

# RIVEREAST News Bulletin

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Instead of a vacation, Marlborough Medical Center nurse Penny Davidson and her husband Arnie recently spent two weeks in Ghana helping teach children at an orphanage.

## East Hampton Couple Volunteers in Ghana

by Katelyn Kelleher

Two East Hampton residents recently gave up their vacation to spend two weeks volunteering at an orphanage in Ghana and raised money to aid in the construction of bath facilities.

Penny Davidson, a registered nurse at Middlesex Hospital's Marlborough Clinic, and her husband Arnie, through International Volunteer HQ, a New Zealand-based organization that matches volunteers with programs worldwide, traveled to Koso, Ghana, from the middle of March to April 3.

The pair spent two weeks working hard to help the West African Children's Foundation School, founded nine months ago by a native Ghanaian, Patrick, and his wife. Davidson said Patrick's wife had a religious vision that caused Patrick to leave his teaching job of seven years to open the school for orphaned or abandoned children.

"Ghana is a fairly religious country," she said. Davidson said three of the 34 children who live at the orphanage actually are orphans and the remainder were picked up off the street.

Davidson and her husband spent their time teaching, washing and feeding the children. They wanted to do their first volunteer experience together, so they chose a non-medical program, since her husband has no medical background.

"There's no running water and they share one toilet," Davidson said. "They sleep on straw

mats on concrete floors. In the morning, they get up and go to the classrooms. Then they bring the benches outside to eat."

Davidson said twice a day she and her husband helped haul water from down the street to fill a 50-gallon drum.

There was a need to improve the bathroom facilities, Davidson said, and Patrick had "dug a hole by hand that was a good 10 feet deep to erect a building to have an outhouse and two shower rooms."

Davidson said the project was never able to move forward from there because there was no money. She and her husband contributed \$600, raised primarily by Davidson's co-workers at the Marlborough Clinic, which paid for four days of mason work and got a significant portion of the project done.

"Everybody [at the Marlborough Clinic] was very generous and very much into this," Davidson said.

Davidson said it will cost approximately \$200-300 to complete the project, which will allow the children to take "bucket showers."

Davidson and her husband mostly helped the three women who ran the orphanage. "Because we're older, we looked at systems that were going on and tried to help in those ways," she said. "The three women helped the place run so we were attracted to them and we tried to help them out."

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## Portland Library Celebrating 30 Years

by Joshua Anusewicz

The year 1982 saw many noteworthy births: the Commodore 64 home computer was launched; Baltimore Orioles shortstop Cal Ripken Jr. played the first of his record 2,632 consecutive games; Michael Jackson released the album *Thriller*; and Prince William was born.

Lost in the shuffle – perhaps understandably – was the birth of the Portland Public Library on Freestone Avenue, which is celebrating its 30th anniversary this year.

Prior to its construction, the only library in town was the Buck Library, now the Buck Foreman Community Center on Main Street, which is now home to the town's parks and recreation and youth services departments. According to the library's website, Buck Library was built in 1895, with funding from former resident Horace Buck and brownstone donated from the local quarries.

In the late 1970s, however, the Portland Board of Selectmen formed a committee to look into the needs of the town, including the town's facilities and whether they were adequate. Perched at the top of that list was a new library.

According to Library Director Janet Nocek, who began as director 10 years ago, Buck Library was "too crowded" for the growing town population and would not be able to fit com-

puters, which were soon to be introduced. Nocek also said that the children's section of the library was located in the basement, which was "dark and damp."

With the help of the library board, then-Library Director Mary Flood and then-First Selectwoman Terri Larson, the project to build a new library was approved at a town referendum and soon underway. In late 1981, the final touches were put on the building and in January of 1982, town volunteers and even members of the Connecticut National Guard took four hours to move 60,000 books and equipment to the brand-new facility.

Today, the library is no longer brand new, but is still able to comfortably serve its purpose as a place of learning for the entire community. Nocek said the library has gone through a long series of changes, most relating to improved technology. But it has also grown to accommodate the community's needs, expanding and decorating its preschool area, enclosing a "story time" area, adding a teen section for middle and high school students to read and study, and making upgrades to the front desk and front entryway – almost all of which was funded by grants or donations. Over the past year, the library also went through the process of replacing the roof, which had been the origi-

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This year, Portland Public Library is celebrating 30 years at its Freestone Avenue location, where it has grown into a community center that serves residents of all ages. To commemorate its three decades of service, the library's Board of Directors will be holding a Birthday Bash fundraiser on Saturday, April 28, at Quarry Ridge Golf Course.





**East Hampton residents Arnie and Penny Davidson donated \$600, collected from staff at Marlborough Medical Center, and brought school supplies to a Ghana orphanage.**

#### Volunteers cont. from Front Page

An additional 90 children visit the orphanage during the day to attend school and are supposed to pay a small fee on a regular basis, but don't always do so, Davidson said.

"It really runs on donation and prayer... Patrick is a pastor and is very much a believer in prayer. He doesn't have any source of income," she said. "They really go meal-by-meal at this point."

Davidson said the whole experience was "quite humbling and eye-opening."

The Davidsons decided to participate in the program to give back. "We've been on cruises, we've been places. Maybe it was time to give back a little bit," she said. They chose Ghana because they wanted to go to an African country and Ghana has one of the most stable governments and is one of the safest.

Davidson commended the International Volunteer HQ program for its "top-notch" guidance and support for its volunteers.

She said she and her husband are supposed to do another trip and may or may not go back

#### Library cont. from Front Page

nal roof built in 1982.

As for technology, the library has expanded and improved upon its computer services, which Nocek said is one of the biggest draws of the library. "We've become the central place in the town for people to use computers," she said, adding that the library is currently going through another computer upgrade.

The library also offers CDs and DVDs, and now has begun offering eBooks through a product called OverDrive, which you can take out, just like a regular book, on your Kindle, Nook, or other eReader.

Even though most residents own computers and the popularity of eReaders is rising, Nocek said that the use of the library hasn't really waned.

"People still want to save money," Nocek said, adding that many of the residents she has spoken with actually read hard copies of books and magazines on top of reading from their eReaders. "We won't go by the wayside [with eReaders], because we still provide good educational tools."

The library also draws patrons through its various programs, which cater to residents of all ages. Nocek said that the library always looks for "practical" programs that will hit on the need of residents. Programs like summer reading and book discussions have been a constant, but the library has also offered seminars on everything from gardening to teenage issues.

to Ghana. "A piece of our hearts will always be there. There's so much more of the world we'd like to see," she said. "We like the idea of immersing ourselves in the support of a culture."

"It was all those things you can imagine Africa to be," she said. "It was very humbling to come from where we come from and basically be immersed in the culture that runs on so much less and is very content with what they have."

Regardless of if they return to the school in Ghana, they are continuing their efforts to help. Davidson said her husband is working on putting up a website for donations to try to get consistent funding to send to the school.

Donations could help finish the bathroom facilities, bring water to the school, feed the children and buy land, as Patrick currently rents, Davidson said.

Arnie and Penny Davidson set up a blog so friends, family and donors could follow their trip at [WeGhanaGo.blogspot.com](http://WeGhanaGo.blogspot.com). Donation information can be found at the website they set up for the school, [WestAfricanSchool.org](http://WestAfricanSchool.org).

"It's a good place for people to come and meet; it's like a park," Nocek said. "The programs are a big part of what we do here."

To help continue what the library does, the town has relied on fundraisers and donations, with assistance from groups like Friends of the Portland Library. With that in mind, the library has found a way to incorporate its 30th birthday and a fundraiser with a "Birthday Bash," planned by the fundraising committee of the library's Board of Directors.

The event will be held Saturday, April 28, at 7 p.m. at Quarry Ridge Golf Course, and will include a silent auction and a performance by the local band Driven, which will celebrate the decade of the library's birth by playing 1980s hits. Tickets are \$40 and will include food and beverages; there will also be a cash bar.

Funds raised from the event will be used to improve some of the library's furnishings, including the 30-year-old carpeting and chairs. Nocek said that the event has already received a "great response" from residents and local businesses, which have purchased tickets and donated items for the auction.

"It's going to be really nice," Nocek said. Tickets are available at the library; for more information call 860-342-6770. For information on how to donate to the silent auction, contact Gail Landry at 860-965-0212 or Stephanie Tatro at 860-342-0887.

#### From the Editor's Desk

## Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

Some of you may recall the big cover story the *Rivereast* ran this time last year about Colchester resident Peter Kupczak working with town officials to run a big "Donate Life" flag in front of Town Hall the last two weeks in April.

The initiative was part of the Flags Across America campaign and recognized National Donate Life Month, which occurs in April.

Peter's connection to the cause can't be any closer. His daughter Jessica died at age 24 in 2002, following a massive asthma attack that caused cardiac arrest. While on life support, Jessica was able to donate her heart, pancreas, kidneys and liver. The donations went to help two men and two women continue their lives.

Since Jessica's tragic death, Peter has committed himself to promoting awareness of organ and tissue donation. This past Monday, the Donate Life flag was raised again in Colchester, and will continue to run through the end of next week.

Also – and this is pretty cool – Jessica's smiling face is now looking down at motorists on Interstate 95, urging them to give life.

Peter told me this week a billboard just went up on I-95 south at exit 25 in Bridgeport. Along with a beaming photo of Jessica, there's a picture of her and Peter dancing, and a simple message: "My daughter Jessica saved lives. You can too." The billboard tells people they can register as an organ and tissue donor at [DonateLifeNewEngland.org](http://DonateLifeNewEngland.org).

I'm an organ donor, and proud of it. I mean, you can't take them with you. (Well, you can, but they won't be of much use.) It's a great cause, and I'm glad Peter's able to get awareness of it out there at such a high-profile level.

\* \* \*

If you did much TV watching last weekend, you were probably reminded of the 100th anniversary of the Titanic sinking. There were lots of stories about it on the web too – and I saw a pretty neat picture of the *Hartford Courant's* cover from April 15, 1912 – including one that, frankly, seemed a little sick.

For your next office picnic or church carnival, you can rent a giant inflatable sinking Titanic.

Yes, the company Fun Makers Incorporated has a "Survive the Titanic" adventure slide. Much like those inflatable slides and bounce houses commonly seen at town fairs, this one is a big, 25-foot job. Folks can climb steps up to the top of the "deck" – which, as was the case in real life a century ago, is sticking high up in the air, at an angle – and slide down into a vinyl bed of "water" below.

Now, inflatable slides seem like fun, but forgive me if I sound a little stuffy here: You

want to recreate plunging down a ship's deck to your death? Let's not forget 1,500 people died when Titanic went down. Yes, it was a century ago at this point, but still. It just seems a tad morbid.

\* \* \*

In case you haven't noticed, it's baseball season – a great time of year. It's also the 50th year for my beloved New York Mets. The Mets are off to a good start this year; as of Thursday, they're 7-5, which may not seem like much, but it's a lot better than I think most people thought they'd be 12 games into the season.

Anyway, in honor of the Mets' 50th anniversary, I thought I'd offer up some famous Ralph Kiner quotes. Who? A Hall of Fame slugger for the Pittsburgh Pirates in the 1940s and '50s, Kiner started broadcasting the Mets games on TV and radio back in their inaugural 1962 season – and he's still with the team today. Granted, he doesn't broadcast nearly as many games today as he used to, but he's still a living legend, and it's always great to hear him in the broadcast booth.

Kiner is also known for his sometimes-interesting way with words. When it comes to baseball malapropisms, Yogi Berra is king, and for good reason. But as you can see here, Kiner's had his fair share of misspeaks over the years. And, much like Yogi, we love him all the more for them. Here's a sample of some classic Kiner:

"All of his saves have come in relief appearances."

"If Casey Stengel were alive today, he'd be spinning in his grave."

"Kevin McReynolds stops at third and he scores."

"On Father's Day, we again wish you all happy birthday."

"Solo homers usually come with no one on base."

"All of the Mets' road wins against the Dodgers this year occurred at Dodger Stadium."

"Tony Gwynn was named player of the year for April."

"[Don] Sutton lost 13 games in a row without winning a ballgame."

"The Hall of Fame ceremonies are on the 31st and 32nd of July."

"The Mets have gotten their leadoff batter on only once this inning."

"The reason the Mets have played so well at Shea this year is they have the best home record in baseball."

"There's a lot of heredity in that family."

\* \* \*

See you next week.

## East Hampton Man Arrested in Bar Fight

by Joshua Anusewicz

Portland Police have arrested a man due to his alleged involvement in a bar fight in March at Café 66.

Joseph Piatti, 24, of 46 Champion Hill Rd., East Hampton, was arrested on Monday, April 2, and charged with second-degree assault and breach of peace. Cunningham stated that a court-issued warrant was released for Piatti, who voluntarily met with Portland Police.

The incident occurred Saturday, March 3, at roughly 11:30 p.m., at Café 66 on Main Street. According to Sgt. Scott Cunningham, police were dispatched to the restaurant after a report that a fight had broken out between two patrons. When police arrived, the bartender advised the police that both men had been escorted from the bar and that the victim of the fight was located in the back parking lot of the restaurant after being punched "without provocation," he said.

The alleged victim stated, according to Cunningham, that he had been talking with a friend when Piatti blindsided him, striking him several times in the face. The alleged victim also stated that while both men were at the bar, a patron of the bar began making "statements about children with disabilities" and that Piatti was "very close" to someone with disabilities and took offense to the comments.

Cunningham said Piatti thought the alleged victim had made the comments and punched him in the face twice before then being escorted outside. The man later sought medical treatment for his injuries, which included a fractured jaw.

Piatti was released on a \$500 non-surety bond and is scheduled to appear in Middletown Superior Court on Wednesday, May 9, at 10 a.m.



# New African Drumming Program Starting

by Geeta Schrayter

Next month, AHM Youth and Family Services will begin a new series of workshops meant to teach local youth the art of African drumming while instilling an understanding of different cultures.

Participants will learn how to play the Djembe and Dundun, African drums carved from wood, one of which is played with the hands, the other with sticks.

"I have a vision," said Hebron resident Carla Pomproicz, who is helping to coordinate the event. Along with volunteering as a mentor with AHM for many years, Pomproicz – who may be more commonly known in the area as Hebron's longtime town clerk – is learning to play the drums as well.

"One of the long-term ideas is to get some kids involved with the drumming program, teach them several different rhythms and then at some point we can do an exhibition," Pomproicz said, which would combine the fun of playing with the historical significance behind the different rhythms.

"All of the rhythms [taught] would be [those] played for a celebration, planting, fishing, hunting – there are all different reasons why certain rhythms are played and when," she said.

Pomproicz also mentioned the currently-being-restored Peters House and said "it would be really nice if this group of kids, a couple years down the road, could play at a ceremony" when the restoration is complete. The Peters House, located at 150 East St., is known for purportedly being the former home of Caesar and Lewis Peters, two former slaves who were captured in 1787 with the intention of being sold back into slavery, before being rescued by residents of the town.

But before any events can happen, there need to be participants.

"Our biggest obstacle right now is – we have the money, we have the teacher, we have some money set aside to purchase drums, people who have loaned us drums until we can buy as many as we need – but we need the students!" Pomproicz said.

Specifically, boys and girls in the seventh through 12th-grade age bracket. Pomproicz

stressed that drumming isn't just for boys, stating it wasn't uncommon for there to be more girls than boys in some of her classes.

As far as the benefits of learning the art, Pomproicz explained it gives young people an outlet: "a positive way to expend some energy and at the same time, play music" while doing something that's also historic.

AHM Director Joel Rosenberg explained the program is a partnership between AHM and the Marlborough Arts Center – and stressed that Marlborough Arts volunteer Marilyn Ulion "has just been absolutely wonderful to work with."

Ulion, he said, has been instrumental along with Pomproicz in making the program a reality.

"This has really been the two of them working together to bring this to AHM," he said, adding, "really, the idea is to continue to bring in new alternative programming to the teen center."

"We really want to build on performing and visual art programs," he added, explaining the African drum program would expose participants to a new cultural and musical experience.

"Anyone who has ever sat down and tried drumming knows the great feeling that you get from a new musical experience and I think drumming is something everyone can relate to," he said.

"The teacher, I'm sure, will be walking the students through not just the skill but the traditions and meanings that go into this form of drumming," Rosenberg said.

And that teacher is Matt Dean, a Bozrah resident who has been playing the drums since a friend convinced him to take an African drumming class in 1995.

"My friend had asked me to join him in this class because he didn't want to go alone," Dean said. "I looked at the drum and found it interesting, and then I hit it, and I could feel my heart beat through my shirt. And a year later I was in Guinea, West Africa."

Since then, Dean has been to Africa four times to learn from master drummers of Le Ballet Africains, Ballet Djoliba and Percussion De Guinea. He has lived in New York City where he studied with additional master drum-



**Town Clerk Carla Pomproicz and African drum musician and teacher Matt Dean played the Djembe and Dundun to students at RHAM on April 13. Pomproicz, who is also a drumming student, is hoping local youth will sign up for an upcoming African drumming program at AHM.**

mers and toured the United States and Canada for nine years as one of the original members of the New York-based ensemble Magbana Drum & Dance.

"I don't believe in coincidence," said Dean. "I followed my heart and it's brought me to where I am today and it's been a great journey."

And now, Dean's journey is taking him to AHM, where he'll share what he's learned with local youth.

Dean said he wants to "teach the kids about the drumming and the culture and the reasons why we play music – and to inspire them is the main thing. Just inspire them."

But again, before the inspiration and any fun

can begin, there need to be student drummers.

"What we need right now are teens to sign up. That's what going to round this program together – that's the only thing left, and we're really excited," said Rosenberg. "We think that if we can get teens interested in this, it's one of those things that's going to grow instantly."

"I'm just aching for someone to sign up," said Pomproicz. "It's \$15 for nine lessons – we're talking about 18 hours of lessons," she added. "Where can you get that kind of music lesson for \$15?"

The workshops will take place Tuesdays and Fridays in May from 2:30-4:15 p.m. and registration forms can be picked up in the RHAM school guidance department.

# Portland Selectmen Delay Sending Blight Ordinance to Hearing

by Joshua Anusewicz

Although the Board of Selectmen had planned to send a proposed blight ordinance to a public hearing at its meeting Wednesday, the board opted to push the decision to its next meeting after a lengthy discussion.

Much of the discussion focused on changes that were made to the drafted ordinance after multiple residents weighed in on the proposed ordinance at the selectmen's last meeting. Last week, the property maintenance subcommittee of the board – which consists of First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield and selectmen Fred Knous and Ryan Curley – reviewed the suggestions and added or removed items to fine tune the ordinance.

Bransfield reiterated Thursday that the ordinance was being established to enforce significant examples of blight, "not for minutiae." With that in mind, the board opted to remove, from the definitions in the ordinance, buildings that are "becoming dilapidated," that are "attracting illegal activity," and have overgrown weeds and grass, as these descriptions were seen as insignificant or vague. However, the board added buildings that "diminish the value of abutting properties," a topic that was brought up consistently during the draft process.

The ordinance now also defines "debris," which includes abandoned objects, junk vehicles, automobiles or boats, vehicle parts, furniture and appliances.

Another item that was removed was in the exempt property item, which originally included "any municipal-owned property." A few residents objected to the item at the previous public hearing on the ordinance, leading the subcommittee to remove it.

The majority of the discussion on Wednesday centered on the section of the ordinance titled "Notice of Violations." In the original proposal, complaints would be submitted to the first selectman, who ultimately would be the individual to rule on the complaint and oversee the citation process.

Some of the selectmen felt Bransfield should be the individual who receives and rules on the complaints, but there were some concerns that the complaints could become politicized or that Bransfield would not have additional time to perform the needed tasks. Curley, however, felt that if the ordinance was approved, the citation process would be considerably busy at first and should be handled "from the top down."

Selectman Carl Chudzik agreed, stating that

the matter should be "high on the priority list" and receive the proper oversight by Bransfield.

Other members of the board agreed with a resident recommendation from the April 4 public hearing on the proposed ordinance, suggesting that the town's building official, Lincoln White, should be the individual who receives the complaints and issues the citations. Bransfield said White is "already in the field" everyday and is more experienced in dealing with housing issues and could make rulings more efficiently. Selectwoman Kathy Richards added that White "works under the guidance of the first selectman," so Bransfield would still be overseeing the process.

After the discussion, the board agreed that submitted complaints and rulings would be under the umbrella of the building official. The selectmen also added that "in the absence of the building official, the first selectman shall designate a qualified replacement" to perform the duties.

For enforcement, however, the first selectman or the Board of Selectmen would be authorized to "initiate legal proceedings" if the process matriculated to that point. The delivery of the citations would be in the hands of

the police department, which Bransfield said would help avoid any type of altercation with the individual.

Because there was a considerable amount of changes, the board decided to push back sending the ordinance to public hearing to make the adjustments to the draft. The board also reviewed a draft of the "citation hearing procedure ordinance," which outlines the process that an individual would go through if they received a citation.

The selectmen wanted additional time to review the ordinance, which is direct from the Connecticut General Statutes (Section 7-152c) and cannot be amended. Bransfield said Thursday that selectman Brian Flood would be reviewing the ordinance, and that the most likely option was to simply add an item to blight ordinance that would refer to the statute for the citation hearing procedure.

The ordinance, with the additional adjustments, will be brought to the board's next scheduled meeting on Wednesday, May 2, at 7:30 p.m., at Portland Library, where it will be reviewed by the selectmen and sent to a public hearing.

## Lifestar Called After Colchester Man Collides with Tree

by Katelyn Kelleher

An Amston resident was transported by Lifestar helicopter to Hartford Hospital for head injuries sustained when he crashed into a tree off a Colchester road Saturday.

Michael McCarthy, 31, of 28 Cannon Dr., Amston, was traveling on Lake Hayward Road when he failed to negotiate a curve and proceeded off the road. McCarthy then struck

a tree with his Ford Taurus, State Police said.

McCarthy was flown by Lifestar helicopter to Hartford Hospital with incapacitating head injuries.

A Hartford Hospital spokesperson listed McCarthy in critical condition as of Wednesday.

Police said the case is still open and under investigation.



# Kids Pack Gym for Andover Fun Night

by Geeta Schrayter

The warmer weather and the onset of spring were welcomed with Andover Fun Night, which was held Saturday at the Andover Elementary School gym. Popcorn, cotton candy and fun were aplenty at the event, which was completely free and sponsored by the Andover Recreation Commission.

Local kids played around on five giant inflatables, took part in carnival games, a limbo contest and a pie eating competition while socializing with their friends.

"It was a zoo," said Recreation Commission member Kathy Hawes, who is also on the local Board of Education.

Hawes, who has been a member of the Recreation Commission for about 10 years, said the volunteer group holds two fun nights each year, one in the winter and one in the spring. The commission also helps to maintain the Long Hill Field for the sports teams and basically does the work a paid parks and recreation individual would do, since "Andover is such a small town that we don't have the position."

The Recreation Commission has been in town for around 41 years and Jay Linddy has been a member for about 35.

"Our group – we try to run as much as we can," said Linddy, including a holiday sing-along, a Halloween night which is "one of our big events," movie nights and concerts at the gazebo.

"We do as much as we can because we're the only volunteer rec. department in the area," he said, adding the town was "fortunate because everybody gets involved and helps."

As far as Fun Night, which Linddy said has been taking place for about 26 years, he explained it's an opportunity "to spend quality time with the neighbors and other kids – it's

just a nice time."

The Fun Night lasted from 6-9 p.m. Saturday, and at the event's peak – around 6-7 p.m. – Linddy said you couldn't get in the parking lot and could barely walk in the gym.

"The kids were wired out on cotton candy [and] there was unlimited popcorn," he said, adding the commission actually ran out of the former – which he figured meant they had to have given out about 400.

Jake Nichols was at the event with his mother Sandy for about two hours, and as he left with a bag full of popcorn and his mouth filled with gum he won playing a carnival game, he said his favorite inflatable was the obstacle course.

As far as what he enjoyed the most overall, "I would say both bouncing and playing with friends," he said.

Jessica Calhoun was at the event with her four children, and while she mentioned her favorite part was seeing the static in her daughter Ryan's hair as she played in the bounce house – "it was wild," she laughed – Ryan, 2, had a different preference.

Her favorite aspect was the inflatable made to look like a jungle, because you could "act like a monkey," while her sister Alana, 5, said she liked going down the slide and Caelyn, 6, enjoyed the bounce house.

Their older brother Liam, 8, was more a fan of the overall experience, and said he enjoyed "that we got to go there and spend time with our friends and have a good time."

For Kobe Davis, 11, the bounce houses were enjoyable as well, and even though he didn't win, he liked taking part in the pie eating contest too.

"It was good," he said of the blueberry pie, while his mother Jill added "if it was apple you would have won."

The annual Ted's Pie Eating Contest was



Local kids packed the elementary school gym to enjoy giant inflatables, carnival games and treats like cotton candy and popcorn at the Andover Fun Night on April 14. Also a big hit was the annual Ted's Pie Eating Contest which was won by sixth-grader Megan Schreiner, shown below

named after the late Theodore Armata of Ted's IGA in Hebron.

"[Ted] always donated the pies," explained Linddy. "So even when he was gone, we just continued" holding the contest in his name.

"The kids just loved it," Linddy continued. "There was blueberry everywhere."

"It was hysterical," said Hawes.

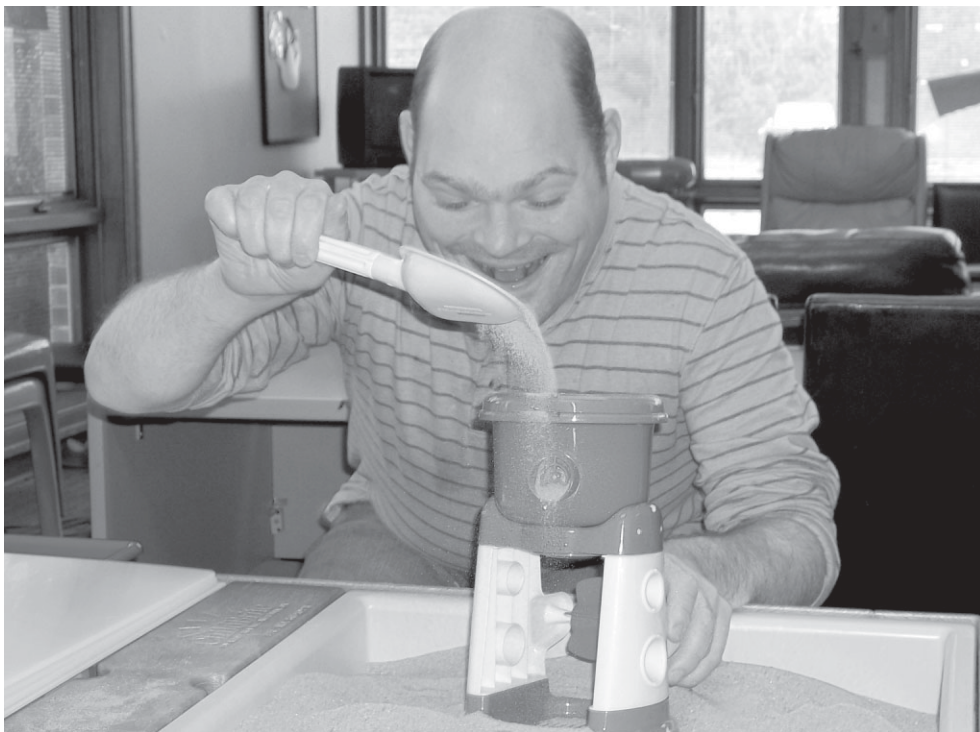
The competition was won by Andover Elementary School sixth-grader Megan Schreiner.

"The champion of the pie contest and the runner-up – that's the biggest bragging rights at the school!" said Linddy. "And this year, to have two girls as winner and runner-up, that's unbelievable."

And for Megan to win was even more unbelievable since, as her mother Sue said Wednesday, "[Megan] hates pies and will not eat a blueberry and it was a blueberry pie.

"She said after that contest it gives her a new reason to hate blueberries."

The runner-up was fifth-grader Zoe Lachut, and along with bragging rights, the winners took home gleaming trophies – and more likely than not, a blueberry pie-induced stomach ache.



Network Inc., an organization that helps people with special needs, will hold a wine-tasting and raffle in Coventry Saturday. Shown here is Kurt Parkington, a participant in Network's Andover Day Program, enjoying the sensations provided by a "sand and water table" donated by the Deupree Family Foundation.

## Network to Sponsor Wine-Tasting

Network Inc. will sponsor a wine-tasting to benefit people with special needs Saturday, April 21, from 6-9 p.m., at Cassidy Hill Vineyard, 454 Cassidy Hill Rd., Coventry.

Included with the \$25 ticket price is: a tasting of five wines or a full glass of any wine; live acoustic music; hors d'oeuvres such as chicken kebabs and bleu cheese pinwheels; and a free souvenir wineglass.

There will also be a variety of raffle items, and an autographed baseball signed by Adrian

Gonzalez will be auctioned off.

Network Inc. is a nonprofit that partners with people with special needs to help them flourish educationally, socially, vocationally and personally.

The vineyard can be reached at 860-498-1126. For more information, you can also contact Mickie Betancourt at Network at 860-371-9014 or 860-742-1313 ext. 55401 or [mickeb@network-programs.com](mailto:mickeb@network-programs.com).

## Police Arrest Two for 2011 Boat Vandalism in Portland

by Joshua Anusewicz

Portland Police recently arrested two individuals for their alleged involvement in extensive vandalism of a boat that occurred last summer.

According to Sgt. Scott Cunningham, Roland Savoie, 34, of 196 Pine St., Columbia, was arrested Tuesday, March 27, and charged with third-degree burglary, fourth-degree larceny, first-degree criminal mischief, and providing a false statement. Also, this past Wednesday, April 18, police arrested Allen James Hall, 19, of 520 Bunker Hill Rd., Coventry, who was charged with third-degree burglary, fourth-degree larceny, and first-degree criminal mischief.

In a release from Cunningham, he said the incident occurred last summer; on Aug. 5, Officer Peter Paranzino responded to Yankee Boat Yard on Riverview Street for a report of vandalism to a 34-foot boat in the dry dock area of the boatyard. Paranzino met with the owner of the boat, Cunningham said, who showed Paranzino extensive vandalism to the exterior, including "several vulgar words" spray-painted and carved into the fiberglass outer shell.

Cunningham said Paranzino also saw extensive damage to the interior of the boat, including items strewn about, obscenities cut into the fabric of a couch, a smashed bathroom mirror, a damaged marine radio and \$1,200 in assorted items missing.

The total damages to the boat exceeded \$5,500, Cunningham stated.

According to Cunningham, Paranzino was able to develop a group of suspects based on information provided by the boat owner. Paranzino then interviewed the suspects and reviewed the evidence to link the crimes to Savoie and Hall, who provided written confessions when they were confronted with the findings.

Cunningham said Wednesday the motive for the crime was related to Savoie, who he said was the alleged victim's ex-girlfriend's new boyfriend. He said that the two men broke into the boatyard, broke through a window on the boat, and caused the damage.

Savoie and Hall were both held on a \$25,000 court-set bond and are scheduled to appear in Middletown Superior Court on Tuesday, May 1, at 10 a.m.



# Longtime Volunteers Preparing to Leave Marlborough

by **Katelyn Kelleher**

A local couple who have spent years working to better the community will soon be leaving to spend more time with their family – and their friends and fellow volunteers this week lamented their impending departure.

Residents Jim and Linda Cherry will be leaving Marlborough for Indiana, where their son and daughter-in-law live with their new baby, George. Currently they rent a home in Indiana and are trying to sell their home in town. Linda said she expects to move within the next few months so that she and her husband can be closer to their first grandchild.

However, while the Cherrys may leave, the projects they have started in Marlborough and maintained through years of volunteering will continue.

Linda created the Marlborough Food Bank in 2005 and has managed it since. Linda said she has put in 20 to 30 hours per week of her own unpaid time running it.

Resident Joanne Goode volunteers often at the food bank and has occasionally covered Linda's position.

"It's only by doing that I realized what a huge job that was," she said. "Linda being director of that food bank is a full-time job and more."

Linda said some of the work is now parceled out amongst volunteers and she estimates whoever takes her place as manager will need to put in about 10 hours per week.

"We have someone who deals with the food share, someone else who deals with the local shopping and financial pieces of it," she said. "Everyone's a volunteer."

Before distributing some of the work to other volunteers, Linda had to do much of the shopping for the food bank. The food bank used to have an assistant manager, Wayne Smith, but

he moved to New Hampshire, Linda said. Goode said Smith was also an integral part of the food bank – and his departure from town was largely unheralded.

"He moved and nobody ever said thank you," Goode said. "This can't possibly happen again [with Linda and Jim]. Nobody even knew about any of the things that he did."

The new manager will oversee the day-to-day operations and problem solve, just as Linda does. Because of that, she said it might be difficult to find someone. "A lot of people are afraid of the whole responsibility part of it, especially because it's all volunteered," she said.

Last month, 82 distinct families utilized the food bank and there is a change of families using it from week to week, Linda said. Anyone looking to utilize the food bank must sign The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) document "saying they are telling the truth that they are within a certain income per individual in the household," she said.

Linda said for one person the income limit is around \$25,000, and increases approximately \$8,000 per person in the household.

The Marlborough Food Bank is set up like a grocery store so people can come in and make choices about what they need, unlike many food banks in which every family gets the same bag of food, Goode said.

"We're trying to keep people with babies in diapers," she said. "We're helping the elderly keep their cats fed so they're not making the choice between food and animal food."

The churches in the community provide a lot of support for the food bank and encourage members to participate.

"Both the Catholic and Congregational church are very active in terms of volunteers

and people who donate food," she said. "There are lots of people who I've never even met."

Marlborough Congregational Church has "taken ownership" of the food bank, allowing it to become a nonprofit organization, granting it access to FoodShare. Before this, the food bank relied solely on donations, Goode said.

Jim does "whatever Linda can't get another volunteer to do," Goode said. "If Linda's ever short with volunteers he's the first one to come up on the list."

The most-needed items for the food bank are determined based on the season. "It's summer weather, so drink mixes, things that would feed children that are home for the summer, kid pastas, tuna fish, [peanut butter and jelly], lots of ketchup, mustard, relish, mayo, salads and summer salads need mayo," she said. "You look at what you use."

Linda said there aren't any prospects for the new manager yet, but the search has only been on for about a week.

Goode added with some of the tasks split amongst volunteers, the new director won't have to take on as much as Linda.

"There is no new Linda to step into that position," she said. "Everyone involved has decided it can't just be one person. What's happened over the last six years is the job has evolved into something much bigger than any one person wants to take on."

Both Jim and Linda have also served on the local Board of Education. Jim has been serving on the RHAM Board of Education for seven years and is currently the vice chair, which Goode said is his "greatest legacy."

"He's been instrumental on that board," Goode said. "I have three kids going through

the school system and I know if I'm concerned about something he's the first person I call."

RHAM Board of Education Chair Michael Turner said Jim has been very active and committed to the school board. Turner has served alongside Jim for all seven years.

"In general, he looks at how some of the initiatives are working in this school and figuring out how we were going to deal with some of the increases in the middle school in the last four or five years," Turner said.

"We'll miss him," he added. "He's a nice person. An all-around nice guy anyway."

Goode said Jim was recognized as Connecticut Science Teacher of the Year and served on an educational council in Washington, D.C. for a year.

Both Jim and Linda have served on the Richmond Memorial Library Board and the board's president, Deborah Bourbeau, said both have been assets. Jim currently is vice president and is serving his second term on the board.

"What's nice is that he has so much experience with the RHAM Board of Education that any time we have a problem he brings a lot of knowledge," Bourbeau said.

Bourbeau said Linda, who used to be president of the board, was also very knowledgeable.

"We're sorry to see her go," she said. "She put the needs of the board ahead of her own."

Goode said Jim and Linda had no connections when they moved to Marlborough, but through their volunteering they made plenty.

"It's a little bit hard to break into a community," she said. "They really enjoy giving and supporting causes that they think are important for the community."

# Marlborough Selectmen Set Hearing Date for Building Fee Changes

by **Katelyn Kelleher**

The Board of Selectmen set a May 15 public hearing date for residents to speak about three matters at its Tuesday meeting.

First Selectwoman Catherine Gaudinski said the hearing was set for land use and building fee schedule revisions, the acceptance of Victoria Lane for use as a town road and the posting of signs for public hearings in certain land use matters ordinance.

The revisions for land use and building fees followed the recommendations of Town Planner Peter Hughes, Gaudinski said. Hughes noted the fees are equal to or lower than other towns and haven't been adjusted in 12 years.

At the board's April 3 meeting, Hughes said the commission fee will increase 25 percent and the inspection fee will climb from 7 percent of the total project cost to 10 percent, due to some changes in the laws regarding inspections. Any money left over from the inspection fee will be refunded and, if additional funds are required, the fee will increase.

The changes also included a fee for residents working on their property without a permit, which Hughes explained is an additional \$150

charge on top of the initial permit fees.

Fees were reduced in two areas, Gaudinski said. The fee for temporary events where a public hearing is not required was reduced from \$75 to \$40 and temporary events where a public hearing is required dropped from \$150 to \$80. A public hearing is required if the event will be a gathering of 100 or more people.

The acceptance of Victoria Lane as a town road was also set for the public hearing. Gaudinski said Victoria Lane is an extension of a road to a development built a few years ago and was never officially approved as a town road. She added the town cannot accept roads between Nov. 15 and April 15 – due to winter weather, "so it's time to just accept it. The work's been done."

Gaudinski said the town engineer said the road is in good shape and accepting it is just a "housekeeping" matter.\* \*

Posting signs for public hearings in the town's land use ordinance was also set for the May 15 hearing. The ordinance pertains to a signpost placed near the exterior of Town Hall serving as a notice board for the community.

Also at the meeting, Gaudinski announced that effective July 1, the town's base rate for electricity supply will decrease from 9.965 to 8.240 cents per kilowatt hour. The town uses TransCanada Corporation for its power service.

"We were just looking in areas where we can save for charges," she said.

Gaudinski said the reduced rate will produce a small reduction in the budget. "The largest savings will be seen in the local Board of Education budget because they're 2/3 of our electricity usage," she said.

The board also narrowed down to four its list of 17 firms to interview for on-call engineering services for the town. Gaudinski said she could not disclose the four firms as they have not been contacted, nor has the town's current engineering service provider, Nathan L. Jacobson & Associates, Inc.

\* \* \*

Only one resident showed up at a public hearing on the 2012 Small Cities grant, which was held immediately before the selectmen's meeting, Gaudinski said.

The grant will fund a housing rehabilitation program aiming to help residents update their homes to be more energy efficient and compliant with codes. Homeowners must meet specific income requirements. The interest-free loans would cover the costs of items such as electrical upgrades, windows, roofs, furnaces, septic systems and wells, as well as interior and exterior modifications to accommodate homeowners with disabilities. The loan has an open-ended repayment period or until the homeowner sells or refinances the property.

Gaudinski said the town is still looking for letters of interest for the program and has a definite nine, potentially 12 letters, but needs 15. A letter of interest doesn't commit a person to the program, Gaudinski said.

The public hearing date for the land use and building fee revisions, acceptance of Victoria Lane as a town road and posting signs for public hearings in the land use ordinance will be held at 6 p.m. Tuesday, May 15, at Town Hall, before the regularly-scheduled meeting of the Board of Selectmen.

# Revaluation Results in 4.06 Mill Rate Increase in Hebron

by **Geeta Schrayter**

As Board of Finance Chairman Mike Hazel put it at last week's public hearing, perhaps the "most shocking" element of the 2012-13 proposed budget is a steep 4.06 mill rate hike – 13.40 percent more than the current year's rate.

The proposed budget comes in at \$34.28 million with a .57 percent (\$195,698) spending increase over the current year. (A full story about the budget public hearing appears elsewhere in this week's issue.) But, Hazel said, "it's not the spending of the town" that's a budget issue.

"In prior years it was a revenue problem," he said, but now it's the mill rate.

Hazel said the Oct. 1, 2011, Grand List was down almost 13 percent (\$99,588,090) from the year before, and "the unfortunate thing with the revaluation is it does not affect everyone. It's not like peanut butter you spread across bread evenly.

"Given that our budget is up less than half a percent, it's basically redistributing the expenses of town government," he continued. "And as a Board of Finance and Board of Selectmen, we have no say as to how this happens – this is mandated by state law."

Hazel explained increases due to spending (constituting decreased town spending, increased spending of the RHAM and Hebron boards of education and increased enrollment at RHAM) would have resulted in a mill rate increase of .26, with revenue reductions adding an extra .03 mills, for a total .29 increase.

However, due to the Grand List reduction, "it's going to go up a minimum 3.77 mills... that's pretty significant," he said.

The proposed mill rate, which will be set by June 15 assuming a budget has been approved by that time, is 34.32 – a 4.06, or 13.40 percent, increase over the current 30.26 mill rate.

Without revaluation, Hazel said, for many in town their tax increase would be "less than a tank of gas." But he went on to show examples of homes under the new assessment and the proposed mill rate, saying "that's telling. That's the part of this whole thing that scares me more than anything."

A home with a \$242,058 market value, assessed at \$169,440 as a result of last year's revaluation, would see a \$564 increase in their 2012-13 taxes with the proposed 34.32 mill rate.

A property with a \$331,000 market value, assessed at \$231,700 would see a \$386 increase, while a home with a market value of \$509,500 and an assessment value of \$356,650 would see an \$824 decrease.

As illustrated by the last example, not everyone will see an increase. On Wednesday, Finance Director Elaine Griffin explained 55 percent of the taxpayers in town will see a decrease in their taxes as a result of revaluation, while 45 percent will see an increase.

"So more taxpayers in town have a decrease as opposed to an increase," she said.

She also said "there's no easy way to explain" the overall impact of revaluation."

But to further illustrate the changes, the town manager's office prepared a tax impact chart which shows how the new assessments and proposed mill rate will impact an individual's taxes based on their previous assessments at 30.26 mills.

For example, a property previously assessed at \$200,000 which was assessed in the October 2011 revaluation at \$150,000 would see a \$904 tax decrease. If that same property were newly

assessed at \$250,000, there would be a \$2,528 increase.

Then, property with a previous assessment of \$500,000 and a new assessment at \$400,000 would see a \$1,402 decrease. But an assessment \$50,000 higher would cause a \$314 tax increase instead, and the same assessment as before would equate an increase of \$2,030.

"I don't think anyone can argue [there] is a huge spending issue" in this year's budget, said Hazel. "It's not a spending issue. It's what we're required by law to do."

Hazel said he "didn't like to see those [tax] numbers either," but went on to stress the issue couldn't be addressed since "that's just the way the law tells us we have to assess the taxes, and I'm at a loss for words beyond that."

Residents who would like to learn the impact of revaluation and the proposed budget on their individual taxes prior to receiving their bill can look at the town-supplied list of each property that's available in the assessor's office as well as the town manager's office, both of which are located at the Town Office Building, 15 Gilead St.



# Low Turnout for Public Hearing on Hebron Budget

by Geeta Schrayter

Attendance was low at the public hearing regarding the proposed budget for 2012-13 on April 12, as Board of Finance Chairman Mike Hazel summarized the numbers to a nearly empty audience.

The proposed budget comes in at \$34.28 million, with a spending increase of \$195,698, or .57 percent, over the current year.

The spending plan also calls for a rather eye-popping 4.06 mill rate increase, due largely to a revaluation-fueled Grand List reduction. (A story about that increase appears elsewhere in this issue.)

The town budget is decreasing 4.79 percent to \$8,502,121, the majority of which is due to a debt service reduction of about \$680,000, said Hazel. The town budget includes total government expenditures of \$6,465,592 – \$121,324 over the current year – and various contributions.

The Capital Improvement fund will receive a \$644,054 contribution, up 2.79 percent over the current year, as a way to make up for the account being flat-funded for many years. Meanwhile, a \$100,000 contribution was listed to flat-fund Open Space/Land Acquisition.

“The next three initiatives,” he said, referring to contributions to capital non-recurring expenditures, capital projects and revaluation, “are new ways of spiking out” the different items. Previously, the items would have been included in the Capitol Improvement Plan budget.

A contribution of \$10,687 is listed for cap non-recurring, while \$61,053 will go toward capital projects and \$50,000 will be set aside for the next revaluation. The total cost of the new capital initiatives is \$122,000.

Additionally, there are two budget initiatives listed for \$27,600: hiring an economic development coordinator for 16 hours per week at a cost of \$17,903 and changing the fire marshal to a full time emergency management director position at a cost of \$9,697.

“I think that in this day and age, we need to attract businesses,” Hazel said. “So from that [standpoint] I don’t think it’s an unreasonable request” to add these initiatives.

Hazel explained 75 percent of the \$34.28 million budget is education spending. The local Board of Education budget calls for a 1.85 percent increase, to \$12.01 million, while the proposed RHAM budget features a 4.05 percent increase, to \$12.40 million.

Hazel stressed it was important to keep in mind the local Board of Education is coping with a loss of \$176,000 in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funding, as well as an increase of \$265,000 in health insurance costs and a \$210,148 increase in contractual raises.

Hazel also noted these increases were partially offset by a reduction of \$279,610, due to the retirement of eight teachers, of which five positions won’t be filled. He called the board “forward-looking” for offering retirement incentives for the teachers which would result in some long-term savings.

The RHAM levy, Hazel continued, “is the largest single increase in spending in our entire budget.” He said “the greatest influence on the RHAM budget is the number of students being sent to the schools.”

Of the 1,783 students projected to be at RHAM in the 2012-13 school year, 976 will be from Hebron, up from 950 this year. The extra kids resulted in a \$130,799 increase, while Hebron’s share of the overall RHAM budget increase amounted to an additional \$274,119, for a proposed budget increase of \$404,918.

Hazel added he was presenting these numbers “just for facts,” as the town doesn’t have a say on the RHAM budget. The budget is voted on separately, at a tri-town referendum to be held in May.

As Hazel concluded his presentation, the few residents in attendance had an opportunity to speak.

Residents Heidi Nelson and Elizabeth Lachapelle offered praise for the local Board of Education budget.

Lachapelle said it was an unfortunate year to have to vote on anything “because I think across the board in town we’re in so many different places” with the loss of jobs, higher bills and increased taxes. But, she added, “I don’t think that changing anything as it’s presented tonight is going to make it any easier.”

Lachapelle also said she thought the boards had done “extremely well” and urged the Board of Finance to “let the people of Hebron vote on [the budget] as we saw it tonight,” saying she was ready to cast her vote on May 8. Resident George Alden also commended the board for both the presentation and the budget, saying they’d done “a pretty good job.” But, he added, “I would like to see some other changes in the future at least,” and mentioned downsizing and sharing services.

“The residents want to maintain essential services, but I do believe we have some excess positions,” he said. “Some people may need to wear two hats but it just seems to me we’ve got to do something to keep this budget down.”

Resident and Republican Town Committee chair Donna McCalla agreed with Alden, saying, “an economic development coordinator is nice to have, but who’s moving here? Nobody.”

“I understand we had to have [revaluation] and some people are getting socked – more than shown,” she continued, but “I just do not think that this is the right year that we have new

spending initiatives including new positions.”

McCalla also made several points regarding issues like the proposed tax increases.

“So much for affordable housing in Hebron,” she said, “because those hit hardest are in affordable housing and less able to pay for increases.”

She went on to say she felt it was inaccurate to say the town government had a 4.79 percent decrease in spending when it was a result of an offset in debt.

“It’s no different then when you pay off the mortgage on your house. When the debt is gone, the debt is gone,” she said.

\* \* \*

After the public hearing ended, the Board of Finance held its regular meeting, where the budget was discussed and then voted on.

“I don’t think we’ve heard anything different tonight then we’ve heard over the last month and a half,” said Hazel. “For the most part, we seem to have support for the budget. There are obviously some people who do not support it, but we’re not seeing an overwhelming number” against it.

“Based on the comments we heard I can’t see us not putting this forth,” he added. “We have a duly-elected Board of Education and Board of Selectmen who’ve put this forth.”

“It’s now for the town to decide,” Board of Finance member Lynne Guerriero said.

But finance board member Paula Verrier said her phone constantly rings with comments and concerns regarding the budget and contractual expenses.

“When does it end?” she asked. “When do the contracts stop increasing? Because it’s not happening for John Q. Public who doesn’t have a contract to protect him.”

Member Thomas J. Sousa Jr. answered Verrier, saying “until such time as [the decision is made] to lay people off, it won’t.”

Hazel responded to her inquiry further, highlighting the Board of Education and the fact their current contract was on a zero percent increase last year. He also said the board was looking at “opportunities we can reap in the future years regarding [the drop in] enrollment,” and changes in employment as a result.

“People have recognized this is an area we focus in on,” he said, adding the current enrollment allowed for some positions to be made part-time and at some point that might effect the administration too.

It’s “discussion that’s ongoing through the process,” he said.

Finance board member Malcolm Leichter said this would hopefully be the closing of “a long budget season” and said in his two terms on the board, this was “the most difficult bud-

get season for me to go through.”

He commended the collaborative process of the boards, but agreed with Alden and McCalla and the need for expenses to be kept down.

“We need to do a better job looking how to reduce our expenses in the future,” he said. “I can support this budget as it is, but I think we have a very difficult road ahead for us in future cycles.”

When discussion came to an end, a motion was made to bring the proposed \$34.28 budget to referendum, as well as a motion to bring the proposed \$923,968 Capital Improvement Plan budget to referendum. Both motions passed 5-1, with Verrier against.

On Wednesday, Verrier explained why she chose to vote against the budget, saying, “it is my opinion that the town is on an unsustainable spending pattern.”

She said she’d looked at spending over the last 10 years, and “it clearly shows the town has a spending problem.”

Verrier mentioned she’d had conversations with residents where they wondered why they had to keep paying higher taxes to support salaries and benefits they don’t get to enjoy. Additionally, she said, they question why the town has the amount of staff that it does.

“I have not heard one discussion about staffing decreases other than the five teachers in the elementary schools,” she said, adding, “General Government activity has declined, yet the budget requests were for more staff.”

Verrier was elected to the board last November, and as a new member, had to attend various conferences, at which it was stressed, she said, that “revenues should always be discussed and deliberated first.”

But in Hebron’s case, she said, “it’s being looked at last.”

Verrier also felt the Capital Improvement Plan budget shouldn’t be approved as presented because she didn’t think the parking lot expansion proposal for Hebron Elementary School “is a good use of our tax dollars.”

“I strongly feel there are other alternatives to the problem than throwing money at it,” she said, such as implementing a program that had previously been proposed to use the parking area to the south for staff and the area to the north for parents.

“Let’s give that a shot first, see if it solves the problem,” she said.

But since the motion to send the budgets to referendum passed, the outcome is, as Guerriero stated earlier, now up to the town.

\* \* \*

The referendum on the proposed budget will take place Tuesday, May 8, from 6 a.m.-8 p.m., at Hebron Elementary School.

## Colchester Finance Board Gets Update on School Health Insurance Spikes

by Katelyn Kelleher

The Board of Education chairman and town’s chief financial officer updated the Board of Finance on the status of high health insurance claims at their Wednesday meeting.

Employee health insurance costs in the 2012-13 fiscal year budget increased \$845,502 over the current fiscal year. This is one of the major contributors to the 2.98 percent overall increase in the education budget.

Because the town is self-insured, it must cover the cost of each claim up to a stop-loss of \$125,000. Chief Financial Officer Maggie Cosgrove said being self-insured has saved the Board of Education \$5.6 million in the last four years.

Board of Education Chairman Ronald Goldstein said the town is given an annual estimate of expected claims and budgeted for 90 percent of that claim for the 2011-12 fiscal year as it usually does. In the last several years, the claims have not exceeded the budgeted amount.

Cosgrove said the town has received some preliminary claim analysis information from Anthem. The town asked them to take a look at claims in the \$25,000 to \$50,000 range to see if they are done growing or might progress into a larger claim.

“I’ve asked for some additional information on the basis that the analysis that the claims

were on ran from last January [2011] to this February,” she said. “So if it happened from the February to June period it’s over. I don’t really care about it right now [because the claims are in the previous fiscal year].”

Cosgrove said she asked for the analysis to be done on a July to March basis and she herself has looked at claims within the month that were at least \$5,000 and laid them out on a spreadsheet so she “could get a feel for whether a claim would continually [be] still building or whether it hit [stop-loss] or it’s over.”

She also looked at the high claims report that Anthem sends monthly. “Basically as soon as someone hits the halfway point to the stop-loss amount they go onto that report,” she said. “Between the different things I’ve done I’ve been kind of able to piece together what’s what.”

“Based on looking at that, seeing how claims have developed I can tell ones that kind of get to a certain point and they’re either continuing maybe \$5,000 to \$10,000 before they seem to have dropped off,” she said. “It gives us a better feel of what’s happened, this year in particular, and whether or not things may develop.”

Cosgrove said several single claims that sprang up quickly exceeded the health insurance budget. November, January, February and April “spiked dramatically,” Cosgrove said, but

in each case one single claim was the reason for the spike.

Cosgrove said the claims in February and March hit stop-loss. “So I know those two are done,” she said. “When I say they hit stop loss, they didn’t go up \$15,000 a month until they reached \$125,000. In a single month they hit stop-loss. They went from not being a claim at all to hitting stop-loss.”

At Tuesday’s Board of Education meeting, Vice Chairman Donald Kennedy said, “March was bad. March was real bad.”

The January claim has not reached stop-loss yet, but in that single month it reached \$85,000, Cosgrove said. Similarly, the November claim reached \$65,000-\$70,000 in the one month.

Cosgrove said it is better news that there are isolated high claims rather than many smaller claims increasing. “These are at least glimmers of some positive information,” she said. “I’d rather have that than a lot of little claims.”

Goldstein agreed that having just a few high claims throwing off costs is better than many smaller claims increasing because it doesn’t show a pattern of healthcare costs increasing or other factors.

Cosgrove said the existing claims don’t seem to be progressing at a rapid rate.

Goldstein said the Board of Education spending is still in a hard freeze. “We’re canceling field trips, moving paper from building to building and nothing’s being purchased,” he said. “We’re hopefully going to realize some line items that are unexpended funds toward the end of the year that we will transfer as much as possible into the account.”

Cosgrove said the income from the remainder of the fiscal year, between the town, Board of Education, water and sewer and employees is \$1.6 million. “If we average \$537,000 for each of the three months [until the end of the fiscal year] we’d be at zero,” she said.

The town is in the process of selecting a new consultant for overall contract negotiations, wellness programs and data analytics to replace Ovations Plus, its current broker. “We have been working with a broker who was paid through commission with the carrier as opposed to this [request for proposal] process where we are actually paying a fee for services,” Cosgrove said. “That should put the consultant as more of a consultant, not just an insurance broker. More as an advocate of us as a client.”

“We have loads of information,” Goldstein said. “We need somebody that’s going to help us put it in place and manage claims more effectively.”



# Woman Tells Tale of Leaving Amish Life Behind

by **Katelyn Kelleher**

A woman who defied her family's expectations by leaving her Amish community spoke about her life torn between her traditions and her aspirations last Thursday, April 12, at Cragin Memorial Library.

*Why I Left the Amish* author Saloma Furlong compared leaving her Ohio Amish community to committing spiritual suicide.

"All of us know our whole lives long that we have the choice of whether to commit suicide. Mostly we don't think about that choice unless we're tempted to do it," she said. "Leaving the Amish was much like this. It became a conscious choice only when I began thinking about doing so."

That thought emerged when Furlong's school days were coming to an end. "All too soon came the day when I was handed my eighth-grade diploma, signaling the end of school for the rest of my life," she said.

Furlong wanted to attend school beyond the eighth grade. She said school was her escape from the reality that was the cyclical nature of the rest of her life: have children, grandchildren, attend church and tend the family farm. The Amish, she said, are a people "steeped in tradition and patterns of life are unchanging."

The monotonous life was not the only reason Furlong wanted to leave. Her father's aim to "break the will of each of his children through punishment with a whip or leather belt" and her older brother's violent, abusive outbursts were reason to escape.

At 14, Furlong was too young to leave, so she didn't until she was 20 years old. She told her mother she would be babysitting overnight, packed her suitcase and took off for Vermont. She joked about finally getting her "dream job"

as a waitress at Pizza Hut. During this time she also met her future husband, David Furlong.

After four months of freedom, Furlong's family came to Vermont to retrieve her, "pulling me right back into the world I left," she said. "The Amish life isn't about saying 'no'."

Furlong remained with her family for two years, eight months. David said his wife "switched off part of herself" when she went back.

Eventually, Furlong left again and married David. None of her family attended the wedding, however, and she was shunned from the Amish community. She and her husband have two adult sons.

She attained her goal of furthering her education with a degree from Smith College, even studying abroad in Hamburg, Germany.

In Furlong's family, she and all four of her sisters left her Ohio Amish community, the only members to leave. Her two brothers stayed.

"Of 2,500 families, mine was the only one [who had members leave]," she said. That left a "black mark" on her family.

"The guilt trap is set for both parents and the people who are leaving," she said. "The idea is if you raise your children right they won't leave. Those leaving feel horrible."

The only time she has returned to her community was to attend her father's funeral. While his health was failing, Furlong stayed at Smith College.

"I knew that the reason I could make this decision with a clear conscience was because I made peace with him," she said.

Furlong said her father got help after she left. "My mother said yes to social services coming in," she said. Her father was diagnosed with bipolar disorder and schizophrenia and, with

treatment, was no longer violent for the last 25 years of his life.

When she returned for the funeral, she got a surprising look into her mother's life when asked if David was the reason she left. "I told her if it wasn't for David, I'd be going to the south to get an education," she said. "She told me she once had a chance to get married [outside the Amish community] and wondered what it would be like."

Furlong said there are times she imagines what it would be like if she stayed and married in the Amish community.

"For most of my life I have felt that I have lived two separate and distinct lives in one. I often sought to bring the two together," she said. "There are things I lost and other things I gained from leaving my Amish community."

Furlong is not in contact with any of her sisters who left the Amish.

"I was always willing to go to a deeper place to deal with the abuse," she said.

The crowd of approximately 60 had plenty of questions for Furlong and she gave them insight into Amish beliefs and traditions and the variations between different Amish communities. "The way the Amish view us is about as varied as how we view the Amish," she said. "Some invite tourism into their lives [such as those in Lancaster, PA]. Our community used Lancaster as what we did not want."

Overall, Furlong said they are a closed-minded people. "The Amish are the most non-judgmental people in the world – if you have white skin," she said.

Furlong said she doesn't have a set spirituality that she follows since leaving the Amish. She purposely did not go to any other churches



**Author Saloma Furlong spoke to a large crowd at Cragin Memorial Library of her decision to leave her Amish community when she was 20 years old.**

the first time she left. Her reasoning was, she said, "if I went back [to the Amish] I would have to confess to going to other churches."

Since leaving for the second and final time, Furlong said she has visited many different churches and she and her husband were married in a Presbyterian church.

"We moved around a lot so we're still on a search for the right church in the area," she said. "We haven't found just the right community."

# Colchester School Board Nixes 90-Minute Storm Delays

by **Katelyn Kelleher**

The Board of Education voted to change delayed openings from 90 minutes to two hours at its Tuesday meeting.

Superintendent of Schools Karen Loiselle-Goodwin said the extra 30 minutes can make the difference having a school day or canceling it. She said due to the size of the town, the extra half hour would allow the town more time to clear the roads.

"They need about two hours to get everything done," she said.

Loiselle-Goodwin said there have been days school was canceled because the weather was not safe at 90 minutes, but would have been at two hours.

"We wanted to get the day in but we are never going to compromise student safety, ever. If we had that extra half hour, because of the timing of things, the weather would've changed to rain and we would've been okay," she said.

Board of Education member John Reeve asked if it were possible to leave the delay at 90 minutes and push it back for a bad storm, but Loiselle-Goodwin said it would be too complicated for parents, students and staff to figure out the length of the delay and for the administration to coordinate transportation and lunch waves.

"The decision was made in 1994 to have a consistent time," she said. "I don't know any district that doesn't have a consistent time because of all the logistics."

Loiselle-Goodwin said the goal is to have the school day, as "adding days at the end of June are not as effective as having continuity."

Reeve voted against the change, and wanted to take more time to look at it.

"I'm sort of against this stuff. I just think then it's three hours then, it's, gee, a half day," he

said. "I've got to think [90 minutes is] enough time to do it."

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The board also voted Tuesday in favor of a conceptual plan to reorganize the public works and facilities departments by moving the school's facilities manager into the public works domain. Loiselle-Goodwin said the facilities manager would focus on maintenance and no longer supervise the custodial staff. The director of facilities and operations would become the director of school operations and would provide direct supervision of the custodial staff.

The transfer of responsibility would begin to shift this year, but the reorganization would be in effect for the 2013-14 fiscal year and will not affect this year's budget. The director of facilities and operations' \$90,000 salary, currently funded 60 percent by the town and 40 percent by the schools, would be fully-funded by the schools when the position changes to director of school operations. The change comes as First Selectman Gregg Schuster said the current director of facilities and operations, Greg Plunkett, indicated he will likely retire in approximately one year.

Loiselle-Goodwin also discussed the plan to use town capital funds for a sidewalk on Halls Hill Road, which prevent students who attend Apple Tree Learning Center and Castle after school programs from being bussed across the street from the facilities. She said the transportation policy does not need to change but administration will need to formally notify families. At its April 4 meeting, the Board of Finance transferred \$24,684 from 2011-2012 budget savings for the project.

Also Tuesday, the school board voted in fa-

vor of a new algebra I model curriculum for the 2012-13. Director of Curriculum Barbara Gilbert said the new model will provide a uniform curriculum for all grades taking algebra I, starting in grade seven.

Gilbert and Director of Technology Frank Aloia also presented the 2012-15 educational technology plan, which the board approved. The state requires a revised plan every three years. Gilbert said she and Aloia assessed the number of students and teachers considered technology proficient and the new plan will ensure "all students have equitable access [to the most current technologies]."

The board voted in accordance with Loiselle-Goodwin's recommendation to keep the Board of Education and central office in Town Hall, rather than relocate to the community center upon the completion of the William J. Johnston Middle School/Community Center/Senior Center project. Loiselle-Goodwin said she, the first selectman, the schools' principals and the central office support staff believed it was best for communication purposes to remain in Town Hall.

The board approved project requests from two students. Former Bacon Academy student teacher John-Paul Williamson requested to conduct a study on students' perceptions of SAT exams for his Teacher Certification Program at the University of Connecticut.

Joshua Vinoski, a University of Hartford Educational Leadership doctoral student and a teacher in the Colchester school district since 1997, requested permission to complete a study examining stresses on parents of children with disabilities and the types of social support that help buffer the stress through a survey in the

school district's Digital Backpack. Vinoski said as the father of a child with a disability, his "current passion is working with parents of children with disabilities."

Vinoski added that he plans to share the conclusion of his research with the schools and parents.

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The board awarded two student groups for their achievements in competitions. The Bacon Academy jazz choir performed in a national Disney Jazz Celebration in California in Feb. The singers received a "rating of excellent", Vocal Jazz Best in Class, Vocal Jazz Bronze Award and junior Zach Grinfeld received Outstanding Student Accompanist.

The Bacon Academy Robocats Team placed third overall at a regional robotics competition in Virginia. The team won the Underwriters Laboratory Safety Award at the competition. They also competed in a competition in Hartford where they received an Entrepreneurship Award.

Colchester Learning Foundation President Fred Brown presented six \$500 grants to school staff and community members. The grants were awarded for a Bacon Academy sports team equipment shed, Bacon Academy picture communication storybooks for business communication, William J. Johnston Middle School's digital fitness program, an electric imaging machine at Bacon Academy and to the Colchester Historical Society and the Bacon Academy Robocats Team.

Brown said this was the foundation's sixth round of grants. "When we ask for donations for the Colchester Learning Foundation, this is what it all goes for," Brown said.



# Obituaries

## Portland

### Marjorie Kuskey

Marjorie Kuskey, 87, of Portland, passed away Friday, April 13, at Middlesex Hospital. She was the daughter of the late August and Jennie (Clark) Kuskey. Born Feb. 25, 1925, in Middletown, she was a Portland resident for all of her life. She also worked for Stone Container Company in Portland for over 40 years until her retirement.

She leaves her son and daughter-in-law, Kenneth and Mary Ellen Kuskey of Middletown; grandson, Paul Kuskey and his wife, Laura of Portland; three step-grandchildren; six great-grandchildren; nephews Robert and Edward Kuskey; and many grandnieces and grandnephews.

She was predeceased by her brothers and sisters, Clark, Ruth, Kermit and Ethel.

Funeral services were held Monday, April 16, at Portland Funeral Home, 231 Main St. Burial will be in Center Cemetery, Portland. Relatives and friends called Monday before the service, at the funeral home.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the charity of the donor's choice.

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

## East Hampton

### Dana M. Todd

Dana M. Todd, 45 (April 15, 1967 – April 16, 2012), of Glastonbury and formerly of East Hampton, died Monday at Hartford Hospital after a courageous battle with cancer.

Born in Raleigh, NC, Dana was the daughter of Edward S. Todd and the late Patricia A. Slack Todd Turner. Dana was a graduate of Woodrow Wilson High School in Middletown and received her degree from Eastern Connecticut State University.

She is survived by her beloved children, Jordyn Bisi and Ryan Bisi, who were the center of her world. Dave Bisi, Dana's former husband, will continue to love and nurture the twins, as he has done so well during Dana's illness. Dana is also survived by her father, Edward S. Todd, of East Hampton; her sister, Rachel Sarantopoulos, Rachel's husband, Christian Sarantopoulos, and their three children, Clara, Emma and John, all of Pomfret Center. Dana leaves behind many beloved family members and cherished friends.

Dana and her family are especially grateful to Alison Coe Roraback, Cindy Henry and Suzanne Thompson, for their unwavering love and extraordinary devotion to Dana.

Calling hours will be held today, April 20, from 5-8 p.m., at Glastonbury Funeral Home, 450 New London Tpke., Glastonbury. Funeral services will be held Saturday, April 21, at 11 a.m., at Buckingham Congregational Church, 16 Cricket Ln., Glastonbury. Burial services will follow in Green Cemetery, Glastonbury.

To visit Dana's online tribute or to leave a message of condolence, visit [glastonburyfuneral.com](http://glastonburyfuneral.com).

## East Hampton

### William C. Lunden

William C. Lunden, 83, of East Hampton, widower of Mary (Fazzino) Lunden, passed away Monday, April 16, at Middlesex Hospital. Born Jan. 29, 1929, in Manchester, he was the son of the late Carl and Edith (Andersen) Lunden.

William was a Navy veteran of the Korean Conflict and a member of the Tin Can Sailors (National Association of Destroyer Veterans). He worked for Bailey's Express as a truck driver. He retired from Bailey's in 1990 after 44 years of employment.

William is survived by a son, James Lunden of East Hampton; a daughter and son-in-law, Kathleen and Charles Race of East Hampton; and four grandchildren, William and Jennifer Lunden and Andrew and Nicole Race.

A service will be held today, April 20, at 10 a.m., at Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton. Burial followed in the Connecticut State Veterans Cemetery in Middletown. Calling hours were Thursday, April 19, at the funeral home.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Tin Can Sailors, P.O. Box 100, Somerset, MA 02726 or to the charity of the donor's choice. Family and friends may leave a condolence message by visiting [spencerfuneralhomeinc.com](http://spencerfuneralhomeinc.com).

## East Hampton

### Edgar A. Prince Sr.

Edgar A. Prince Sr., 92, of East Hampton, widower of Emma (Parsons) Prince, passed away Thursday, April 12, at the Connecticut Veterans Home in Rocky Hill. Born March 27, 1920 in Lowell, MA, he was a son of the late Ernest and Mary (Taugue) Prince.

Edgar graduated from Cambridge City Trade School in Cambridge, MA, and then joined the Massachusetts National Guard. He then transferred to the 82nd Airborne. Edgar served in the European Theater during World War II. He was discharged in September 1945 and married his love, Emma E. Parsons, on Sept. 29, 1945. They both lived in Connecticut their entire married life.

He is a past commander of American Legion Post 64. He is a past camp commander at Camp 55 Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, past department commander and past New England regional commander of the SOUVC, a member of the Connecticut Yankee All-American Airborne and a member of the Fowler Dix Park VFW 5095. He was a volunteer fireman and a member of East Hampton's Fireman's Recreational Association and past president of Middlesex County Fire and Police Association. Edgar was also a member of the East Hampton Congregational Church.

He is survived by his three sons, Alfred Prince of Colchester, Edgar Prince Jr. of Oakdale and Robert Prince of East Hampton; a daughter, Mary Alice Hale of Enfield; nine grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren; his brother Henry Prince of Jersey City, NJ, and several nieces and nephews.

The family would like to thank the staff at D Upper at the Rocky Hill Veteran's Home who took such good care of Edgar for the last three years.

A memorial service will be held Monday, April 16, at 3 p.m., at Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton. Burial will be at the convenience of the family in the State Veterans Cemetery in Middletown. Calling hours will be Monday from 1-3 p.m., at the funeral home.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the East Hampton Congregational Church Memorial Fund, PO Box 237, East Hampton, CT 06424.

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

## Colchester

### Raymond Boisvert

Raymond Roland Boisvert, 84, of Lebanon, beloved husband of 57 years of Shirley (Fritz) Boisvert, passed away Monday, April 16, at Apple Rehab in Colchester. Born Dec. 12, 1927, in Gardner, MA, he was a son of the late Napoleon and Regina (Lauzier) Boisvert.

Mr. Boisvert proudly served with the U.S. Army following World War II with the Army of the Occupation from 1946-48. He earned his Master's of Education degree from Suffolk University and taught business in Groton and Ludlow (Vermont) from 1957 to 1962 and then at RHAM High School in Hebron from 1962 until his retirement in 1988. During his career, he had been an advisor for the Future Business Leaders of America.

Raymond was a communicant of St. Francis of Assisi Church in Lebanon where he was also a Brother with the Knights of Columbus Council there. In his spare time, he enjoyed fishing and playing poker, but his greatest joy was found in his family, to whom he was ever devoted.

In addition to his loving wife, he is survived by four children, Katherine White of Windham, Susan Kelley of Brooklyn, Kenneth of Fayetteville, TN, and Richard, his wife, Kimberley and his stepdaughters, Ashley and Brittny Lovett, all of Lebanon; five grandchildren, Derek and Jared White and Carissa, Jennifer and Nicholas Kelley; two sisters, Sr. Lorraine Boisvert and Theresa Phaneuf, both of Pawtucket, RI; a brother, Reynald and his wife, Doris of Norwood, MA; and many nieces, nephews and extended family members and friends.

He was also predeceased by a brother, Robert.

Friends called Thursday, April 19, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. The funeral liturgy will be celebrated at 11 a.m. today, April 20, directly at St. Francis of Assisi Church, 67 West Town St., Lebanon. Burial will follow in the New Lebanon Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, donations in his memory may be made to the Lebanon Vol. Fire Dept., P.O. Box 51, Lebanon, CT 06249, or to the church.

The family would like to extend their heartfelt thanks to both the staff at Apple Rehab in Colchester and the staff of A-2 at the Wm. W. Backus Hospital for the wonderful care provided to Raymond.

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

## Colchester

### Mary (Rauluk) Prokop

Mary (Rauluk) Prokop, 97, wife of the late Walter Prokop, formerly of Miller Road, Preston, died Saturday morning, April 14, at Harrington Court in Colchester. Born in Bangor, ME, on Sept. 16, 1914, she was the daughter of the late Peter and Anna (Lasckiewicz) Rauluk.

On May 3, 1936, in St. Thomas Aquinas Church in NY she was united in marriage to Walter Prokop who died Jan. 8, 1982.

In the early years of Mary's career, she was a buyer for the former Reid & Hughes Department Store in Norwich, the Boston store in Maine and The Outlet Store in Providence, RI. In 1950, she and her husband established the Debonair Shop in Norwich, and at one time operated in three locations. She was dedicated to her business until 1989 when she retired.

Her love of family was unmatched and she will be dearly missed by all. Her son Walter remembers that at times his mother enjoyed antiquing, baking or just relaxing at home reading. We love you mom and we will miss you.

Surviving is her son, Walter R. Prokop and his wife Susan of Preston; two grandchildren, Walter P. Prokop of New London and Dana Grin and her husband Victor of Glastonbury; three great-grandchildren, Carley Prokop, Eric Grin and Elise Grin; two sisters, Olga of New Jersey and Pat of Florida; and several nieces and nephews.

She was predeceased by two brothers, Michael and Steve, and two sisters, Rose and Millie.

Funeral services and interment are private and under the direction of the Labenski Funeral Home.

## Hebron

### David Soto Jr.

David Soto Jr. of Hebron died Monday, April 9, at Hartford Hospital. He was born in Willimantic Jan. 12, 1968, to David and Virginia Soto.

David was a huge sports fan who enjoyed football games, concerts, movies, books and traveling and Holbrook Pond. He was a remarkable person who endured a lifelong disability that would not stop him from living his life to the highest potential. He attended the University of Connecticut and graduated with two degrees, one in engineering and another in business. He also attended Three Rivers College and earned a degree in computer aided drafting. He loved learning.

He is survived by father, David Soto of Willimantic; mother, Virginia LaForce of Woodstock; sister, Wanda Records of Columbia; three brothers, Steven and Michael LaForce of Woodstock and Joshua Fesik and aunt Florence Fesik of Windham; his grandmother, Florence Bjork who he loved very much from Douglas Manor of Windham Center; ex-wife Faith Maura and her three children of Clinton who he loved; best friends and caretakers Sue Dunnack of Hebron, Anna Ortiz of Willimantic, and Anna's grandson Joselito Santiago; and many aunts, uncles and cousins.

He was predeceased by Marcus and Laura Soto of Puerto Rico, grandfather Leo Edwards Sr., and step-grandfather Ed Bjork.

Relatives and friends attended a memorial for David at Sagrade Corazo DeJesus Church Thursday, April 19, at noon, on Club Road in Windham.

## Colchester

### Wasył Darczyn

Wasył Darczyn, 67, of Colchester and Amston, passed away Thursday, April 12, at Hartford Hospital.

He was a U.S. Army veteran of the Vietnam War, attaining the rank of captain and received the Purple Heart and the Bronze Star with three Oak Leaf Clusters.

A funeral service will be held at 9 a.m. Saturday, April 21, at the Belmont/Sabrowski Funeral Home, 144 South Main St., Colchester, followed by a 10 a.m. Service of Devine Liturgy at St. Mary Ukrainian Church, Linwood Ave., Colchester. Burial will follow with full military honors in New St. Mary Cemetery. Visitation will be from 3-8 p.m. today, April 20, at the funeral home.

## Amston

### Ellen J. Larson

Ellen J. Gardner Larson, 70, of Amston, wife of Douglas A. Larson, died Thursday, April 12, at her home.

Funeral arrangements are incomplete, and will be announced in a full obituary to be published at a later date.

The Thomas L. Neilan and Sons Funeral Home, 12 Ocean Ave., New London, is assisting the family.

## Colchester

### Jerome Januszewski

Jerome Januszewski, 64, of Colchester passed away Thursday, April 11 at the Wm. W. Backus Hospital in Norwich. He was born Aug. 8, 1947, in the Bronx, son of Frank and Ann Kindel Januszewski.

Surviving are his brother Tyrone of Colchester, three nieces, eight nephews and six great nieces and nephews. He was predeceased by his three brothers, Roger, Allen and Danny.

A memorial Mass will be held today, April 20 at 10 a.m., at St. Andrew's Catholic Church on Norwich Avenue, Colchester. Visitation will be one hour prior to the Mass at the church. Belmont/Sabrowski Funeral Home of Colchester is in care of arrangements.

## East Hampton

### Helen Smith Wallis

Helen Smith Wallis, 98, of East Hampton and more recently a resident of Middlesex Health Care in Middletown for the past four years, died Sunday April 15 after a gradual decline in health. Helen was born to the late August and Flora (Claus) Smith in Hackensack, NJ, on Jan. 24, 1914. She was the oldest of four children, Alice (Walsh), Theodore and Herbert and a stepbrother, Raymond Smith, all deceased. She married Carl Gustav Wallis in 1935 and was a major force in running a business with her husband, a professional photographer until his death in 1972.

She grew up mostly in Middletown, with many relatives living in the nearby area. As a young woman, she worked in the silk mills, the Russell Company and as a nanny for several families. For most of her adult life she lived in East Hampton, which she considered "home."

Helen was a member of the East Hampton Congregational Church for over 50 years, a resident of Bellwood court for over 30 years, a member of the East Hampton Senior Center where she enjoyed calling bingo, crocheting, playing cards, exercising and doing puzzles. She also enjoyed trips with her friends to every state in the US, including Hawaii. Helen was 89 when she cruised to Alaska with her daughter, Barbara. Helen was also a member of the Intergenerational Group and The Belltones at the Senior Center.

She was an inspiration to many, because of her positive attitude toward life and had made many friends both at the senior center and Bellwood Court.

Helen was a devoted and inspirational wife, mother, grandmother and great-grandmother who enjoyed her children and grandchildren for many years.

She is survived by two daughters and a son-in-law: Barbara Felgate of Portland and Diane and William Jaquith of Amherst, NH; and was predeceased by a daughter, Joanne Wallis in 1967. She is also survived by twelve grandchildren, twelve great-grandchildren and many nieces and nephews.

The family wishes to thank the staff at the Middlesex Health Care for their excellent dedication and care of Helen. The wake will be held Saturday, April 21, from 10 a.m.-noon, at Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton, followed by a celebration of her life at the East Hampton Congregational church, 59 Main St., East Hampton, at 12:30 p.m. A graveside committal service will be held at Lakeview Cemetery immediately following the church service.

In lieu of flowers, the family is requesting that donations be made to The East Hampton Congregational Church, the American Cancer Society, 825 Brook St., Rocky Hill, CT 06067 or the American Heart Association, 1 Union St., No. 301, Robbinsville, NJ 08691-4183. Family and friends may leave a condolence message by visiting [spencerfuneralhomeinc.com](http://spencerfuneralhomeinc.com).

## More Obituaries on Following Page



## Marlborough

### David E. Merry

David Edward Merry of Marlborough, beloved husband of Andrea (Trzcinski) Merry, passed away Monday, April 16, surrounded by his family at the Rocky Hill Veterans Hospital, after a long battle with Alzheimer's.

Born Nov. 22, 1937, in Lewiston, ME, he was the son of the late John C. and Gertrude



(Fitzgerald) Merry. David was a loving husband, father, brother, soldier and friend and will be greatly missed for his joyful nature, positive attitude, patience and most of all, his love.

David attended Chevrus High School in Portland, ME and St. Francis Xavier University in Nova Scotia, Canada, where he played on the X-Men football team. He was inducted into the Nova Scotia Sports Hall of Fame in 2003 for his extraordinary distinction and contribution to football. He was a proud veteran having served in the United States Army for several years. While in the service, David was awarded the Marksman Carbine (M-2); Expert (M-1 Rifle) and Good Conduct Award.

David loved his career as a social worker and was respected for his thirty seven years of dedication to Mount St. John's in Deep River as an L.C.S.W.

In addition to his loving wife, Andrea, David leaves behind his dear children, Holly Merry and her fiancée, Andrew Capelli, Kelly McCormick and her husband Cy, Kevin McGrath, Erin Annecharico and her husband Arthur, and Meaghan Kitchin and her husband, Benjamin; four grandchildren, Mia, Massimo, Ella, and Behr; his very special sister, Virginia Marriner of Portland, ME; a dear brother, Jack Merry and sister-in-law, Mary Joan of Cape Elizabeth, ME; loving sister, Nancy Bergere and brother-in-law, Orland of Doylestown, PA; as well as a mother-in-law, Laurie Trzcinski and numerous nieces and nephews and their families. David had the uncanny ability to touch the hearts of all of us with his unconditional love.

David's family would like to extend heartfelt gratitude and appreciation to every caregiver at the Rocky Hill Veteran's Hospital. For the last five years, David received outstanding care from the dedicated staff.

The celebration of his life will take place Saturday, April 21, with an 11 a.m. Mass of Christian Burial at St. John Fisher Church, 30 Jones Hollow Rd., Marlborough. Interment will be at the convenience of the family. There will be no calling hours.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that donations be made to The Ride for Alzheimer's Research, 9 Mystic Ln., Marlborough, CT 06447. This year's ride will take place Aug. 4, 2012. David was an avid believer in helping others. Once diagnosed, David participated in several research studies with the hope of finding a cure. This ride was established over three years ago in his honor. We now hope to continue this ride in his memory.

The Doolittle Funeral Home, 14 Old Church St., Middletown is handling the arrangements. Messages of condolence may be sent to the family at [doolittlefuneralservice.com](http://doolittlefuneralservice.com).

## Colchester Police News

4/10: Robert See, 48, of 78 Elm St., was charged with violation of probation, State Police said.

4/10: David Arkus, 32, of 29 12th St., Norwich, was charged with speeding and operating with a refused/suspended/revoked license or registration, State Police said.

4/11: Matheau Willette, 22, of 25 Victoria Dr., was charged with third-degree larceny, third-degree trespassing and conspiracy, State Police said.

4/12: Christopher Greenwald, 28, of 15 Kimball Rd., Lebanon, was charged with burglary and larceny, State Police said.

4/12: Cristina Johnson, 41, of 31 River Rd., Haddam, was charged with violation of a protective order, State Police said.

4/12: James O'Connell, 37, of 24 Lawrence Dr., Lebanon, was charged with violation of probation, State Police said.

4/12: Jeremy Borum, 26, of 103 Williams St., Norwich, turned himself in to Troop K on an outstanding arrest warrant for a third-degree forgery charge, State Police said.

4/12: Rachel Blandina, 20, of 23 West Ridge Rd., turned herself in to Troop K on an outstanding arrest warrant for a charge of second-degree failure to appear in court, State Police said.

4/12: Karen Hunt, 62, of 6 Bramblebush Rd.,

Manchester, was transported to Hartford Hospital with complaints of head and back soreness after losing control of her vehicle traveling on Route 2 West near exit 18. Hunt's vehicle veered off the left shoulder, flipped over and came to a final rest point near the left shoulder of the road. Hunt was charged with failure to drive right, State Police said. A Hartford Hospital spokesperson listed Hunt in good condition.

4/13: Michael Leith, 24, of 42 Williams Rd., was charged with DUI and failure to drive right, State Police said.

4/14: Nicole Klusek, 21, of 90 Middletown Rd., East Hampton, turned herself in on an active arrest warrant for third-degree larceny and conspiracy charges, State Police said.

4/14: David Wyman, 25, of 9 Woods Way, North Windham, was charged with DUI and making an improper turn, State Police said.

4/15: Aurora Krupke, 50, of 549 Hartford Rd., Salem, was charged with DUI, State Police said.

4/16: Joseph Santora, 24, of 24 Lakeview Ave., Salem, was charged with third-degree assault, possession of a controlled substance and disorderly conduct, State Police said.

4/16: Zachary Jascowski, 24, of 12 Setters Ln., was charged with DUI, State Police said.

## Marlborough Police News

4/13: Christine Lank, 40, of 141 Linwood Ave., Pawtucket, RI, was charged with DUI and speeding, State Police said.

## Hebron Police News

4/14: Nicholas Malley, 21, of 191 Lebanon Ave., Lebanon, was charged with first-degree providing a false statement, evading property damage/physical injury, failure to drive at a reasonable distance and interfering with an officer after he evaded an accident, State Police said.