were handed awards for various categories. These awards include: John Valley, 62, for Most Senior Plunger; 2-year-old Preston McGrath as Youngest Plunger; Donna Roberts for Best Adult Costume (Mrs. Doubtfire); Jessie McGrath for Best Child Costume (Gingerbread Boy); Headliners for Largest Team; Free Birds for Best Team Theme; Peter Evans for Volunteer of the Year; Craig Frost and Jeremy Moore of Team Teach Like Your Hair is on Fire for Plunger of the Year; Tasos Papaglannopoulos of Loco Perro for Top Fundraiser; and Bonnie Rau of Smokey O’Grady’s for Outstanding Team Captain.

For their bravery and community involvement, though, every plunger could have received an award on Saturday, a great day to see just how much East Hampton cares about their neighbors. Because even after a hurricane and a snowstorm, some in the community are brave – and just maybe a little crazy – enough to be “freezin’ for reason.”

With NCLB Out, Changes Coming for RHAM Schools

by Geeta Schrayter

In May, Connecticut became one of 34 states around the country to receive a No Child Left Behind (NCLB) waiver, granting it flexibility regarding some of the act’s requirements. However, because of the waiver, new state regulations have been put in place – and as a result, changes are on the way for the RHAM middle and high schools.

According to the U.S. Department of Education, the NCLB waivers were granted in exchange for “rigorous and comprehensive state-developed plans designed to improve educational outcomes for all students, close achievement gaps, increase equity and improve the quality of instruction.”

Since the waiver’s approval, schools such as the RHAM middle and high schools have been discovering exactly what the waiver means and the various changes that will – and already have – occur as a result.

One of the changes involves the target score for student achievement. Under NCLB, the target was for students to score proficient or higher on their performance tests (the levels are: below basic, basic, proficient, goal and advanced) and for 100 percent of students to reach that target by 2014. The new objective is for students to reach the goal level instead, and for schools to be halfway to the target by 2018.

In addition, RHAM Superintendent of Schools Bob Siminski explained Tuesday that all levels of student achievement will now be

examined whereas previously, only students who moved from the basic to proficient level on their performance tests were valued (also, only scores on math and reading counted under NCLB, but now writing and science do as well).

“Districts are getting more credit for kids,” he said.

That credit will then be used to determine a school’s performance index, which the state Department of Education said would aid in capturing performance and progress across bands, capture big picture trends, while also allowing for particular cohorts to be examined. Schools will receive a value for each student’s test score: students who score at the basic level will earn a performance credit of 0.33 while those who score proficient earn 0.67 and students who score at the goal or advanced level will earn a credit of 1.0.

An Individual Performance Index (IPI) will be calculated for each student by averaging together the values (times 100) they receive on all of their tests. For example, a student who scores goal in reading (1.0), proficient in writing (0.67), basic in science (0.33) and proficient in math (0.67) would earn an IPI of 67.

The IPIs of all students are then averaged to calculate the School Performance Index (SPI). Under the new system, the state target is for schools to receive an SPI of 88 following 2018. A baseline SPI determined by a three-year av-

erage of the test scores at RHAM places the middle school with an SPI of 91.1 and the high school with an SPI of 85.1. As a result, the state department said the 2012-13 target for the middle school is to “maintain” their score, while the high school has a target of 85.3.

Also, as a result of the changes the state is making, school performance will be determined by graduation rates in addition to standardized test scores. The target following 2018 is for districts to have a four-year graduation rate of 94 percent and an extended graduation rate – covering students who stay enrolled for longer than four years – of 96 percent.

Currently, RHAM’s rates fall short of those numbers. The baseline graduation rate – a two-year average, derived from the classes of 2010 and 2011 – for four-year graduation is 86.2, while the rate for extended graduation is 92.1. The target for 2012-13 is to increase those numbers to 86.8 and 92.4 percent, respectively.

Based on the different targets that are now in place, schools will then receive a classification based on how many targets they meet. If the school meets every target they’ll be classified as “excelling.” Schools that meet the annual targets but haven’t yet reached the state targets will be classified as “progressing” while those who are not meeting annual targets will be classified as “transition.” Schools that need the most support will be considered as “review” or “turnaround” schools.

Siminski explained other ways of evaluating school performance in the future are through fitness/wellness tests, cohort growth, college and career readiness, school climate, civics and the arts. Siminski said the last two areas would need work, but he shared there was already a school climate plan in place, students take yearly fitness tests and the schools utilize different programs to help with college and career readiness.

Along with the shifts in testing and reporting, changes are also due in regards to teacher evaluations. Siminski stated both teachers and administrators will be required to take part in a more extensive evaluation process beginning in 2013-14. These evaluations include numerous conferences, observations and summaries – none of which are expected to take less than 30 minutes.

Concurrently, the district is working on the instructional shift to the Common Core State Standards, which involves updating the schools’ math and English curriculum. Siminski noted there is no curriculum director for RHAM, so the task falls on him and the school principals. “Time is always an issue,” he said.

But at the end of the day, the hope is that these changes will allow for an increased focus on, in the words of the state Department of Education, “improving student learning and increasing the quality of instruction.”



With a great turnout and solid support from the community, the inaugural season for the East Hampton Hawks Youth Football and Cheerleading Association was a rousing success, with both football and cheerleading squads showing success and progress. The program was able to field three cheerleading squads and four football squads, including the B (ages 11-12) and C (ages 9-10) that finished 3-4 and qualified for the postseason.

First Season of East Hampton Football – It’s Good!

by Joshua Anusewicz

While professional football is hitting its mid-season stride, the East Hampton Hawks Youth Football and Cheerleading program is wrapping up its inaugural year, which saw successes, progress, and – most importantly – fun across all levels of play.

“The turnout [from players] that we had and the progress they showed was unbelievable,” said Frank D’Anna, president of the fledgling association. “I think this was something that the town needed.”

D’Anna was integral in founding the program, which began as an offshoot from a neighboring program, the Portland Panthers. D’Anna said many East Hampton parents, who at that time had to send their children to play in Portland, felt Belltown could support a youth program of its own. The interest in a local program grew further when it was announced last year that East Hampton High School would be creating a co-op football team with Vinal Technical High School in Middletown; that program is currently in its second season of play.

Those who felt that the town could support a program were proved right this year, when over 150 children signed up for football and cheerleading. D’Anna said the organization was able to field four football teams: A (ages 13-14), B (11-12), C (ages 9-10) and Mighty Mites (ages 7-8); for cheerleading, three squads were formed: the C and D squads had their own cheerleaders, while the A and B teams had a combined cheering squad.

The team competed in the Connecticut Youth Football League (CTYFL), which includes nearby programs like Glastonbury, Haddam/Killingworth and East Hartford.

The theme for the first-year program was

progress, as each level showed ups and downs, but eventual improvement over the season. D’Anna said roughly 90 percent of the players on the teams had never played football before, but continually turned out at practice and games to work hard.

“They did a great job and you could see the progress,” he said.

The A squad, coached by Brian Ferchaw, did not pick up a win during the season but qualified for the postseason, competing in the “Orange Bowl.” D’Anna said this squad “came together” throughout the season, showing improvement with each game. This team, he added, will be seen as “a feeder” to the high school squad in years to come, as the players learn the systems used in the high school program.

Both the B and C squads finished with 3-4 records, with the B team, coached by Brad Deveran, picking up the first win in the program’s history, a road win in its first game against Canton. D’Anna said the B team also won the program’s first home game, which were played by all levels at East Hampton Middle School.

The B and C squads both made the postseason, as well, competing in the “Rose Bowl.”

The D squad, coached by Tom Weyrauch, played at an instructional level, finishing the season with one win and one tie; at the instructional level, there is no postseason, D’Anna said.

D’Anna also commended the work of the cheerleading squads, particularly the coaching from Holly White, Keri Lohrmann and Melinda Chunko. The three coached over 50 cheerleaders, who would go on to compete in a competition in Berlin, placing in the “best choreogra-



Rooting on the home team all season long were the Hawks cheerleaders. Under the guidance of coaches Holly White, Keri Lohrmann and Melinda Chunko, the girls competed in a year-end competition in Berlin and place in the “best choreography” category.

phy” category.

“They took the entire cheerleading program and ran with it,” D’Anna said of the three coaches. D’Anna said the cheerleaders were also a major part of a pep rally held before the season at Center School, which he said fired up the players for the upcoming season.

After a “successful season” in its first year, D’Anna said that one of the biggest reasons for the success was the community involvement. D’Anna said that parents were behind the program from day one, acting as volunteers and supporters for the fledgling program.

“So far, parents have been very supportive with our program,” D’Anna said. “We had many volunteers step up and help out throughout the season. This is what the goal was. We wanted the community to have a great sense of pride

when asked about the program.”

With the athletes, the parents and the more than 30 sponsors that made the season a success, D’Anna said he has high hopes for the upcoming season and beyond. He said most players he has spoken with expect to return next year, with more expected to jump on when registration begins after the holidays. D’Anna said the program will continue to look for sponsors and fundraising opportunities, as well. (To learn how to become a sponsor, you can visit ehyouthfootball.org or contact D’Anna at ehyouthfootball@yahoo.com.)

With so much of the community “head over heels” about the program, D’Anna said, there seems to be nowhere to go but up.

“This season is the first of many to come,” he said.

Walter ‘Mike’ Kelly Remembered in Marlborough

by Melissa Roberto

Walter A. “Mike” Kelly Jr., a man described by many Marlborough and Hebron residents as a “guy that was loved by everyone,” passed away last Wednesday from pneumonia.

The 69-year-old Marlborough resident left an imprint on a number of towns on the east side of the river because of his active spirit. Up to the time of his passing, Kelly was the Marlborough Fire Commissioner and president of the Hebron Lions Club. He was also a life member of the East Glastonbury Fish & Game Club, a member of the Marlborough Moose Club and a part of the Irish Club of Glastonbury, among many others.

His actions in these towns were admired by many, who described Kelly as a “dedicated” man that, according to his best friend, Carl Zirkenback of Colchester, gave 150 percent or more to everything he did.

Since July, Kelly had been president of the Hebron Lions Club, a group he joined in October 2006. Lion Robert Lee said that six years is a relatively short amount of time to step up to

the “ultimate leader position.” Others in the club said Kelly played a role in the Hebron Harvest Fair and also left an impact on young people who volunteered in the club. Club members also described Kelly as a man that was available 24/7. Although he had medical difficulties over the years including a bypass surgery, Lee said that “didn’t slow him down from attending all the meetings that he could”.

Ironically, there was a Hebron Lions Club meeting the night Kelly passed. Lee said members were notified before the meeting that he was taken to the hospital and at the end of the meeting they were told he didn’t survive.

“It was quite a shock,” Lee said.

Kelly is the second Hebron Lions Club member to pass away in the last two weeks unexpectedly. Hebron resident David Snow, 53, also passed away just six days before Kelly from a stroke while vacationing in Florida. He was a member of the Lions Club for over 20 years. “They were two major players in the Hebron Lions organization,” said Lee.

Both Kelly and Snow received two major Lions Club awards during the time they remained in the club: the Knight of the Blind and Melvin Jones Fellow awards that are two of the highest awards given to Lions Club individuals.

Kelly’s duties did not just stop at the Lions Club. He was also a well-known member of the Marlborough Volunteer Fire Department, which he joined in the mid ‘70s. “He was one of the best firefighters we’ve ever had,” said Fire Marshal Joe Asklar.

Kelly also rose to the position of captain and years later became the commissioner. As the commissioner, Kelly was responsible for purchasing equipment and being the liaison between the fire department and Town Hall in terms of finances. “He was a dedicated person to community service and especially in our town with the fire department,” said First Selectwoman Cathi Gaudinski.

In addition to Kelly’s role in civic organiza-

tions, Zirkenback described him as a “super salesman” who sold tires for over 40 years in Manchester and South Windsor.

Kelly also enjoyed traveling and would often take road trips with Zirkenback to one of his favorite places in the world, Saranac Lake in New York. The two even vacationed together in Florida for a month five years ago. While traveling with Kelly, Zirkenback said, “You couldn’t go anywhere without him running into someone he knew, everyone liked him.”

Kelly was a father to three: his daughter, Brenda L. Norman of Vernon and two sons, Walter T. Kelly of Marlborough and Raymond D. Kelly of Rollesville, N.C.

Most people who knew Kelly well described him as a man that was “always smiling.” Vice President of the Hebron Lions Club Richard Griswold said, “He was a little teddy bear, short of stature but had a giant heart.”

A full obituary of Mike Kelly is included in this week’s issue.

Local Hypnotists Open Business in Marlborough

by Melissa Roberto

A unique and specialized business, Associates in Hypnosis, has made its way into Marlborough for individuals that would like to undergo hypnosis healing practices.

The business was opened Oct. 1 by co-owners Julie C. Ciucias, PT, MBA, C. Ht and Elizabeth Samson, BA, C. Ht and is located at 33 North Main St. in the A Therapeutic Touch building. The building houses a total of four businesses that all offer wellness and healing services: A Therapeutic Touch offers massage therapy, hot stone treatments, and Ashiatsu Oriental Bar therapy; Ancient Whispers includes massage, reiki, Qi Gong and Alpha Sonic Wave therapy; The Facial Corner offers facials, eye and paraffin treatments; and lastly, Associates in Hypnosis provides healing for stress, fears, habits, cravings, pain, weight management, and medical and dental challenges, a list Ciucias describes as “limitless”.

The Marlborough location is one of two in Connecticut. The other office is located at 7 N. Washington, Suite 103 in Plainville. The Marlborough office provides easier traveling for Ciucias, a resident of East Hampton, while the Plainville location is closer to Samson of Higganum. The Marlborough location is open on Tuesdays and Thursdays by appointment during the day and evenings.

Ciucias and Samson are both certified hypnotists and members of the International Hypnosis Federation. They received their certifications from the Institute of Hypnotherapy in Edison, N.J. in 2012. They each took additional training to become members of the Medical and Dental Specialty Division of the International Hypnosis Federation. “It gave us more customized hypnotherapy scripts for specific medical and dental problems,” said Ciucias.

Although the two do not claim to be mental health counselors, they are able to treat clients’ medical symptoms by communicating directly with doctors.

Ciucias and Samson said they have always had an interest in hypnotherapy.

Ciucias received her B.S. in Physical Therapy from the University of Connecticut and MBA from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. She practiced as a clinical physical therapist and rehabilitation manager during 1978-2003 at Middlesex Hospital, a variety of private practices and at the New England Home Care in Cromwell. Seeking a career change in 2004, Ciucias went to aesthetician school and opened

up her own day spa out of her home, April in Paris, a year later. She has since been a certified aesthetician, reflexology and reiki practitioner.

Samson received her B.A. in Child and Adolescent Psychology from Rhode Island College and worked as an intake counselor at Bradley Hospital in Providence, R.I. with children and adolescents dealing with psychological issues as well as mental and physical disabilities from 1988-94. In addition, Samson received training through the University of Arizona in Drug and Alcohol abuse. In 2005 she became trained as a Lifestyle Coach teaching adults and children about nutrition.

The long-time friends were both seeking a career change and decided to train as hypnotists together under the direction of Dr. Jaime Feldman. Dr. Feldman started the Institute of Hypnotherapy with his wife and has appeared on the *Montel Williams Show* as well as recently hypnotizing the captain from the famous 1981 Natalie Wood case.

When asked why the two became involved in hypnosis, Samson replied, “Because it works.” She said that her interest in hypnotherapy came from her first psychology class when she was 17 and that she personally participated in hypnotherapy during the birth of her son 13 years ago. “I saw then that it was very powerful,” she said.

Ciucias said she has also undergone hypnosis and believes it is powerful because it can relieve individuals of trauma by reducing the use of medications or medications altogether. “I’ve always been intrigued with the power of the mind to heal people,” she said.

The two explained that their hypnosis practice is unique because it includes the “9-Step Advanced Parts Therapy” created by Dr. Feldman. They explained that the method was created to identify the origin of a client’s unwanted behaviors and to “bring the subconscious to the forefront.”

They define hypnosis as a heightened state of suggestibility that works with an individual’s subconscious mind to resolve issues and to let go of fears or habits.

“The subconscious is basically where all of your memories are stored of fears and traumas, and we take out those traumas and replace them with new behaviors so the person can release them and heal,” said Samson.

Ciucias explained that the sessions place an individual in a deep state of relaxation similar to when a person falls asleep but is still able to



Certified hypnotists Julie Ciucias, left, and Elizabeth Samson are the women behind Associates in Hypnosis, a new hypnotherapy practice opening this weekend in Marlborough. The practice will be one of four wellness and healing offices located in the A Therapeutic Touch building, located at 33 N. Main St.

hear the phone ring.

The two explained that direct and indirect techniques are used to put a person into relaxation. A direct technique straightforwardly asks a person to relax while indirect techniques are used for those who are more resistant to hypnosis.

Hypnotherapy does not just cure a person’s fears or habits; it is also used for self-improvement purposes. “It can be used for performance enhancement, sports enhancement, self-confidence or even public speaking,” said Ciucias.

Ciucias and Samson believe hypnotherapy is significantly valuable because it can sometimes help a person in as little as one or two visits.

“It’s wonderful to be able to offer something that is cost effective and effective,” Ciucias added.

After being opened for a little over a month, Samson and Ciucias said they have already received “really great” feedback from clients. In particular, Samson is looking forward to a client flying all the way from Savannah, Ga. next month to perform a second session for weight management.

Ironically enough, the two said they’ve received “great” therapy themselves and even hypnotize each other.

“It’s almost like peeling the layers of an onion back, we’re so complex and there’s so much in our minds and memories and releasing that every now and then is so therapeutic,” said Samson.

The grand opening of the entire facility and all four businesses at 33 North Main St. will take place on Sunday, Nov. 18 from 1-4 p.m. and each business will offer a free service. Associates in Hypnosis will give out information about hypnosis, show a DVD that will give an overview of what a session is like, and will conduct suggestibility exercises for those that would like to participate. In addition, Associates in Hypnosis is offering a \$50 discount off of a session for first-time clients in November and December.

Ciucias and Samson said they are excited to start their new business in Marlborough and to share the healing benefits of hypnosis. Ciucias said, “If there’s a reason people are holding back, we can help them.”

East Hampton | Colchester | East Hampton | Colchester | East Hampton

Goff Pursuing Ballot Mix-Up in Westchester

by Joshua Anusewicz

As he indicated last week, former Democratic state representative candidate Christopher Goff will be pursuing complaints from at least two voters that mislabeled ballots were distributed during the Nov. 6 elections.

Goff, an East Hampton native, ran for state representative in the 34th District, losing to East Haddam’s Melissa Ziobron by a 6,240-5,122 vote. The 34th District, which was recently re-districted, covers East Hampton, East Haddam and the Westchester section of Colchester.

According to Goff, the issues took place in Westchester, where he claims at least two voters were handed ballots that listed Linda Orange, a state representative candidate for the 48th District, in the Democrat slot. (The 48th District covers the rest of Colchester, as well as portions of Lebanon, Mansfield and Windham.) Goff said these individuals approached him after they had voted to explain the situation to him, and that one of the voters “was not given the correct ballot,” even after he pointed out the error to election moderators.

As he said last week, Goff reiterated Thursday his understanding that correcting the error is “not going to change the result” of the election, but added that he wants to look into the matter “for the sake of Westchester voters.” Goff said he has contacted the office of the House Democrats this week and spoken with individuals who plan to investigate the matter further.

In Colchester, the town’s Democratic Registrar of Voters Dot Mrowka sees no such problem. Mrowka said Wednesday she only received one complaint from a voter that they had received the wrong ballot, and Mrowka explained it was because the voter “gave the wrong address” when receiving a ballot. Mrowka said that when the voter noticed the error, she was given the correct ballot.

“Everyone at the table heard her give the wrong address,” Mrowka said. “There wasn’t any mix-up on our part.”

In the Nov. 6 election, Ziobron carried Colchester, 325-258.

Fire Destroys Summer Home on Lake Pocotopaug

by Joshua Anusewicz

An early evening fire destroyed a summer home near Lake Pocotopaug last week.

According to Fire Marshal Richard Klotzbier, at around 6:45 p.m. last Friday, Nov. 10, firefighters received a call of a fully-involved fire at 13 Sears Ln., located on the western side of the lake near Sears Park.

Klotzbier said mutual aid arrived on the scene as well, from Portland, Marlborough and Colchester.

Firefighters were able to extinguish the

flames, but Klotzbier said the home was a complete loss. Nobody was home at the time of the fire; one other house on the south side of the building suffered minor damage, he added, but nobody was living in that home at the time, either.

An investigation into the cause of the blaze yielded no answers.

“Because of the extensive damage, it’s too difficult to determine the cause of the fire,” Klotzbier said.

Marlborough Public Hearing Discusses Proposed Dog Camp

by **Melissa Roberto**

The Zoning Commission held a public hearing Wednesday night to allow residents a chance to discuss and gather information about a proposed Country-Dogs dog boarding camp that could potentially take place at 15 Bull Hill Rd.

Attendees of the hearing included the Zoning Commission, owner of the proposed facility Mark Cave, and residents of Marlborough and other surrounding towns.

The proposed location at 15 Bull Hill Rd. is owned by Lynn Wolf.

The Zoning Commission is responsible for approving or denying the dog boarding camp and it has 65 days from the public hearing to do so.

Mark Cave, owner of the Country-Dogs boarding camps in Virginia and Pennsylvania hopes to turn the stable on 15 Bull Hill Rd. into a boarding facility for dogs. His company converts horse boarding facilities into dog care businesses that care for dogs on a long-term basis.

The Zoning Commission advised attendees that Mark Cave was able to speak first to provide the crowd with information about his proposed facility before comments were open to the public.

"I'm not going to stand up here and try to sugarcoat everything because I have no incentive to do that," said Cave, "if we move in and you guys are up in arms about it then that would be a bad move for us."

Cave provided pictures on his laptop to show the commission and the public what his facilities in Virginia and Pennsylvania look like and some of the dogs that board there.

One issue Cave wanted to tackle was what he believed to be a misconception about his facility: that it was being referred to as a dog kennel rather than what he believes it to be, a dog boarding camp. Cave explained to the public and the commission that his proposed dog camp is "as far from a kennel as you can be and still be in the dog business."

He went on to explain that when he made the application for his proposed Marlborough facility, he looked at regulations from the Chatham Health District. He explained the regulations he looked at were written in 1970, and they said the only way to categorize his business is as a dog kennel.

The Chatham Health District serves the towns of East Haddam, East Hampton, Haddam, Hebron, Marlborough and Portland and provides public health programs for those towns.

East Haddam attorney Scott Jezek attended the meeting on behalf of a group of local residents and pointed out these zoning regulations and special permit regulations "specifically only permit commercial dog kennels." Jezek told the commission its "only option" is to call the proposed business a commercial dog kennel – which Cave has said it is not – and if it isn't, it

should not be allowed "under any circumstance."

Town Planner Peter Hughes could not be reached to confirm the regulation requirements.

Cave also addressed four major concerns that he was aware the public had: excessive dog barking, an increase of traffic, dog waste management and a decrease in property value.

He explained that the dogs at his facility would be let outside to exercise 4-6 hours a day between 8-10 a.m. and 4-6:30 p.m. During the other hours of the day, Cave said the dogs would be kept inside an insulated barn to prevent neighbors from hearing barking.

"In eight years of business in both locations, I've never gotten one phone call from any neighbors about noise," said Cave about his Virginia and Pennsylvania facilities.

"But we don't know how many neighbors are around," said Marlborough resident Torri Buchwald of 59 South Rd. about his businesses.

Resident Walt Lesnewski of 34 Bull Hill Rd. described the neighborhood as "already saturated with noise," and said it is "becoming an industrial park." He said the accumulated noise comes from the 4H camp in the summer, a small airport "next door" to the neighborhood, the horse farm, and neighbors with their own dogs. He believes that "dogs that have been cooped up for 20 hours" would bark and socialize with one another.

In terms of an increase in traffic, Cave explained that his company would use one van that picks up dogs on Mondays and Thursdays while also telling the public that if people do choose to drop off their dogs it is by appointment.

"I would say during our busy time, customers would drop off and pick up [dogs] themselves two times a week and [during] our non-busy time maybe once or twice a month," he said.

Cave told the public that his facility is busiest in the summer and when customers go on vacation.

Cynthia Chotkowski of 10 Sturbridge Rd. introduced herself as an agricultural science teacher, a certified level one dog trainer through the Continental Kennel Club in Louisiana, and an individual that worked for the Connecticut Farm Bureau for five years among many other titles, and said she was in favor of Cave's property coming into town. She touched on the traffic concern brought up by residents at the meeting and specifically stated that the traffic on the opening day of fishing season is "ridiculous."

"The traffic from Salmon River is a lot more than it ever was or will be at Lynn's or a lot more than it ever was or will be at a dog camp," she said.

Another concern brought up by residents was how the proposed facility would manage dog waste. Cave referred to the Chatham Health

regulations as "vague" about what is required for dog care.

"We would certainly not only meet the Chatham Health restrictions and requirements but we would exceed those," said Cave.

Karin Bromley mentioned that she and her twin sister Jill approached Cave about constructing a compost manure bin that would meet the state agricultural regulations. Bromley said Cave agreed with the idea.

Don Kuerner, a resident of 278 South Rd., said his property line abuts the horse farm at 15 Bull Hill Rd., and that for the past 15 years horse manure has accumulated in his yard.

"Why would I be in favor of another establishment after this record of performance?" he asked the public.

In addition, residents surrounding 15 Bull Hill Rd. are worried that having a dog boarding camp in the neighborhood would decrease the property values of their homes. Cave said that there will not be any signs put up to advertise his company and that his website is where his advertisements are located.

"If you drove by you wouldn't know that we're there," said Cave.

He also said he would purchase the property at 15 Bull Hill Rd. at a "good competitive rate" which he said residents would be able to use as a "sold comparable." A sold comparable is a price paid for recently sold properties that are comparable in size and location to others.

However, multiple residents said they are concerned the boarding camp would not only decrease their property values and make it difficult to sell their own homes, but would make the area commercial rather than maintaining the agricultural aspect that attracted them to the neighborhood in the first place.

Chris Balda of 27 Bull Hill Rd. stood up to show the commission and the public pictures on his iPad of his house and the property surrounding it.

"I bought the house two years ago and was first attracted by the horse farm," said Balda.

He continued to show an aerial view from Google Maps of the farm and the surrounding homes which he said showed a total of 18-22 residences. Balda also used Google Maps to compare the proposed property in Marlborough to Cave's current facilities in Virginia and Pennsylvania.

Although Balda said he was not sure which one of Mr. Cave's facilities it showed, he said his research showed that one is "on 17 acres of land" and that it is in an agricultural area. Balda said Cave "hasn't received any complaints because that facility is in the right area" and refers to Marlborough's desired location as a horse farm "right smack dab in the residential area."

The location of the facility is also an aspect that the commission brought attention to by

putting up a map of the desired location in front of the public. The commission asked Cave to point out where the current structures are and what he plans to do with them.

Jezek said the map is from "decades ago." He said he went to the zoning office to look at a map and that the most recent date of the copy he looked at was from 1983. "That doesn't show present conditions or what the applicant intends to do."

Another issue Jezek brought up to the commission is that the application submitted by Mark Cave is incomplete. He said the application requires a signature by the owner which was not done. In addition, Jezek said there were two questions on the application that were not answered: whether the property is located within 500 feet of the town line and if the Inland Wetland application was submitted.

Jezek said he did not think this situation should have even gone to a public hearing because of the "current state of the application."

Hughes could not be reached for further comments regarding the map or application.

In addition to the dog boarding camp, the Bromley Kings Farm at 15 Bull Hill Rd. has also received negative attention. The Bromley sisters board three of their horses at Lynn Wolf's property and have a small therapeutic equestrian business. Their website describes the equestrian company as a business that "conducts equine assisted services under the program name, Premier Equine Therapeutics." Its services provide equine assisted learning and therapy to youth, family and veterans. Their business has been running since July 2012.

Inflammatory signs have been posted around Marlborough that state equine therapy could potentially ruin the neighborhood.

However, East Hampton resident Alaina Platz spoke on behalf of the sisters. "I really hope you people get your facts before you start attacking a business you know nothing about," she said.

The Bromley sisters suggested the public go to their website, bromleykingsfarm.com, for more information on their business. They told the public they too were concerned when the property at 15 Bull Hill Rd. went up for sale. Their three concerns were about safety with children, traffic and noise. However, Karin Bromley said after speaking with Cave and learning about his background, the sisters think it could "definitely work for everybody."

The sisters explained that the proposed facility would keep traffic and noise down as opposed to what could potentially happen, "cinderblock buildings, 100 horses that destroy the land or a helipad."

Discussion on the proposed dog board camp will continue at the next Zoning Commission meeting, being held Thursday, Dec. 6, at 7 p.m., at Town Hall.

East Hampton Police News

10/28: Kimberly A. Belanger, 38, of 166 Divinity St., Bristol, was arrested for fifth-degree larceny, East Hampton Police said.

11/1: John Joseph Berouty Jr., 46, of Pawtucket, R.I., was arrested for third-degree burglary, fourth-degree larceny, third-degree criminal mischief, stealing a firearm and criminal possession of a weapon, police said.

11/2: Stephen Christopher Edwards, 45, of 116 Dickenson Rd., Marlborough, was arrested for first-degree criminal mischief, police said.

11/4: Christopher Laurito Jr., 22, of 85 N. Main St., was arrested for DUI, failure to drive right and traveling too fast for conditions, police said.

11/7: Nathan Richard Hall, 18, of 22 N. Main St., was arrested for disorderly conduct and violating a protective order, police said.

Portland Police News

11/9: Kendrick Jackson, 43, of 161 Spring Hill Rd., Trumbull, was charged with fourth-degree larceny, third-degree burglary and first-degree criminal mischief, Portland Police said.

Marlborough Police News

11/7: State Police said Raymond Riley, 23, of 74 Montowese St., Hartford, was traveling down Route 2 east near exit 13 in Marlborough when she came across an accident that was already in the travel lane and stopped at the scene in the left lane. Gail Case, 62, of 40 Hyrock Ter., Groton, was traveling behind Riley and, unable to stop, hit Riley's car, causing minor rear-end damage. Case was transported to Middlesex Hospital for minor injuries, State Police said.

11/9: Ronnie T. Ruffolo, 42, of 346 Stillson Rd., Waterbury, was charged with reckless driving, operating an unregistered motor vehicle, operating a motor vehicle with no insurance, and operating a vehicle without a license, State Police said.

11/11: Michael Leser, 73, of 18 Village View Ln., Unionville, was charged with DUI, State Police said.

Hebron Police News

11/7: Lindsay Poulos, 18, of 85 West Rd., Colchester, was traveling on Route 66 west when she attempted to turn on Mill Stream Road but was unable to due to slippery road conditions, State Police said. She then slid off the road into an embankment and reported a split lip and soreness, although she was not transported to a hospital. Police said Poulos was at fault and charged her with traveling too fast for conditions.

11/9: Bryan C. Sweet, 39, of 47 Cedar Swamp Rd., Deep River, was charged with DUI, operating a motor vehicle with a suspended license, evading, failure to insure a private motor vehicle and improper turn.

Colchester Police News

11/6: Jason T. Wunsch, 31, of 247 Parum Rd., was charged with fifth-degree larceny, State Police said.

11/7: State Police responded to a call reporting three unknown individuals entered a vacant residence on Prospect Hill Road. Three juveniles, ages 15, were all charged with simple trespass, State Police said.

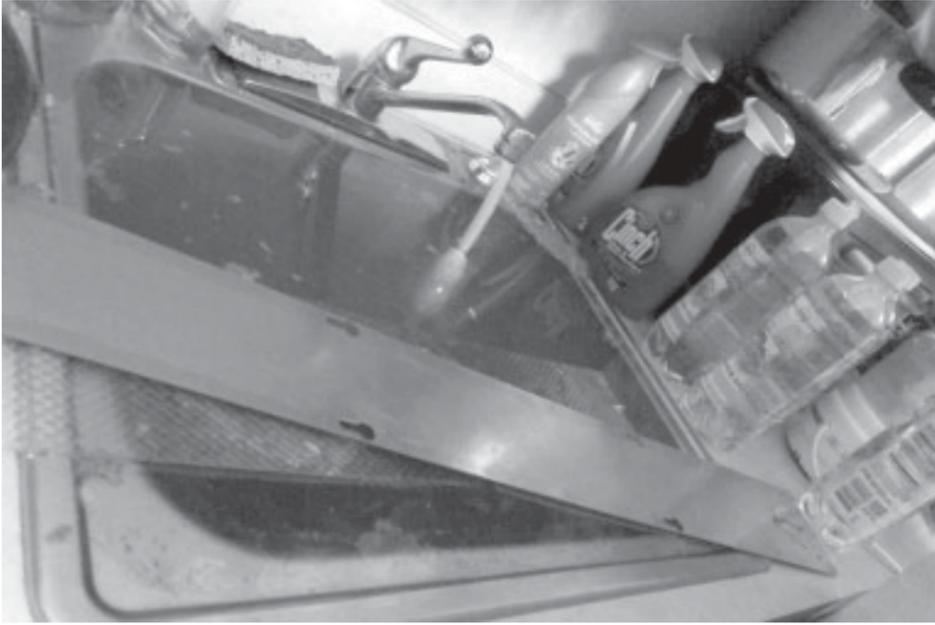
11/8: Ryan Hall, of 43 Florida Rd., East Haddam, was charged with evading and failure to maintain proper lane, State Police said.

11/12: Colchester Police are investigating a larceny that took place at a residence on

Standish Road. Items missing were jewelry, cash and electronics, State Police said. Anyone with information about this incident is asked to contact Officer Jonathan Goss at 860-537-7555 ext. 4083.

11/12: Andrew J. Simonow, 27, of 6 West Ave., East Hampton, turned himself in on an outstanding arrest warrant and was charged with third-degree larceny, State Police said.

11/12: Deena Griffin-Collett, 45, of 60 Deer Run Dr., was charged with interfering with an officer, disorderly conduct and threatening, State Police said.



After the passing of her father, William Krauth, in August, Portland resident Jill Deane found her father's Quarry Heights apartment in "deplorable" condition as the result of a flooding issue from a heavy rain. Holes were cut into walls, right, to remove black mold, and a subsequent drainage issue due to grease being put down the drain in the upstairs living unit caused the sink, left, to fill with brown, foul-smelling water. Despite months of back and forth, Deane is being forced to pay for the damages.

Concerns Arise Over Quarry Heights

by Joshua Anusewicz

On Aug. 18, just over a week after her father, William Krauth, passed away, Jill Deane was still in mourning. Having lost her mother tragically years before, her and her 77-year-old father were extremely close, living just down the street from one another at the time of William's death. That day, Deane went to Quarry Heights, the public housing complex on Main Street where her father had lived for seven years, a place he enjoyed and where he made many good friends.

Deane said she had heard flooding had occurred in her father's apartment shortly after his death; this wasn't uncommon, she said, as the apartment was located under ground level. During the week or so since the flooding, the company SERVPRO had been at the apartment, as usual, to dry it out and repair any damage. Inconvenient, yes, but not out of the ordinary.

When she arrived that day at her late father's apartment, it was completely dry. The condition of the apartment, however, Deane described as "deplorable."

Wood trim had been removed and left on the floor and a large hole had been cut in his bedroom wall, in an apparent attempt to remove black mold. Most of her father's belongings had been moved throughout the apartment, and not returned to their original location. Deane said her father had been in the hospital for several weeks leading up to his death, but the apartment had been left in "great condition."

"When I walked into his apartment, I cried," Deane said. "Not only did I have to see his apartment, empty and without him, but I had to see the mess that was left behind."

It got worse. The next day, when Deane returned, she smelled a foul odor coming from the kitchen. Apparently, a tenant upstairs had been putting grease down the drain of their sink, causing a malodorous, brown water to fill William's sink, causing more flooding. SERVPRO came out once again to repair the issue, which took roughly another week.

Unfortunately, William did not have renter's insurance, leaving the \$1,000 bill at the feet of Deane. But Deane felt the Portland Housing Authority, the state-run group that oversees Quarry Heights, should foot the bill; she argued that her father was not living in the apartment at the time, and that the flooding in the sink was caused by the upstairs tenant, not William.

Deane said the housing authority didn't see it that way, receiving a letter that stated that William should have had insurance and that he would not be reimbursed for the personal items that had been destroyed.

But aside from the financial aspect of her problem, Deane had other questions: why was the apartment rented out to William if it had a history of flooding? Would a new tenant be moving in before these problems were addressed? What is going to be done about the black mold?

What Deane soon realized was that she wasn't the only one who felt the housing authority wasn't answering her questions. Speaking with other tenants and her father's friends,

she learned about a pattern of complaints from residents who felt fearful of the housing authority and of other residents.

"I can feel the superiority in their voice," said Jim Balding, a war veteran and friend of William's who lives in Quarry Heights. Balding said he has tried to attend as many of the housing board's meetings as possible over the past year, and his frustration has boiled over in regards to the housing authority's treatment to its tenants.

"They're not really concerned about the tenants, period," he continued. "They have no idea what actually goes on in that complex."

Balding related a story about how he recently received his Social Security check, \$500 of which went to a local VA hospital to pay for his medications. This left him short for his monthly rent, he said; the next day, without a warning, he received an eviction notice. He said that he called and explained his situation, but the housing authority stood firm.

"You don't treat Jim Balding like that," he said, angrily.

Another resident, Debbie Taylor, explained a similar situation. A cat owner, Taylor didn't have the money to get her pets immunized, a policy outlined in the lease. The next day, without warning, she said she received an eviction notice.

"These eviction notices are regular," Taylor said.

This one-strike process, however, is not how the housing authority sees it. Jackie Frazee, the director of the Portland Housing Authority, said that any issues go through a process: tenants are sent a notice, then a warning, then an eviction notice. Frazee said that when a resident receives a notice and disagrees, they can request an informal conference with the housing authority; if they disagree with that outcome, the tenant is then entitled to a formal hearing with an impartial hearing officer; and if they disagree with that decision, they can request a meeting with state commissioners from the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority (CHFA).

"Our intention is never to evict a good tenant," said Frazee.

"There are no surprises here," said Dawn Wadding, tenant commissioner and resident of Chatham Court, another public housing complex in town. "Yes, it's strict, but these policies are in place for residents. And when there are new policies, they're notified."

The residents said they understand the policies, but it's how the policies are enforced that chides them. They said there are groups of tenants that actively seek out other tenants seemingly violating rules and are able to anonymously file complaints. Balding explained there's a group of tenants who take pictures and "build a case" against tenants to have them evicted for various forms of rule-breaking.

"Everyone's scared of them," Balding said, calling the acts a form of "bullying."

Frazee didn't disagree with the assessment, admitting that she knows there are residents at

Quarry Heights who act as "bullies" toward other tenants. Ann Marie Supryniewicz, the chair of the Housing Authority Board, said the housing authority has taken steps toward eradicating the bullying in the past, going as far as bringing a representative from the state Department of Education to Quarry Heights to speak with the tenants.

"It's not as uncommon as we thought," said Frazee of adult bullying. Frazee said that part of the bullying issue also stems from the demographics of Quarry Heights itself; she explained that the state mandates that the complex be not only for elderly residents, but those receiving Social Security income. This means, she continued, that groups of young, disabled individuals live amongst elderly people with very different lifestyles, often causing clashes.

"The state has mandated that we take these people," explained board member John Stewart of the younger tenants.

What Balding and Taylor agreed would help alleviate bullying would be taking away the opportunity to file anonymous complaints. "Tell us who's complaining," Taylor said.

Frazee disagreed, stating it would lead to more issues. "There would absolutely be repercussions if it weren't anonymous," Frazee said.

She continued on to explain that when a complaint is addressed, she sees tenants act as though they are being "singled out." She added that the same individuals who feel hurt by receiving a complaint have often filed complaints against other tenants – something they are certainly allowed to do, Frazee said.

"If you see something, we want you to report it to our office," Frazee said, reiterating that the tenants have the option to request a meeting to discuss the complaint.

Not all tenants agree, however, that their voices are heard. "We don't feel we can speak freely without consequence," said Balding.

"People don't go to the [housing board] meetings, because they don't feel heard," Taylor said. "So many people are afraid, because they're always on you about something."

Frazee disagreed. "If you look at the housing authority in any town in the state, the same issues persist," she explained. "If we're approached with a problem, we will address it. We can't ignore them. Because it might seem small, it doesn't mean it isn't a problem. But we can't make everyone happy. Sometimes, there's just no solution."

And that's the rub. In a housing complex with a unique makeup of residents, Frazee's 25 years of experience in public housing has taught her that "these issues will persist." The housing authority is often put in a position where they are tasked with determining the outcome and solution of a "he said, she said" situation. All the authority can do, she said, is enforce the rules as they are written and give the tenants a chance to "defend themselves."

But the fact that this "drama," as Wadding described it, exists doesn't help the housing authority shake the stigma of public housing,

which is often seen as unsafe, low-income living.

"It's safe here, it really is," Wadding said. "People outside of Chatham Court or Quarry Heights look at public housing and say, 'Oh, that's where you live?' That's a stigma we'd like to get rid of."

And if you talk to Balding and Taylor, they'd likely agree with you. "We stay because we like it here," said Balding of why he continues to live in Quarry Heights, even through all of the issues. "I have friends here. It's a nice location, nice apartments, and it's so convenient, with all sorts of stuff within walking distance."

That's what kept William Krauth there, too, Deane said. And despite the flooding, he enjoyed his living unit, she said, which gave him a good view of the surrounding premises which he liked.

But the future is uncertain for the tenants of Quarry Heights. With the housing authority in dire straits financially, the board just approved raising the cost of rent by \$50 beginning next year, a decision that was made mandatory by CHFA. Frazee said the housing authority recently applied for a state grant that would fund much-needed upgrades and repairs throughout the complex, but the board was denied after it was determined that the organization did not have sufficient "reserve" money to be awarded the grant.

"We thought for sure we were going to get it," Frazee said with disappointment, adding that the CHFA would not have approved the housing authority's yearly budget without the rent increase to help increase the reserves.

That funding would have repaired the drainage issues in the apartment where Krauth used to live, as well, Frazee said. For now, after continued back and forth between Deane, the housing authority, and CHFA, the decision was made to not rent out Krauth's apartment until the drainage matter is attended to. Frazee said the apartment is currently cleaned and renovated, but there is no telling when a storm will come along and cause more damage.

For Deane, who certainly never intended to get embroiled in any controversy, the renovation of her late father's apartment was welcome information.

"I am thrilled!" Deane said happily.

But she said she feels the only reason the decision was made is because the CHFA pressured the housing authority into it, and that the housing authority had planned to rent the apartment out.

The decision to not reimburse Krauth for his belongings, however, stands. Deane now has the option to contact the Board of Selectmen in Portland regarding the matter, but there is no telling at this point how the matter will be handled. For now, she's simply happy that another individual will not have to go through what she and her father went through, and that the tenants of Quarry Heights who feel bullied and scared are standing up and speaking out.

"They just want to be left alone," Deane said.

Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

Was last week's presidential election a blow-out? Depends how you look at it.

In terms of the popular vote, it was pretty close. As of Tuesday, the latest numbers showed President Obama with 62.60 million votes compared to Mitt Romney's 59.12 million. But if you look at the Electoral College numbers, it was something of a blowout, with Obama collecting 332 electoral votes – far exceeding the 270 needed to win – and Romney just 206.

And, in a painful truth Al Gore unfortunately knows all too well, when it comes to electing the president, the electoral vote is what counts. I don't really agree with the system. Sure, at one point in time it served a purpose. When our Founding Fathers were putting together this country in 1787, they rejected the idea of the president being elected via a popular vote because they feared people would not be well-informed enough to make a good vote. They'd be more apt to go with just people well-known in their particular state. In those pre-news media days, it made sense.

But that's no longer the case. There are so many ways for people to become informed that the Electoral College doesn't really serve a purpose anymore. Furthermore, as the Obama-Romney race indicated, it's not always all that reflective of how people in the country really feel. Sometimes things are closer than the Electoral College race makes them appear. In 1980, for example, Ronald Reagan collected just over 50 percent of the popular vote, but got 91 percent of the electoral vote. In 1992 and '96, Bill Clinton – thanks partly to Ross Perot's inclusion on the ballot both years – didn't even fare as well as Reagan, collecting 42 and 49 percent, respectively, of the popular votes those years. But in the Electoral College, Clinton did pretty well, getting 69 percent of the vote in '92 and 70 percent in '96.

But at least Clinton and Reagan won the popular vote. There have been times over the years the Electoral College just plain disagrees with the popular vote. Of course everyone remembers 2000, which I referenced earlier, when Gore lost to George W. Bush despite winning the popular vote. The same thing happened in 1876 and 1888 when Rutherford B. Hayes and Benjamin Harrison, respectively, found their way into the White House thanks to the Electoral College, despite both of them losing the popular vote.

Not allowing the person people elected president to actually be president doesn't exactly seem in keeping with the notion of a democracy. So it may be time to re-examine the Electoral College.

Speaking of the election: One of the letter-writers in this week's paper lamenting Obama's re-election wrote that voters were less concerned with "putting food on the table and being accountable for one's life" and more concerned with gay rights, free birth control and free cell phones. That last part stood out for me: free cell phones? Was somebody giving out free cell phones and I didn't get the memo? So I did some research. Okay,

so the Obama administration isn't exactly giving away free phones – which is what the letter basically implied – but it's close enough to the truth that I didn't kill that part altogether. And it also led to a "hey, I didn't know that's what *that* meant!" moment.

In 1984, the Federal Communications Commission created the Lifeline program, which subsidizes companies that provide phone services to low-income people. In 1996, the program was expanded to include discounts for cell phone service as well as landline service. And in 2008, a cellular program named SafeLink Wireless started up that provides free cell phone service to those eligible under the Lifeline program, not just discounted service.

I should note that '84 was under the Reagan administration, '96 under the Clinton one, and '08 under the Bush one. So how'd Obama get the credit/blame for giving away free phones? Beats me.

And I should also note Lifeline, though set up and administered by the federal government, isn't exactly a taxpayer-funded program. Rather, it's paid for through the Universal Service Fund, which is a pool of money collected through fees assessed against telecommunications service providers. The providers can pass that fee onto their customers if they so choose, but that's up to the providers, not the government.

Which leads me to my "hey, I didn't know that's what *that* meant!" moment. That "Universal Service Fee" listed among all the other various and sundry taxes, fees and surcharges at the end of my Verizon bill each month? At least now I know what it means – and that it's going toward a good cause.

I've written before about my fondness for *The Office* – and I admit my enjoyment of the show dipped last season. However, when it was announced the 2012-13 season would be the show's last, and that Greg Daniels, who was the executive producer of the show before departing a few seasons back to start up the brilliant *Parks & Recreation*, would be returning to the series, I was definitely intrigued. And I'm happy to report the show, while not quite at the levels of greatness it once experienced, is still closer to it than it has been the last couple of years.

The writing is sharper; the characters are doing more believable things than they had been lately (the show had gotten a little cartoony); and, frankly, the show is staying in the office a lot more often. Last season, there were far too many field trips.

Simply put, the show is having a fine bounce-back season, and exactly the kind of last season you'd want it to have. A long-running show should have the kind of farewell year that makes you wish it weren't the farewell year. I think it's something a lot of long-running shows strive for, but not very many actually achieve. I'm glad *The Office* is – so far, anyway – finding itself in that select group.

See you next week.

Andover School Board Returning \$39,000 to Town

by Geeta Schrayter

The Board of Education unanimously agreed at its Wednesday meeting to give to Andover \$39,000 in excess funds the school board received from the state.

Superintendent of Schools Andrew Maneggia explained the school budgets money for two out-placed students. After the board reaches a "threshold" the state reimburses the town with a state grant for "excess costs." The money the town receives is placed in a separate special education account, and Maneggia said to date, that account had accrued \$89,000.

"I would suggest to the board that we meet with the Board of Finance and return \$39,000 to the town," he said.

Maneggia said he wanted the board to hold on to some of the money as a safety net.

"In fairness to the town, this is money that should go back – but I'm not willing to give it all because we need some safety. This money in reserve is kind of like an insurance policy," he said, if, for example, a child with special needs should move into the community.

"But we're getting to the point where [the account is] building up and I feel it's appropriate to return some to the town," he said.

Maneggia added the town would receive additional funds from the state this year in February and May, "so we're alright."

Board member Cathy Danielczuk added by returning some of the money to the town and not allowing the fund to build, the board was "showing integrity."

In preparation for the budget season, the board also decided on a date to hold a public session on the proposed budget for the 2013-14 year. Various members expressed frustration over the fact that little to no public has attended the session in the past, but even so, they acknowledged the importance of holding one.

"It's important for the board to offer this and share the budget with the public," said Maneggia. He agreed it was frustrating to set aside the time and have no one show up "then we're talking to each other." But he furthered "if we don't offer the meeting, the board is open to criticism."

"I think it should be offered, and if they come, they come" said Danielczuk.

A motion to schedule a special meeting to share the 2013-14 budget proposed budget for Jan. 23 passed unanimously.

The next Board of Education meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, Dec. 12, at 7 p.m. in the Andover Elementary School library.

Whooping Cough Reported at RHAM

by Geeta Schrayter

Last week, Superintendent of Schools Bob Siminski informed the community there had been a confirmed case of whooping cough – known medically as pertussis – at RHAM.

Due to the Department of Health and Human Services' privacy rule, Siminski couldn't specify as to whether the diagnosed individual was a student or faculty member, but on Nov. 9 he sent to parents and also placed online a letter highlighting symptoms of the illness and ways to prevent its spread.

"All medically indicated precautions are being taken at this time," he wrote in the letter.

Pertussis spreads when an infected person coughs or sneezes in close contact with others. Getting vaccinated against the illness is the best way to prevent it; however, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), while the vaccines are "very effective," that effectiveness isn't 100 percent. If pertussis is circulating within the community, there's still a chance someone whose been vaccinated can catch it.

Pertussis – which the CDC described as a "very contagious disease" – starts like the common cold with congestion, sneezing, a runny nose and a mild cough or fever. But after a couple of weeks that "mild cough" can become much more severe.

The CDC wrote "pertussis can cause violent and rapid coughing, over and over, until the air is gone from the lungs and you are forced to inhale with a loud 'whooping' sound" – hence the more common name. Pertussis is one of the most commonly-occurring diseases in the United States that can be prevented by vaccines. As of early October, the CDC reported there had been over 32,000 reported cases of the disease across the country this year, including 16 deaths. The majority of related deaths occur in infants under three months.

On Tuesday, Siminski said the RHAM community member who'd been diagnosed would recover. He called the condition "very treatable" – but added, "we wanted to get the information out in case parents had concerns."

According to the CDC, early treatment of pertussis is important, and requires antibiotics. Anyone concerned they might have the disease should contact their physician.

Siminski added this was the first case of whooping cough he'd been made aware of at RHAM since starting as superintendent in 2005. He added he'd spoken with the school nurse about "where to go from here" and had been told there was "nothing else to be done."

For more information on pertussis, visit cdc.gov/Features/Pertussis.

Obituaries

Colchester

Barbara Standish

Barbara (Van Cedarfield) Standish, 84, of Colchester, widow of the late Donald Webster Standish, passed away Wednesday, Nov. 7, surrounded by her loving family at the Middlesex Hospital in Middletown after a brief illness. Born July 10, 1928, in Massachusetts, she was a daughter of late Anton and Emily (Bliss) Van Cedarfield.



She grew up in East Haddam and attended Nathan Hale-Ray High School. Early on, she worked with her late husband at the former Balaban & Standish TV and Appliance in Colchester. She went on to work as a cashier for G. Fox, Hartford before her retirement.

Barbara was a charter member of the Colchester-Hayward Volunteer Fire Co. Auxiliary. In her spare time, she enjoyed reading, knitting and loved to entertain both friends and family alike in her warm, inviting home.

She will be remembered most fondly for her undying love and devotion for her family – may she now rest in peace.

She is survived by three children, Donald Myles Standish and his wife, Winnie, William Standish and Beverly Tarnowski and her husband, Arthur, all of Colchester; seven grandchildren, Michael Standish, Melissa Dudzic, Daniel and Alison Tarnowski, Heather Priest, Holly Gibson and Jeffrey Standish; five great grandchildren, Rexford Standish Welch, Colin Bunkley, Gregory Priest, Lily and Sophia Gibson; two expected great-granddaughters, one this month and the other in May; her sister, Peggy Corsaro of East Hampton; three brothers, Ernest of Interlachen, Fla., David of Colchester and Jack of Poplar Branch, N.C.; and many special nieces, nephews and numerous extended family members and friends.

In addition to her husband of 62 years, who predeceased her Feb. 22, 2009, she was predeceased by a daughter-in-law, Valerie Evans Standish; and siblings, Myrtle Bennett and Lawrence, Daniel, James, Francis and Rachel Van Cedarfield.

Friends called Sunday, Nov. 11, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. The funeral gathered Monday, Nov. 12, at the funeral home, immediately before a chapel service. Rev. Fred M. Dole, CHVFD chaplain, will officiating. Burial will follow in the Standish family plot in Linwood Cemetery, Colchester.

In lieu of flowers, donations in her memory may be made to the Colchester-Hayward Vol. Fire Co. Auxiliary, 18-54 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester, CT 06415 or to the Middlesex Hospital Palliative Care Unit, 28 Crescent St., Middletown, CT 06457.

For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

Portland

Audrey K. Benoit

Audrey K. Benoit, 50 of Portland, wife of David M. Benoit, passed away unexpectedly Saturday, Nov. 10, at Middlesex Hospital.

Born May 8, 1962, in Massena, N.Y., she has been a Portland resident for the last 19 years. She graduated as a professional photographer from the Hallmark Institute of Photography in Turners Falls, Mass.



Besides her husband, she leaves her sons, Shaun Brassard, Nicholas and Joshua Benoit; a daughter, Katelynn Benoit; a sister, Brenda Bates of Florida; and her special in-laws, Nicholas and Mary Lou Pini of Portland and Dale and Cindy Benoit also of Portland.

Funeral services will be held Sunday, Nov. 25, at 3 p.m., at Portland Memorial Funeral Home, 231 Main St., Portland. Relatives and friends may call or visit Sunday from 1 p.m. until the time of the service at the funeral home.

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

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

Marlborough

Walter 'Mike' Kelly Jr.

Walter A. "Mike" Kelly Jr., 69, of Marlborough, formerly of Manchester, died Wednesday, Nov. 7, at Hartford Hospital. Mike was born in Manchester Sept. 8, 1943, son of the late Walter A. and Shirley (Elkerton) Kelly. He was raised in Manchester, served in Vietnam with the U.S. Army, and had been a resident of Marlborough since the 1970s.



Prior to retiring Mike was a sales representative in the automotive tire industry for over 40 years in the Manchester and South Windsor area. He was the Marlborough Fire Commissioner, president of the Hebron Lions Club, a life member of the East Glastonbury Fish and Game Club and the Marlborough Moose Club, a member of the Irish Club of Glastonbury, and a member of various other groups.

He is survived by his daughter and two sons, Brenda L. Norman of Vernon, Walter T. Kelly of Marlborough, and Raymond D. Kelly and his wife Cara of Rollesville, N.C.; four grandchildren, Elizabeth Norman of Vernon and Derek Kelly, Ryan Kelly, and Jack Kelly, all of North Carolina; his brother and two sisters, William J. Kelly and his wife Pauline of Windham, Jacqueline Kelly of Florida, and Patricia Ogren of New Jersey; his stepmother, Vivian Kelly of Virginia; several nieces and nephews; and his loving companion, Sarah Childress of Hebron.

Funeral services were held Monday, Nov. 12, with a Mass of Resurrection at St. James Church, 896 Main St., Manchester. Burial will be private. Visiting hours were Sunday, Nov. 11, at the Holmes Funeral Home, 400 Main St., Manchester.

Memorial contributions may be made to the Marlborough Volunteer Fire Dept., 7 Hebron Rd., P.O. Box 237 Marlborough, CT 06447.

To leave a condolence message, visit holmes-watkinsfuneralhomes.com.

Hebron

David Lee Snow

David Lee Snow, 53, of Hebron, passed away Thursday, Nov. 1, after a stroke while vacationing in Florida. Born in Hartford April 28, 1959, he was the son of Kenneth and Norma (Ford) Snow of Elmwood.



He wed his beloved wife Darlene (McNaughton) Snow on Oct. 3, 1981, in Elmwood.

Dave was self-employed for most of his career, building his company in Hebron known as Snow's Lawn Care & Stamped Concrete.

When he was young he earned the rank of Eagle Scout and later enjoyed the many trips and lasting friendships of his son's Eagle Scout Boy Scout Troop 28.

Dave loved to volunteer and showed this in many ways. He coached for eleven years with the HYBSA. In 2003 Dave became the first "Hebron's Most Beautiful Person" for a fundraising event. He was a member of the Sons of The American Legion in Hebron. He also was a long time member of the Hebron Lions Club. He enjoyed camping, snowmobiling, jet skiing and spending time with his family and friends.

Dave will be remembered as a fun, loving person who was always ready to lend a helping hand.

In addition to his wife Darlene of 31 years, he leaves his daughter Linda and her husband David Bedini Jr. of Columbia; a son, Christopher Snow of Hebron; two beautiful grandsons, David Bedini III and Sawyer Bedini; a brother, Alan Snow and his wife Janet; his mother-in-law, Violet McNaughton; two nieces, Laurie Snow, Melissa Hlaszyn and her husband Robert, their children and numerous extended family and friends.

Calling hours will be held today, Nov. 16, from 4-7 p.m., at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. A memorial service will be held Saturday, Nov. 17, at 10 a.m., at Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home.

Donations in his memory may be made to the Hebron Volunteer Fire Department, 44 Main St., Hebron, CT 06248.

For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

East Hampton

Earl Haagensen Jr.

Earl Jondahl Haagensen Jr., 50, of East Hampton and formerly of Colchester, passed away with his loving family by his side Monday, Nov. 11. Born in Hartford Sept. 14, 1962, he was the son of Josephine (Cocolla) Haagensen of Colchester and the late Earl J. Haagensen Sr.

Earl was a hard-working man who truly loved his career as a supervisor for Environmental Services in South Windsor. He was a member of the Westchester Congregational Church with his young family and he loved boating, fishing and snowmobiling. Among some of his fondest memories were those made with his family on the trip of his dreams to Alaska. He will be sadly missed but always remembered lovingly by those he leaves behind.

In addition to his mother, he leaves two sons, Richard Haagensen and Ryan Haagensen, both of Colchester; his former wife and best friend, Missy Haagensen of Colchester; three sisters, their spouses and his nieces and nephews, Eileen and husband John Higgins of East Hampton, Susan Haagensen and husband David Morgan of E. Hampton, Claudia and husband John Soprano of Cromwell; his dearest and best friend, Tommy Testa; and his caring family and friends at Environmental Services.

A memorial service and celebration of Earl's life were held Thursday, Nov. 15, beginning with visitation, followed by the funeral memorial, at Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester.

Donations in his memory may be made to Middlesex Hospital Palliative Care Unit, 28 Crescent St., Middletown, CT 06457.

For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

Meriden

Sandra Lee Olson

Sandra Lee Olson, 60, passed away unexpectedly Wednesday, Nov. 7, at Hartford Hospital after a brief illness, surrounded by her loved ones.



She was a longtime Meriden resident and an active member of the community as a part of many organizations including Kiwanis Club, Girl Inc., etc. Her dedication to youth literacy was not only her job at the Meriden Public Library, but her passion as well.

Sandra is survived by her children, Sara Simonow and Andrew Simonow, her sister Viane Stromberg, nephew Peter Skoczylas and family, and her loving friend Kevin Costello.

Funeral services were held Tuesday, Nov. 12. The Beecher & Bennett-Flatow Funeral Home, 48 Cook Ave., Meriden has been entrusted with the arrangements.

The family requests that in lieu of flowers, please send contributions to the Meriden Public Library, 105 Miller St., Meriden, CT 06450, in memory of Sandy Olson, for a project in her honor.

Colchester

Anna T. Reducha

Anna T. (Staskiewicz) Reducha, 94, of Colchester, died Wednesday, Nov. 7. She was born in New Britain, a daughter of the late Andrew and Marianne Staskiewicz.

Anna worked at the former Fafner Bearing Co. as an Inspector for many years. She was often referred to as "the cake lady" and baked countless cakes for family and friends. She was a wonderful homemaker and enjoyed time spent with her family. She will be remembered as a loving and sweet woman by those who knew and loved her.

Her husband, John Reducha, predeceased her in 1986.

She is survived by her daughters, Marian Tarnowski and her husband Frank of Colchester, and Claudia Marcinkowski and her husband John of Colchester; her son, John Reducha of New Britain; her sister, Helen Staskiewicz of Southington; seven grandchildren; seven great grandchildren and several nieces and nephews.

Funeral services were Tuesday, Nov. 13, from the New Britain Memorial-Donald D. Sagarino Funeral Home, 444 Farmington Ave., New Britain, followed by her Liturgy of Christian Burial in Holy Cross Church in New Britain. Burial followed in Sacred Heart Cemetery, also in New Britain. Visiting hours were at the funeral home Monday, Nov. 12.

For more information, directions, to order flowers or to leave an online condolence, visit newbritainsagarino.com.

Colchester

Fay Schlechter

Fay Schlechter, 86, of Norwich, passed away Monday, Nov. 12, at Harrington Court in Colchester. She was born Dec. 14, 1925, in New York City, N.Y., the daughter of the late Jacob and Sophie (Horowitz) Hillman.

She married Daniel Schlechter Jan. 10, 1960, in New York City. Her beloved husband passed away Sept. 3, 2008.

She graduated with a bachelor's degree from Hunter College and was a long-term bookkeeper. She was a kind and gentle woman who loved opera, classical music and spending time with her children and grandchildren.

She is survived by her son, Steven Schlechter of Norwich, daughter, Debra Poirier and husband Leon of Norwich, and by her grandchildren, Shawn and Rebecca Poirier.

In addition to her parents and husband, she was predeceased by her brother, Murray Hillman, and her sister, Diane Hillman.

A funeral service will be held today, Nov. 16, at the Church and Allen Funeral Home in Norwich at 10 a.m. The family will greet relatives and friends from 9:30 a.m. until the time of the service. Burial will follow in Hebrew Benevolent Cemetery No. 3 in Preston.

The Church and Allen Funeral Home, 136 Sacher St. Norwich, is entrusted with arrangements. To leave an online condolence for Fay's family, visit her memorial at churchandallen.com.

East Hampton

Joseph Witkavitch

Joseph Witkavitch, 67, of Stratford, beloved husband of Connie Rockman, died Saturday, Oct. 27, as a result of a car accident in East Hampton. Son of Stella Witkavitch of Fairfield and the late Bernard Witkavitch, he was born Feb. 11, 1945, in Bridgeport and raised in Fairfield.

A graduate of Notre Dame High School, he attended classes at Fairfield University and served in the U.S. Navy in the late 1960s. He worked at the Bullard Company, ran his own painting business, and worked for over 20 years at Moore Tool in Bridgeport as a service technician, traveling widely in Asia and Europe for his work. Favorite activities were golf, contra-dancing, biking, and gardening.

Survivors include his son, Jeff Witkavitch of Portland, Maine; stepson, Jon Rockman of San Francisco, Calif.; stepdaughter Elena Rockman-Blake, her husband Chris Blake, and grandson Michael Blake, 6, of Monroe. Also surviving are a brother, Bernard Witkavitch of Fairfield; sister, Christine Loxsom and husband John of New Haven; sister, Anne Witkavitch and husband Keith Sagnelli of Bethany; and beloved nieces and nephews Adam, Casimir and Claire Loxsom and Keegan and Nico Sagnelli. He was predeceased by his sister Mary Beth Witkavitch of Franklin, Mass. He is also survived by two aunts, Gertrude Yokst of Bridgeport and Eugenia Witkavitch Lambert of Methuen, Mass., and three cousins.

Two services will be held: A Mass Saturday, Nov. 17, at 11 a.m., at St. George Parish, 443 Park Ave. in Bridgeport and a memorial service Friday, Nov. 23, at 11 a.m. at the Unitarian Church, 10 Lyons Plains Rd. in Westport. Friends may call today, Nov. 16, from 4-7 p.m., at the Edmund Dougiello Funeral Home, 36 South Pine Creek Rd., Fairfield.

Memorial contributions may be made to a charity of one's choice.

Portland

Sebastiana Fazzino Vinci

Sebastiana (Anna) Fazzino Vinci passed peacefully Thursday, Nov. 7, six months to the day after she turned 91.

She was a wife to Vincenzo (Jimmy) Vinci, deceased 2004. Both were born in Melilli, Sicily, immigrated in 1954, and lived in Portland for over 50 years. She was the daughter to Rosa Amato and Sebastiano Fazzino.

She is survived by children Santo Sebastian, Sebastian Antonio, Lucie Rosa Elmer, and their spouses Dale and Marcia. She leaves eight grandchildren, James, Susan, Santo Jr., Eugene, Jessica, Vanessa, Samantha and Marcus; three great-grandchildren, Gage, Lucian, Arianna; and one great-granddaughter due in January, Kiara Annabella. Anna is also survived by her siblings, Lucy Sardo, of Florida (formally of Portland), Carmelina Fiorilla, of Melilli and Salvatore Fazzino and wife, Rosemary, of Middletown.

She is predeceased by siblings, Jenny Marino Daniele, Joseph Fazzino and Conida DiMauro.

Viewing for Anna was held Saturday, Nov. 10, at D'Angelo's Funeral Home, 22 South Main St., Middletown, followed by a Mass at St. Sebastian's Church. She was buried at St. Sebastian's Cemetery, Washington Street, Middletown.

The family wishes to thank Gracie Ternullo and Barbara Rau for their loving care and friendship to Anna.

Marlborough

Rev. Arthur J. Audet

Reverend Arthur J. Audet, 71, of Bristol, passed away Tuesday, Nov. 13, at Bristol Hospital. He was born on July 6, 1941, in Waterville, Maine, to the late Edgar and Simone (Albert) Audet.

Father Audet was a graduate of Bulkeley High School, Hartford, Saint Louis University, Saint Louis, Mo., and Christ the King Seminary, East Aurora, N.Y. He was ordained Feb. 9, 1985, in the Cathedral of Saint Joseph in Hartford by the Most Reverend John F. Whealon, Archbishop of Hartford.

Father Audet served as Parochial Vicar at Saint Augustine in Seymour, Saint Matthew in Forestville, Saint Dunstan in Glastonbury, and Saint John Fisher in Marlborough. He served as co-pastor of Assumption Church in Manchester and as Administrator of Saint Bridget in Cornwall Bridge, Saint Bernard in Sharon, Saint Matthew in Forestville, Saint Dunstan in Glastonbury, and Saint John Fisher in Marlborough. He was named pastor of Saint John Fisher Parish, Marlborough, on Nov. 30, 2008.

Father Audet loved the priesthood and his family. He also enjoyed travel, having taken groups on pilgrimages to Israel many times. He also enjoyed the UConn women's basketball games and was a devotee of action films. Father Audet leaves his beloved sisters, Carmen Libby of St. Cloud, Fla., Lorraine and her husband Louis Hammerschmidt of Auburn, Maine, Jeanette Barger of New Britain, and several nieces, nephews, grandnieces and nephews as well as great grandnieces and nephews.

A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated by the Most Rev. Henry J. Mansell, Archbishop of Hartford, Tuesday, Nov. 20, in the Church of Saint Matthew, 120 Church Ave., Forestville, at 11 a.m. Burial will follow in Saint Francis Cemetery, Torrington. The family will receive relatives and friends Sunday, Nov. 18, from 5:30-6:30 p.m., in Saint John Fisher Church, 30 Jones Hollow Rd., Marlborough, which will be followed by a Parish Mass at 7 p.m. The family will also receive relatives and friends Monday, Nov. 19, from 4-7 p.m., in the Church of Saint Matthew, Forestville.

Contributions may be made to Saint John Fisher Church, 30 Jones Hollow Rd., Marlborough, CT 06477.

The O'Brien Funeral Home, 24 Lincoln Ave., Forestville is in charge of arrangements. To leave an online message of condolence, share a memory or photo, visit Father Audet's page at OBrien-FuneralHome.com.

Colchester

Barbara Zimmerman Memorial Service

A memorial service for Barbara Marie (Kaiser) Zimmermann, who died in Colchester, Friday, Oct. 19, at the age of 81, will be held at 12:30 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 17, at Keeney Hall, 200 Main St., Wethersfield.

Friends and family are welcome.

Hebron

Robert James Vigue

Robert James Vigue, 60, formerly of Hebron, passed away Friday, Nov. 2, with his wife Christina "mi amor" by his side in Pereira, Colombia, South America. He was fulfilling a retirement dream relocating to Pereira, where he spent the past year enjoying the beautiful countryside views and being poolside watching his dogs and horse as often as he could.

Bob was born Aug. 14, 1952, in Hartford, son of Frances (Mathieu) Vigue of Newington and the late George Vigue. Bob's charismatic personality and natural ability to form relationships allowed him to pursue a successful 20 year career in Information Technology with the Travelers Insurance Company. Bob later joined the Aetna Insurance Company and worked there for over 10 years until 2011 when he and his wife Christina moved from Hebron to retire to Christina's home country of Colombia, South America.

During his time in Connecticut, he was an active member of the Hartford Elks Club, Lodge 19, and served as the exalted ruler from 1998 to 1999. For those close to Bob he will always be remembered for hosting the "Happy Hollow" horseshoe tournament for many years and for the entertaining skits enjoyed by all.

In addition to his wife Christina and his mother Frances, Bob is survived by his two daughters, Kathryn Vigue and her wife Jennifer of Ellington, Meghan Dausey and her husband Matthew of South Windsor, and his stepdaughter Claudia Jimenez of Colombia, South America. He leaves his sisters, Linda Leon and her husband Alex of East Hartford, and Julie Jacques and her husband Donald of West Hartford. He was "Peperere" to his grandchildren Little Christina, Sasha, Cannon, Ryann and Anya. He also leaves his nieces and nephews, Jonathan and Melissa Vigue, Jennifer and Danielle Leon, and Kimberly and Gregory Jacques.

Besides his father, he was predeceased by his brother, Michael Vigue.

Friends and family may gather for a Christian Mass Saturday, Nov. 17, at 10 a.m., at St. Thomas the Apostle Church, 872 Farmington Ave., West Hartford.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to The American Cancer Society, 825 Brook St., I-91 Tech Center, Rocky Hill, CT 06067 in Bob's memory.

The family would like to thank the Sheehan-Hilborn-Breen Funeral Home for their help during this difficult time.