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Identical twins will graduate from East Hampton High School at the top of their class Wednesday. Caleb Gates, left, is the Class of 2012 salutatorian and his brother Rosse is the valedictorian.

Twins Are Tops at East Hampton High

by Joshua Anusewicz

East Hampton High School seniors Rosse and Caleb Gates are exactly what you would expect of a set of twins: they are involved in most of the same sports, clubs and activities, have the same group of friends, and will even be attending the same college to study the same subject. And they look a whole lot alike, too.

"People who know us don't mix us up," said Rosse, smiling. "But there are some teachers and faculty that do. People will say, 'Hi, Caleb' or 'good job, Caleb,' and I just say thanks because it happens so often."

But this year, one thing in particular will set them apart - but not by much. When the pair, and the rest of the Class of 2012, graduates next Wednesday, Rosse will be the valedictorian and Caleb will be the salutatorian. There are no hard feelings, both of them said, but each will give you a different account of why one beat the other.

"Rosse puts in the extra effort and gets the grades, while I like to be more laid back and have some fun," Caleb said. "I found a nice balance."

On the other hand, Rosse said his top spot came from friendly competition. "We both try to do well and really push each other," Rosse said.

No matter who you believe, the two bright young men earned their spots. Both have been

heavily involved in activities throughout their four years at EHHS - both Caleb and Rosse were four-year members of the cross country team, played on the tennis team (Caleb was co-captain for two years) and both were members of the school band, Caleb on trumpet and Rosse on the xylophone. They were also members of the National Honor Society, the school's math team, and have both reached the level of Eagle Scout.

While excelling in all classes, Caleb and Rosse both said they particularly enjoyed their science and math classes. Both listed AP Biology with Leslie Kassman as one of their favorite classes at EHHS. "We were really given the chance to experiment and come up with a lot of our own ideas," Rosse said.

As another favorite, the boys listed AP History with Joan Mastro Monaco, where the tight-knit class of 15 students that braved the rigorous curriculum referred to themselves as "The Loyal 15." Rosse said the class would often come to school on Saturdays for lessons or would meet for weekend study sessions at the twins' home.

As both were in band together, they listed music teacher Andrew Groves as one of their favorite teachers, as well. "It was really like a family," Caleb said, "because there were kids

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Colchester Town, School Budgets Again Rejected

by Katelyn Kelleher

In a second referendum Tuesday, the town and education budgets were both defeated, but by much smaller margins than the previous referendum.

Unofficial results Tuesday showed the \$37.54 million Board of Education budget was defeated by 141 votes, with 1,240 voting 'yes' and 1,341 voting 'no.'

The \$12.81 million proposed town government budget was defeated by a slightly larger 195 votes with 1,192 voting 'yes' and 1,387 voting 'no.'

The overall proposed budget for this referendum was \$50.36 million, a \$136,451, or 0.27 percent decrease from the current fiscal year.

The proposed budget was \$51.06 million when it headed to its first referendum May 8; it was defeated by a nearly 2-1 ratio - 1,488 'no' votes to 742 'yes' ones.

Approximately 350 more residents showed up to vote at Tuesday's referendum.

Residents at the polls felt very strongly either way, but several voting against the budget did so because they are senior citizens on a fixed income.

Robert Garabedian said he would experience a property tax increase if this budget passed,

despite not making any home renovations in the 25 years he's lived there. "What the hell do they expect the older folks to do? It's ridiculous," he said.

Leroy Faulkner said he would like to see industry coming to town and for the residents to have a tax break.

A soliciting call from a political action committee pushing a 'yes' vote on the budget persuaded Ted Tredor to vote against the budget. "I have an unlisted number and I'm on the do not call list and I don't understand how they can get my number and persuade me one way or another," he said. "I just voted the opposite way they tried to persuade me."

Tredor called the budget a "politics game."

"Everyone's saying it's less than last year, blah blah blah," he said.

Dorothea Tredor agreed. "The first time around I think they made it extra high because they knew everybody was going to vote it down, so the next time they think people will vote 'yes,'" she said.

Sarah Fox, who graduated from Bacon Academy three years ago, voted 'yes' on the budget to maintain the educational services the town offers. "I know firsthand the severity of what

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The 'no's had it again in Colchester on Tuesday - although by a lesser margin than at the previous budget referendum. The proposed \$50.36 million town and school spending plan was shot down by a 1,387-1,192 tally.

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can happen when the budgets get cut," she said. "I want all the programs to still be there. They keep the kids off of drugs and in school."

Fox added that, as a music major in college, she worries the funding for the arts will be cut. "The funding is being cut every year; 2.5 music education jobs were lost this year from budget cuts," she said. "It's just so upsetting to me."

Not only would it be painful for Fox to see programs cut in her former school district, but she has a younger brother in sixth grade that cuts will affect. "I'm trying to get him into the arts and he's a huge sports player. He plays baseball and basketball and wants to start football next year," she said. "The next thing they're gong to cut is freshman sports, so if they cut that he's not going to get a chance to play that in a couple years."

At Tuesday night's Board of Education meeting, board members were clearly upset over the defeat, but tried to see the optimism of the narrower margin.

Board member Mike Egan called the 141-vote loss a "huge turnaround," and said that could be used to influence the decision on the next referendum. "We had almost no time [between the first referendum and second to make cuts]. We were battling wires," he said. "We have to immobilize that 1,240 [who voted 'yes'] and make sure they make their opinions known."

Board member John Reeve said the slim margin of defeat should say something to the Board of Finance when determining a bottom line. "If we go back to that board meeting and they say we have to cut another \$350,000, I'm going to have a big problem because I don't think that is reflective of what the community's saying," Reeve said.

Superintendent of Schools Karen Loiselle-Goodwin said going into a new fiscal year without a budget is extremely challenging for the school district.

"We order just enough supplies to get you through September," she said. "We can't offer staff contracts, even though some are replacing retirees, we can't bring on new people with the promise of a job. We have to offer them long-term substitute positions so, if they're a talented teacher, they may not like that because people get nervous especially if they have multiple offers."

"It really is problematic for us to start the year without a budget," she added.

Rumors swept through the town Wednesday, as approximately 200 residents showed up at the Board of Finance meeting to advocate for positions that were "options for consideration" to be cut from the town budget.

Board of Finance Chairman Robert Tarlov explained to the crowd the items for consideration – which included cutting the Senior Center and Youth and Social Services directors to combine the departments with Community Services, as well as cutting the fire chief – had not been brought before the board yet and were only "preliminary discussions."

Tarlov said that, as a result of accrued benefits that would need to be paid upon eliminating positions, cutting the director positions and combining the Senior Center with Youth and Social Services would have no positive effect in this budget. "It's tough to financially justify that in the short term," he said. "We're basically going to save \$83,000 to spend \$85,000."

Still, many residents reached out to the board to emphasize how valuable Youth and Social Services Director Valerie Geato and Senior Center Director Patti White are to the community.

Bacon Academy teacher and resident Joshua Vinoski called Geato a "champion of the youngest members" of the town. "You would be hard-pressed to find a struggling child, mother or father who does not know Val's name," he said.

Resident Goldie Liverant said to expect any one person to direct all three departments is not plausible. "Even thinking that the Senior Center can run without someone there that the seniors can go to or ask for help if they need it is unimaginable," she said.

A grant funding paid staff at the fire department left only the fire chief and administrative assistant as possibilities to eliminate without the town having to pay back grant money. First Selectman Gregg Schuster said the town has, in the past, had a volunteer fire chief, but said in the short time he had to come up with considerations, he didn't have answers yet as to who could take over the position. "I think it has the potential to be disastrous," he said, but added it would be the only position at the fire department "financially reasonable" to cut.

Resident John Jones spoke against the idea of cutting Fire Chief Walter Cox. "We've been volunteering a long time in this town and you just shot us in the foot," he said.

Deputy Chief Don Lee attested for Cox's, and the rest of the fire department's commitment to the town. "We have 103 volunteers and nine career staff. We're operating with a \$1 million budget, generating almost half a million in revenue and work tirelessly to protect 18,000 people in 47 square miles in this community," he said. "[Cox] gets paid for a 40-hour week and I can tell you there isn't a week that goes by where he doesn't work 80 or 90 hours, day and night."

Bacon Academy senior Justin Duperry asked the board to consider the repercussions of cutting any freshman athletics at the school. "If you cut these programs, you're going to have kids with nothing to do," he said, adding he thinks if the town doesn't offer sports, students could turn to drugs.

The board discussed the reduction options, which also included eliminating the assistant to the town clerk, reducing two Senior Center drivers from full-time to part-time, eliminating the fleet maintenance supervisor and the school resource officer, and eliminating capital expenditures for hydraulic tools for the fire department to replace outdated Jaws of Life, a building and grounds reserve for non-routine expenditures and a public works equipment reserve. The board took no action on any of the items.

The total net reduction in the town budget, if the board were to make all the cuts, would amount to \$227,180.

A revenue increase of \$196,628 was also presented, with \$20,000 revenue from transfer station fees and \$176,628 from an Education Cost Sharing grant.

A new sedan for the Senior Center, at \$15,500, was taken out of the budget after White said it could be eliminated.

The board asked Schuster to look into potential position eliminations in the building department and part-time employees in non-revenue producing departments.

Selectman James Ford said the board should look to save in areas where the town is outsourcing services.

The Board of Finance said it plans to make every effort to have another referendum before July 1, the start of the 2012-13 fiscal year.

The finance board met again Thursday night, after press time, to further discuss the budget.

Twins are Tops cont. from Front Page

from all grades. When we were freshmen, the seniors helped lead us, and we did the same when we were seniors."

The twins also shared memories from outside of the classroom, which included "mud runs" and pasta parties for the cross country team, the senior class trip to Washington, DC, and an eighth grade trip to the Museum of Science in Boston. But both admitted it was difficult to put the last 12 years - spent mostly with the same group of classmates - into the right perspective at this point.

"It's kind of hard to sum up," said Caleb. "Things don't hit me right away. But a week after graduation, I'll say, 'wow, it's over.' Right now, I'm just going strong to the end."

"Signing yearbooks, I was just thinking back on all of the things we've done together," Rosse said of his classmates. "But now, it's great seeing people get to do what they've always wanted to do."

That would include the Gates twins, who will both be headed to Storrs in the fall to study mechanical engineering in the Honors program at the University of Connecticut. The twins said they will be living in the same dormitory, but requested to live "as far apart as possible," Rosse said. "That way we can be part of different social groups so when we come together, we have twice the friends," he laughed.

While sharing the same major and the dream of someday owning their own business, neither is 100 percent sure yet which direction they want to go after Engineering 101. Rosse said he is leaning towards teaching and possibly getting into biomedical engineering, while Caleb said he wants to "make something new" by developing a new machine or gadget.

Don't bet against them doing just that, either. EHHS Principal John Fidler seemed confident in their abilities and their futures, having seen the two grow up as friends of his son, who

will be graduating along with the Class of 2012.

"They are inquisitive, creative, intellectual, trustworthy, dependable — the rare sort that I would entrust any task or endeavor to and know that once I had given them the task, it was as good as done," said Fidler. "And they have been this way as long as I have known them, and that has been for much of their educational career."

Fidler said he will never forget the school's variety show earlier this year when the twins - having never performed before in their lives - got up on stage and belted out a respectable rendition of the song "We Are Young" by Fun. Their reason: it was something they wanted to do before they graduated.

"Their spirit will be missed next year," Fidler said. "They have managed to be as close as twins can be, yet still remain unique in their individuality."

Fidler called the class as a whole a "caring and giving class" and added that they left "a definitive mark on our school."

That class has been led by Rosse and Caleb, who have been perfecting their speeches this week. While neither divulged details on what they would talk about, it's sure to include a little wry humor, another quality they both share. And after they toss their caps in the air on Wednesday, take trips to Six Flags and attend graduation parties between shifts at Scooter Bugs Ice Cream in Hebron this summer, and head off to college in the fall, they will recall their four years at EHHS with fondness, even though it hasn't quite sunk in yet.

"I think I'll miss the atmosphere," Caleb said. "It's like a home here."

The East Hampton High School Class of 2012 will graduate on Wednesday, June 20 at 6:30 p.m. at East Hampton High School, 15 N. Maple St.

'Yes' Signs Swiped From Town Green

by Katelyn Kelleher

Signs urging residents to vote 'yes' on the budget were taken from the town green shortly after they were placed there Sunday.

Theresa Kennedy, of the Advocates for Colchester's Exceptional Schools (ACES) political action committee, said signs paid for by ACES reading "Vote Yes for Education" were placed on the town green at 5:30 a.m. Sunday and by 7:30 a.m., four of the seven were missing.

Kennedy said ACES members checked with vendors from the town's tag sale over the weekend to see if they removed the signs and no one had seen anything.

She said this is not the first time ACES signs have gone missing. Before the first budget referendum May 8, Kennedy and her husband placed signs on the town green and at intersections and personal yards. Overnight, the signs on the green were taken, but the signs placed on private properties were left alone.

Colchester Police Sergeant Robert Suchecki said no formal complaint has been filed with the police department regarding the missing signs, but said similar incidents occur from time to time.

"Every year, even with local elections, there's some degree of tampering with the signs," he said. "It happens everywhere. Any time there's anything going on people can do that."

Suchecky said even signs promoting a Youth and Social Services event were taken recently.

East Hampton Council Weighs Joining New Planning Agency

by Joshua Anusewicz

With the recent merger of two of the state's regional planning agencies, East Hampton was asked at Tuesday's Town Council meeting to join the newly-formed Lower Connecticut River Valley Council of Governments.

At the meeting, Linda Krause, the acting director of the council of governments (COG), presented the plans to the council of the merger, which joined the Midstate Regional Planning Agency – which included East Hampton – with the Connecticut River Estuary Regional Planning Agency (CRERPA), of which Krause was the chair.

Since the 1950s, East Hampton had been part of the Midstate planning region, which also included Portland, Cromwell, Middletown, Middlefield, Durham, Haddam and East Haddam. But over the past several years, state legislators have looked into streamlining the regions, feeling that 15 regions were too many, Krause said. The new COG includes the members of Midstate, as well as Killingworth, Chester, Deep River, Westbrook, Essex, Old Saybrook, Lyme and Old Lyme. (The town of

Clinton has also yet to make a decision on joining, Krause said.)

Krause said that Midstate and CRERPA have always had a strong working relationship, although they were often used to accomplish different tasks. While CRERPA often focused on grants and programs that would improve environmental and Homeland Security matters, Krause said Midstate often focused on transportation. For example, Interim Town Manager Jeff Jylkka said grants obtained by the town through Midstate have allowed for road projects on Haddam Neck Road and Christopher Brook.

Aside from joining a larger grouping of towns, Krause also stated that the representation of each town would change, as well. While in Midstate, each town had one elected official and one appointed official; in East Hampton, the elected position is currently held by Andrew Tierney and the appointed spot is held by Mark Philhower, the chairman of the Planning and Zoning Commission. In the new COG, however, the representative of the town would

be the chief elected official of each town; Krause said this was done because the representative would be more "responsive" to governing body of the town.

Jylkka said joining the COG was "well worth it" for the purpose of acquiring grants, and the council members agreed. "I see no reason not to do this," said councilor George Pfaffenbach.

Philhower, who was in attendance, agreed. "If we don't join, those grants are going to be all gone," he said.

Jylkka said that to join the COG, the council would have to arrange a town meeting, similar to making changes to a town ordinance. There would then be a one year "transition period" beginning on July 1, Krause said, with the COG going into effect at the end of the 2012-13 fiscal year.

The council took no action on the matter Tuesday and will discuss it further at its next meeting.

Also at Tuesday's meeting, Jylkka gave a

brief update on the status of Bevin Bros. Manufacturing and the future of the company, which saw its nearly 200-year-old factory in town destroyed in a May 26 fire.

According to Jylkka, company owner Matthew Bevin is in the process of securing a new facility within East Hampton where the company can continue manufacturing bells. The location of the new facility, however, has not been announced.

Jylkka also said he met with Bevin to discuss "short-term and long-term goals" of the company and that the best route for Bevin Bros. is to request assistance through the state Department for Economic and Community Development (DECD). Jylkka also said he expects the town's Brownfields Redevelopment Agency to assist in the process of cleanup of the burned factory.

The next regular meeting of the Town Council is scheduled for Tuesday, June 26, at 6:30 p.m., at East Hampton High School, 15 N. Maple St.

East Hampton Town Council Names New Town Manager

by Joshua Anusewicz

The Town Council was all smiles at its regular meeting on Tuesday night, as it officially named Michael Maniscalco of Lincoln, IL as East Hampton's first permanent town manager in almost two years.

"You're going to love him," said councilor Barbara Moore happily.

The council chose Maniscalco from a pool of 30 candidates that applied over the past several months. With the help of consultant Lorraine Baltimore, who spoke with each candidate individually over the phone, the council was able to whittle the field down and unanimously chose Maniscalco at a May 29 executive session.

Chairwoman Sue Weintraub said Tuesday that the council worked together well, putting in "a lot of hours, long nights, weekends and holidays" to find the "ideal candidate for East Hampton."

"I think it went very well," said Weintraub of the decision-making process. "I think it brought us to a better place and brought a better solution to our community."

"This is a long time coming," she added.

While councilor Kyle Dostaler said the council was originally looking for an individual with town manager experience in the New England area, the council agreed they had found a unique candidate in Maniscalco. A native of Trumbull and a graduate of the University of South Dakota, Maniscalco, 30, holds a background in various forms of public service, including management, government, economic development,

finance and public administration.

Most recently, Maniscalco was the executive director of the Lincoln and Logan County Development Partnership (LLCDP) in Illinois, a nonprofit organization that led economic development for a group of communities consisting of roughly 30,000 residents. According to the council, in this position, Maniscalco led a group of local organizations to stop the closure of a state facility, retaining over 350 jobs and saving roughly \$78 million. He also led a campaign to develop a county-wide economic development "master plan" and a plan to pool residential and small business utilities in an effort to save individuals money on electric services.

Prior to his time at LLCDP, Maniscalco was employed as the senior program manager for the Autism Program of Illinois, where he directed operations for the state's 29,000 children with autism. He also led the National Leadership Grant Project for the Illinois State Museum, developing a database and website for The White House, which earned national recognition.

Maniscalco, who made his intention to take the town manager position official this week, said in a statement that he is "excited to work with the town of East Hampton, the council, town employees and citizens."

"East Hampton has great schools, a quaint business district, caring citizens, and is full of opportunities," Maniscalco added.

Next month, Maniscalco is expected to move to East Hampton with his wife, Sabohat, who is from Uzbekistan and is a Fulbright scholar. The council added that the couple has a baby on the way, as well. "We look forward to calling East Hampton our home and raise our family there," he stated.

The arrival of Maniscalco will be a welcome

sight to the community, as the position of town manager has been a virtual revolving door in recent years. The town hasn't been served by a full-time town manager since Jeffery O'Keefe held the position; O'Keefe would eventually resign amid controversy related to the firing of Police Chief Matthew Reimondo in 2010. Since then, the position has been held by former Public Works Director Robert Drewry, former Southington Town Manager John Weichsel, former probate judge Anne McKinney and, most recently, town Finance Director Jeff

Jylkka.

Maniscalco's starting salary will be \$115,000. As a point of comparison, O'Keefe's starting salary was \$120,000 when he was hired in 2008, and his salary at the point of his 2010 resignation was \$123,600.

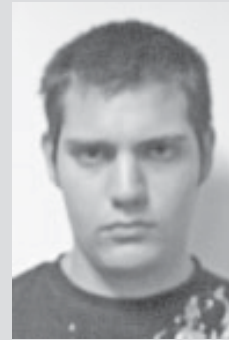
Jylkka will continue to serve on interim basis until Maniscalco arrives in East Hampton, which is expected to happen on Monday, July 9. Weintraub said that Maniscalco is expected to march alongside the Town Council in the Old Home Days Parade on Saturday, July 14.

Police Arrest Teen on Drug Charges

by Joshua Anusewicz

A three-month investigation yielded the arrest of an East Hampton teen for possession of drugs and the intent to sell, Sgt. Garritt Kelly said this week.

On Tuesday, East Hampton Police arrested James Jerjies, 18, of 3 Curry Ln., and charged him with possession of marijuana, possession of marijuana with intent to sell, possession of hallucinogens, possession of hallucinogens with intent to sell, posses-



James Jerjies

sion of drug paraphernalia and operation of a drug factory.

The arrest came after a search of the Curry Lane residence on Tuesday, Kelly said. According to Kelly, more than three ounces of marijuana, 38 grams of hallucinogenic mushrooms, packaging material, a scale, used heroin packaging material and used syringes and needles were recovered from the scene.

Kelly said the three-month investigation into Jerjies was a combined effort with Manchester Police, Glastonbury Police, and the East Central Narcotic Task Force.

Jerjies was held on \$5,000 bond. He appeared in Middletown Superior Court on Wednesday for arraignment.

Top Two Colchester Students Add to Their Achievements

by **Katelyn Kelleher**

With awards, achievements, and hobbies almost too numerous to count, the students at the top of Bacon Academy's Class of 2012 certainly didn't need to "fluff" their college applications.

Christine Rehr earned the top spot in her class of 241 students, though she admitted she didn't really intend on being valedictorian. "I always knew I was kind of towards the top of my class," she said, but didn't know she was the top until administrators called her and salutatorian JohnMichael Stanavage down to the office.

Rehr is headed to Amherst College in Amherst, MA in the fall. It's also something she didn't intend on.

"I hadn't planned to go to Amherst, not at first, but it kind of grew on me," she said. Worried that the small college of 1,795 students would be too small, she was considering larger schools, like the University of Connecticut and Boston College. "I thought [Amherst] was going to be boring," she said. "I went there and visited and stayed overnight and realized you can't possibly get to know all these people."

Rehr will be one of a prestigious few who even get accepted to the school. According to admission statistics, of the 8,461 applicants for the Class of 2015, only 13 percent were admitted. "I know they accept a lot of valedictorians in that school," she said.

She plans to study chemistry, her favorite academic in high school, and go into either research or medicine. "I'm kind of split right now," she said.

A strong background in science and math has set her up for college. Rehr is a member of the Bacon Academy Junior Engineering Technical Society (JETS), which placed fifth in the nation in its division recently, a member of the Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) club and the captain of the math team. She received class awards in Advanced Placement (AP) chemistry, AP English and AP calculus.



Christine Rehr

Her academic achievements also include honors in Spanish II and freshman English, a certificate of achievement in child development, the Smith Book Award, and recognition as a national AP scholar, having scored fives on AP exams in chemistry, language composition and biology and four in calculus. She scored all fives on the Connecticut Academic Performance Test. She was a high honors student all four years at Bacon Academy.

Bacon Academy Principal Jeffry Mathieu said Rehr is "just one of those students that has a thirst for learning."

"When I've seen her in the classroom, she's the type of student who is always looking to fully understand the concept," he said.

At a scholarship night on May 31, Rehr received the Bacon Academy Board of Trustees Senior Math Award, the Valedictorian Prize, the

Bacon Academy Biology Scholarship and the Renee W. Snell Memorial Scholarship, given to seniors exemplifying enthusiasm toward Bacon Academy.

In her high school career, Rehr was also a member of unified sports, the cross country, indoor and outdoor track teams, the dance team, a homeroom mentor, part of the UConn Mentor Connection and a camp counselor.

Rehr is looking forward to heading off to college, but said she wouldn't mind more time at Bacon. "I wish I had a few more years of high school," she said.

Stanavage, who will be heading to UConn in the fall to study biology and medicine, said being the salutatorian of his class is an "honor and privilege."

"It goes to show hard work and dedication definitely has paid off," he said. "It's going to be a huge honor at graduation to address my class before we all go off to different things."

Stanavage has an equally impressive list of attributes. A four-year high honors student with a 4.0 grade point average, Stanavage received honors awards in English, social studies, U.S. history, Spanish II and chemistry III, a Junior Excellence of Honors award, a Culture Award for Spanish and a Culinary Excellence award. He also received scores of five in each category on the CAPT and was a member of JETS, the STEM club, the math team and was a homeroom mentor.

He credited his success to the teachers at Bacon. "They taught me lessons I'll take with me for the rest of my life," he said.

Choosing UConn was sensible for Stanavage. "I chose it because it's close and my father went to UConn and because of how great the school was," he said.

On scholarship night, Stanavage received the Bacon Academy Board of Trustees Foreign Language Award for Spanish, the Alfred D. Goldstein Memorial Salutatorian Prize and the



JohnMichael Stanavage

Jerry Boris Minch Memorial Scholarship for a graduating senior pursuing a career in a medical field.

Rehr and Stanavage were recognized by the Board of Education at Tuesday's meeting, where Mathieu pointed out that both are going into science fields.

Board of Education Chairman Ronald Goldstein called them the town's "academic all-stars."

"You are the culmination of a successful career here at Colchester and it's so impressive to hear not only the list of academic accomplishments but also co-curricular accomplishments," he said.

Both Rehr and Stanavage will address their classmates at commencement next week, which will be held Monday, June 18, at 6 p.m. at Bacon Academy.

Colchester Selectmen to Seek Feedback on Donation Policy

by **Katelyn Kelleher**

The Board of Selectmen at its meeting last Thursday, June 7, requested a town survey for public feedback before taking action on a donation policy for the town's Youth and Social Services.

At previous meetings, the department's director, Valerie Geato, has explained there is an abundance of funds in the food bank account and suggested developing a donation policy to best utilize contributions.

At last week's meeting, First Selectman Gregg Schuster said he first wanted to recognize the town's generosity, but said the food bank receives many monetary donations and food donations from local grocery stores and "we can't spend it fast enough."

"It'd be a shame to have that money just sit there and not serve a purpose," he said. "Nobody in Colchester is going to go hungry. We have plenty of food, whether it be bought or donated, so it's a struggle right now what to do with that balance."

Selectman Stan Soby said the Colchester Fuel Bank could use those excess funds and suggested the board come up with "language with specifications on how to move that money to the fuel bank so the money is still going toward a purpose."

Selectwoman Rosemary Coyle said anyone donating could fill out a card indicating where they would like the money to go. "One of the choices could be to use where it's most needed," she said.

The selectmen took no action on the donation policy, but agreed a survey to gain input from the public would be helpful in making a decision.

Also at last week's meeting, the selectmen authorized the first selectman to enter into an agreement between the town and the state for the Community Farmland Preservation Program.

The first-year program is a partnership between the state Department of Agriculture and the town for the "acquisition and ownership of development rights to agricultural land" for the purpose of preserving agricultural land for farming and food production.

Town Planner Adam Turner said the agreement certifies that Colchester qualifies as a community farm town based on several criteria. "You can then apply for grants and funding [through the program]," he said.

A town ordinance that has been on the books since 1982 regarding Sunday alcohol sales was also discussed. The ordinance permits the sale of alcohol between noon and 5 p.m. on Sundays. State statute now allows alcohol to be sold between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m.

Coyle suggested following the state statute, to make it "easier for people to know when to use the businesses."

Selectman Greg Cordova agreed, adding, "It's a pain in the neck to have our officers on patrol for this to make sure from [10 a.m. to

noon] you're not open."

Schuster said he will work with the town attorney to have the ordinance repealed.

The selectmen also scheduled a public hearing for the Connecticut Neighborhood Assistance Act Tax Credit Program for Thursday, June 21, before the regularly-scheduled Board of Selectmen meeting. The program provides tax credit to business firms that make cash investments in qualifying community programs conducted by tax exempt or municipal agencies.

Turner said the program came as a request from the Colchester Land Trust, so "people who contribute in certain ways to the Colchester Land Trust can take a state tax credit of the money they contribute to that as a part of them being qualified by the state," he said. "The tax break is not from us; it's from the state."

The selectmen accepted a \$3,000 grant contract with the Connecticut State Library to implement the American Library Association's Every Child Ready to Read (ECRR) program, "targeting Colchester's parents, caregivers, and teachers of young children ages 0-5" by conducting workshops for children and parents to teach practices for developing early literacy skills, a memo from Cragin Memorial Library Director Kate Byroade said. The grant will pay for library staff training, publicity and implementation materials as well as the ECRR kit.

At Tuesday's Board of Education meeting,

Byroade said because the objective of the program is to teach parents and early childhood educators, "this has a lifespan beyond the one year of the grant."

Also at last week's meeting, Schuster updated the selectmen on the status of the town's animal control officer. Former ACO Don Favry, who served as ACO for both Colchester and Marlborough, resigned from his position last month during an investigation of allegations of misconduct.

Schuster said the town is in discussion with Marlborough, East Haddam, East Hampton and Hebron about forming a regional ACO facility. Currently, East Haddam and East Hampton work together and Hebron has its own pound.

"There would be a central dispatcher function employee who would be a regular employee and we'd probably have a full-time professional and a few part-timers to help out on coverage," Schuster said. "We have a lot more work to be done, but thinking right now, East Haddam has done significant upgrading on their pound, so the working premise is that would be the primary facility and Colchester would maintain an overflow facility."

He added the plan is still in its infancy. "To get two towns to agree to something takes a lot. Five towns could be a while," he said.

The next Board of Selectmen meeting will be Thursday, June 21, following a public hearing at 7 p.m. at Town Hall.



Residents Mary Morse and Walter Wennberg get a lot of looks when they drive around in their collection of American Ramblers from the 1960s. Pictured left, Morse stands beside her reliable 1967 Rambler with over 400,000 miles, which she has driven for the last 35 years. Right, Morse's "new" Rambler is actually a 1966 model.

Riding Along in a 46-Year-Old Automobile in Marlborough

by **Katelyn Kelleher**

Cruising down the streets of Glastonbury, noticing every head turn as the bright green 1966 American Rambler hit the corner of their eye, I asked Walter Wennberg if this kind of attention is typical.

"All the time," he replied, as he pointed out the functions and capabilities of the antique vehicle. Wennberg and his wife, Mary Morse, Marlborough residents, own not one, but three Ramblers from the 1960s. "Usually they ask me the year."

It proved true. Even standing next to the car, within minutes a curious passerby approached with a "Hey, what year is that, man?"

A ride in the car nearly had me questioning what the year was. With seatbelts reminiscent of those found on an old wooden rollercoaster—definitely no shoulder strap—and a dashboard with little more than a dial-turn radio, it wasn't until I noticed Wennberg's GPS, looking so out of place on the windshield, that the age of the machine really set in.

At 46 years old, the '66 is Wennberg and Morse's "new" car. And at only 93,000 miles, it must seem it compared to Morse's current

ride, a 1967 Rambler that has traveled 419,000 miles and counting.

When they purchased the '66 in November, the car needed a new transmission. Other than that, Wennberg works on the vehicles himself, fixing up the interior of the '66 and doing regular maintenance. The source for Wennberg's mechanical skills was simple. "Well, I grew up in the '50s," he said. "I never got away from it. I can't stand not being able to fix something."

Wennberg opened the hood to show how easily-accessible every part of the engine is.

"The manual for these cars are only a half an inch thick," he said. "Nowadays there might even be two manuals for these cars and most of it is for the electronics."

Morse, on the other hand, never really set out to have a Rambler; it just fell into her lap. She bought the '66 Rambler 35 years ago, for \$350. "At the time, I needed a car...and [Wennberg] seemed like he was a mechanic-type person and I decided I would bring him along with me," she said.

At the time, the car was 10 years old and had been driven minimally by a retired school teacher who, in a decade, had only put about

20,000 miles on it. "She never drove it in the snow," Morse said.

Morse said she has gotten her money's worth "hundreds of times over" on the car and when it finally can't be driven, she will take over the wheel of the '66.

The simpler the better is Morse's outlook on driving a car without all the modern amenities. "You concentrate on your driving more; it's kind of hard to explain it," she said. "A vehicle is to get from point A to point B. And it's comfortable. Things have gone wrong, but it has a good engine."

They own a third Rambler, which Morse said they keep in case something goes wrong with her car, "that I'd be able to just jump in."

Not much has gone wrong, though, which Morse and Wennberg attribute to the quality construction. "It's a unibody construction like most cars are nowadays," Wennberg said. "They dipped it into a galvanizing solution at the factory seven times."

Finding parts for the cars hasn't been too difficult, either. He explained in the 1960s there were two main parts manufacturers, so they were interchangeable between many makes and

models. "We belong to a Rambler club and we get information about the Ramblers and we get a list of parts that we can get from NAPA," he said.

Morse said Ramblers were somewhat innovative in their time and while there is rust on the car, it's very little compared to what one would expect for a car nearly half a century old.

In 2007, Morse bought a Dodge Caravan and regretted it, saying she won't go back to that kind of vehicle. "I wasn't driving my [Rambler] at the time because it needed a new spring or something for maybe three, three and a half years," she said. "We had problems [with the Caravan] and of course when you have a computerized vehicle it's basically it. You're at the mercy of the garage."

Plus, she added, "I'm not really a van person."

Morse and Wennberg don't seem like they would be, either. It wouldn't be fitting for the unique duo, with an appreciation for old accordions, to get around town in a run-of-the-mill minivan. So for now, the Ramblers will keep ramblin' on.

Race for 33rd Senate District Heats Up

by **Joshua Anusewicz**

When state Sen. Eileen Daily announced in May she wouldn't be running for the 33rd Senate District for the first time in almost 20 years, the floodgates opened for a rush of candidates to compete for the open seat. But after a month has passed and the respective parties have held their conventions, the race has begun to take shape – with one exception.

At their conventions last month, Democrats tabbed state Rep. Jim Crawford of Westbrook over Mary Ellen Klinck of East Haddam and former state Rep. Dean Markham, while Republicans nominated Neil Nichols of Essex, who immediately announced he would step down to allow his opponent, Art Linares of Westbrook, to take the nomination. Higganum's Melissa Schlag unanimously received the Green Party nod and will be running as an independent, as well.

But the seemingly-straightforward race took a turn this month, when Klinck announced she would force a primary against Crawford to be held this August. Though Klinck was unable to be reached this week for comment, she has

stated in published reports that her reasoning is based on the compacted campaign for the nomination that did not give the candidates ample time to meet with voters and local town committees.

Crawford was also unavailable for comment this week, but has announced he will accept the challenge for a primary. At the Democratic convention, Crawford narrowly edged Klinck by a 31-27 to get the nomination for the 33rd District, which represents Colchester, East Hampton and Portland, as well as Chester, Clinton, Deep River, East Haddam, Essex, Haddam, Lyme, Old Saybrook and Westbrook.

Both candidates have substantial experience in state government. Crawford is currently serving his first term as state representative for the



Jim Crawford

35th Assembly District, which covers Westbrook, Killingworth and Clinton. Prior to that, Crawford was a teacher in Westbrook for over 30 years and also served on the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) for two terms.

Klinck is the former state commissioner on aging, and has served on the East Haddam Board of Selectmen, the Democratic Town Committee (as chairperson) and 33rd District State Central Committee. She is also an experienced small business owner, having owned a restaurant, an insurance agency and a real estate office.

The Republican candidate Linares, though not participating in a primary, will also be a name to watch. Just 23 years old, Linares has



Mary Ellen Klinck

packed in some worthwhile experience, having served as a legislative aide in Washington to U.S. Sen. Marco Rubio of Florida and helped found a solar power plant company in Connecticut. He also served on the Student Senate while studying at the University of Tampa in Florida.

Another candidate that's made noise is Schlag, who was one of the more vocal residents against the controversial Haddam Land Swap. In opposition, she helped form the Citizens for Protection of Public Lands (CPPL), where she served as executive director.

With two of the candidates locked in, the Democratic candidate will be decided at an Aug. 14 primary. All registered Democrats of the towns in the district will be allowed to vote.



Art Linares

Three Portland Highlanders Top Class of 2012

by Joshua Anusewicz

There's a unique situation at the top of this year's graduating class of Portland High School. Once you get past the small size of the class – just over 80 students – you'll notice, as usual, there's a valedictorian, Caroline Enright. But this year, there was a virtual tie for second in the class, and both Kevin Paley and Rachel DeBarge were selected as salutatorian.

Their grades "were just so close, we chose both," said PHS Principal Andrea Lavery.

And it doesn't seem to matter to any of the three, who are close friends from a very close group that graduated together Thursday as the Class of 2012. But while the three are close, what they accomplished in high school and what they have planned for the future are quite different.

"These are three hard workers who have been involved all over the school," said Lavery, who called the group "really fun kids."

Caroline was a four-year member of the cross country team and the winter and spring track teams, serving as captain of all three her junior and senior years. She was also the secretary of the student senate, a member of the Garden Club, National Honor Society, and played flute in the school band. Her favorite class was history, particularly the class taught by Charles Ryan.

Rachel was also heavily involved with athletics, playing four years of soccer (one as a captain), three years of basketball and outdoor and indoor track. She was also a member of the student senate and National Honor Society. She preferred her math and chemistry classes, especially the class taught by William Varas.

Kevin served as the president of the student senate and the National Honor Society, while also playing bass clarinet in the school band. He was often involved with theatre, including Young People's Center for Creative Arts

(YPCCA) in East Hampton. He most enjoyed his English classes at PHS, and said his favorite teacher was music instructor Karen Novak.

Ask them what they think about their high school career ending and you'll get answers as varied as their interests.

"I'm excited," said Kevin confidently.

"I've been crying," Caroline said with a laugh.

"I'm a little nervous," said Rachel.

But one thing all of them agreed on was that the Class of 2012 has some great memories to bring along with them. This year alone brought many memorable moments, including a band trip to Disney World in Orlando, FL, and Senior Skip Day, when the entire class played hooky and barbecued at the beach. The memories have brought the small class much closer together, making them "all friends," Kevin said.

"Especially over the last month, we've become really tight-knit," Rachel added.

But with high school complete, each of the students in the class will move on to bigger and better things, proudly representing their school and their community. The three top grads are no exception, either: Caroline plans to attend the University of Connecticut and study history in the Honors program, in hopes of perhaps becoming a lawyer. Rachel will head to Boston to attend Northeastern University, where she will study biochemistry, in hopes of attending medical school after she graduates. Kevin will be making the furthest trip, planning to study theatre at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles.

All three admitted to being excited, anxious and nervous all at once at the thought of leaving Portland High School behind.

"It doesn't feel real yet," said Caroline.

"It hasn't sunk in that we're not coming back," said Rachel.

But each of them have made the most of their



The Portland High School Class of 2012 actually features two salutatorians this year, as well as a valedictorian. The valedictorian, Caroline Enright, is shown at center, flanked by Kevin Paley and Rachel DeBarge, who finished in a virtual tie for second place in the senior class, which graduated last night.

time at PHS, a fact reflected in their graduation speeches, which show that education doesn't just happen in the classroom. The speeches touch on the memories of 12 years and their high school careers and how they can use these memories to guide them in the future, as well as being an individual and not allow others around you to affect your decisions – all sage advice for the graduating class.

And from this year's seniors – and the top three students in particular – Lavery would expect nothing less. "This class is one of our best," she said.

The Class of 2012 graduated at Portland High School yesterday, June 14, after press time. A full article on the commencement ceremony will appear in next week's issue.

Top Two RHAM Students Eager for New Chapter

by Geeta Schrayter

Graduation is days away. For RHAM seniors, that means they'll soon walk the hallways they've strolled over the last four years for the final time as students. The lockers they stuffed with books and papers will be cleared for someone else. The hangout spots, the lunchtime antics, the favorite teachers and not-so-favorite assignments will all become memories.

The change will be harder for some than others. Some will inevitably dread the end of high school and stepping into the unknown that comes with their diploma. But for others, like Brian Garcia and Connor McBride, this year's valedictorian and salutatorian, respectively, the change is being welcomed and impatiently awaited.

"I want to go to college," said Garcia. "That's all I can think about."

McBride shared similar feelings.

"As much as we love it here, we want to get the hell out," he laughed. "All good things must come to an end."

And as the two of them sat in the principal's office Tuesday, not to confess to some wrongdoing, but to reminisce about their time at RHAM, it became apparent that their high school career was in fact "a good thing."

Both students, who are Hebron residents, have been active in various capacities throughout their time at RHAM. Garcia has been a part of varsity cross country and track since freshman year, refereed soccer, organized benefit shows at the school, been in various bands and is the president of the National Honor Society.

McBride is a part of Model UN, has participated in the Newspaper Club, umpired and — "most prominently," he said — is an EMT with the Hebron Fire Department along with Garcia.

"We both went to the same EMT class," Garcia noted, adding the two of them had been friends since middle school. "We were on the same team in middle school and we've been in all the same classes pretty much."

This year, they had all but one class together. But it'll also be the *last* year they share classes, as they'll be headed to different schools come fall.

McBride is bound for Tufts University where he plans to study pre-med biology or biochemistry, while Garcia plans to study cognitive science and neuroscience because "biochem makes me want to cry."

"I'm going to Yale in New Haven," he said.

To that, Principal Scott Leslie responded, "Yale in New Haven as opposed to Yale in...?" The comment drew laughter from all.

"You know what?" Garcia rebutted jokingly, "it would be pretentious to assume [the reporter] necessarily knew where it was!"

The laughter and easygoing exchanges between Garcia, McBride and Leslie explained why the two couldn't pick out a favorite teacher or moment from their time at RHAM.

"In fear of forgetting anyone I'm not going to say any particular teacher," said Garcia. "They know who they are; they know that they're loved."

"I feel the same," McBride added. "We've both had a lot of teachers that have been very influential. ... I don't think we've had a bad teacher here ever."

When asked their favorite moments from their time at RHAM, the two said favorite classes would be more appropriate.

"It's not so much any one moment, but certain classes. The group of students in them – every day is sort of an adventure," laughed McBride.

"Our graduating class is a really great group of kids," said Garcia. "The jokes and the rapport we have with our teachers and administrators – it's a very unique kind of bond," he said, adding it made certain classes and interactions "very interesting."

While neither student could pinpoint an aspect of their time at RHAM that they'd miss the least or didn't like, both were able to say they were looking forward to the freedom that college affords and choosing their own classes, as opposed to the structure of high school.

"The more structured environment here is not really conducive to what I care about, like science and biology," said McBride.

"It's funny from this side of things," added Leslie, "when you see these guys who are clearly so mature – they just don't need the structure of high school anymore."

Along with their maturity, the students were humble, too. Both explained that while they always sought to do their best, neither had set it in their mind to earn the top ranking. McBride said he never really cared about class rank, but it was "certainly nice" to learn, and validated the work he put in over the last three years. Similarly, Garcia said being named valedictorian was "fantastic" but it wasn't the full indication of his high school performance and experience.

Rather than a number being the motivation, Garcia said he had a mother who'd instilled the importance of education in him from a very young age.

"My mom was very formative in developing



Kevin Garcia, left, and Connor McBride, the RHAM Class of 2012 valedictorian and salutatorian, respectively, are ready for college. "All good things must come to an end," McBride said.

the whole 'you need to work as hard as you can in school before you do anything else or you won't be doing anything else' [mentality]," he said.

And for McBride, having his sights set on the future kept him focused.

"Medicine has become a passion of mine," he said. "It's the only profession I can imagine myself in. Pre-med and med are very selective so I figured it's best to just start now and be the best student I can."

Excitement and anticipation aside, both students said they'd miss their friends but had plans to keep in touch, acknowledging that now, they'd just see each other less.

In addition, there was one more thing Garcia said he'd miss.

"Well, I mean, Scott Leslie! How could I not? His smiling face as I walk in every morning – later and later lately – just motivates me," he laughed.

While they both joked about not having much left to do (apart from writing speeches and a 25-page research paper that was due Thursday which, on Tuesday, neither had really started),

neither McBride nor Garcia planned to relax over the summer.

In fact, both are actively looking for jobs. "I need a job. So if someone is hiring, the valedictorian and salutatorian need jobs!" plugged Garcia. "We're really hard workers... college is expensive."

McBride added, "Not even kidding – put that in [the paper]. I really need a job."

Both said their parents wouldn't be pleased if they spent the summer unemployed.

But even so, hopefully this year's valedictorian and salutatorian will find a little time to enjoy the culmination of years of hard work. A small respite would be well deserved before the next chapter of their education and presumably just as much, if not more, hard work begins in the fall.

The RHAM High School Class of 2012 commencement exercises will take place Wednesday, June 20, at 6 p.m., outside at the school, 85 Wall St., Hebron. In case of inclement weather, the ceremony will begin at 6:30 p.m. in the school gymnasium.

New Pilot Teacher Evaluation Plan to Start in Colchester

by **Katelyn Kelleher**

Colchester schools will implement a pilot teacher evaluation plan this upcoming school year in line with a state bill passed May 8.

Director of Curriculum Barbara Gilbert said the pilot evaluation will involve 10 teachers in each of the schools.

The plan should meet the state's requirements listed in State Bill 458 for teacher evaluation. "It just needs to meet the state guidelines for four levels of effectiveness and it has to have a clear level of how effectiveness needs to be determined," Gilbert said.

Gilbert said the Board of Education formed a Professional Growth and Learning Committee last summer to begin developing the new plan to prepare for the state's requirements. The committee comprises of teachers Joe Anastasio, Maddalena Scrivano, Linda Kurczy, and Marcy Lavoie; specialists Christie Williams-Kahn, Katherine Wonderly, Carol Benson and Danielle King; administrators Jacqueline Somberg, Amity Goss, Deborah Sandberg, Jennifer Olsen and Linda Iacobellis; central office staff members Gilbert and Katherine Shaughnessy; Colchester Federation of Teachers Union President Frank Gionfriddo; and Board of Education Chairman Ronald

Goldstein.

The committee started discussion on an evaluation plan before knowing what the state would require. "We didn't know what the state was going to do with their plan but we just decided to get a group of people together," she said. "We feel really good about what we've done."

The plan for Colchester schools is being implemented by the town, not the state, and will be reviewed at the end of the 2012-13 school year and the Professional Growth and Learning Committee will present the results to the Board of Education in May 2013. "We'll have tried it for a year, we'll be able to tweak our plan and be happy with what we've got," Gilbert said.

The following year, school districts in the state will be required to develop a teacher evaluation plan adhering to the state's criteria.

The state will be piloting its new teacher evaluation in 10 school districts statewide, not including Colchester. Three dozen districts statewide sought to participate in the pilot program. The state then narrowed the list down to 16 and announced the 10 that would participate on June 1. Colchester was not selected,

which is why the district will pilot its own plan for the upcoming year.

The plan will require students to fill out evaluations on their teachers, but, Gilbert said, this is already common practice among many teachers throughout the district. "Many of the people on the committee already do that," she said. "It's something that's so useful."

Gilbert said the state, when the plan is finalized, might require feedback from both parents and students, something Colchester schools already places value in. "We do have a lot of feedback and we have a really active website and post information about the classes so parents can ask questions and whatnot," she said. Additionally, parent-teacher conferences at the elementary school level garner input from parents.

For in-class evaluations, non-tenured teachers will be observed yearly by colleagues and administrators and rated by a rubric.

Gilbert said evaluation of tenured teachers is not currently in practice, but with the new plan they will be observed and evaluated every three years.

The teachers will be rated in four areas: professionalism, instruction, planning and the

classroom environment on a scale of not demonstrated, beginning, accomplished and distinguished.

Teachers will be required to attain an achievement level based on their seniority. First-year teachers must be rated beginning in each of the four areas, second-year teachers be rated accomplished in at least two areas, third-year teachers must be rated accomplished in at least three areas and fourth-year and beyond teachers must be rated accomplished in all four areas.

The plan meets the state's requirements of four levels of effectiveness, a clear level of how effectiveness is determined, a clear level of performance achieved to gain tenure, a requirement of growth in effectiveness to gain tenure, and differentiation based on career stage and roles. Colchester's plan is also in line with state requirements to address teacher strengths and weaknesses and improve strategies.

Although the state's requirements include using measurements of student growth as a means of determining teacher effectiveness, the Colchester plan states "student performances and growth measures are not explicitly included as a percentage of the evaluation at this time."

Colchester School Board Celebrates Student Achievements

by **Katelyn Kelleher**

Tuesday's Board of Education meeting was largely celebratory, as the board gratefully accepted several grants and donations and honored student achievements.

A new program will be coming to Bacon Academy students with an interest in early childhood education programs thanks to the district receiving the \$36,841 Carl D. Perkins Innovation Grant, secured by Bacon Academy family and consumer sciences teacher Cathy Maher and Director of Curriculum Barbara Gilbert.

The grant will expand Bacon Academy's semester-long preschool course to a full-year. Students will observe at local daycares and work with Three Rivers Community College "to align the course with the Early College Experience requirements."

Gilbert said students taking the course could be qualified to be a head daycare teacher, whereas without the grant they would enroll in a college program.

The board recognized Jack Jackter Intermediate School Principal Deborah Sandberg and artist in residence Carol Glynn for securing an \$8,000 Barnes Foundation Grant to continue to integrate drama and the arts within the

school's curriculum. Glynn explained the grant funds a project where she will meet once weekly with nine fifth-grade classes for 10 weeks and write plays.

Colchester Stop & Shop manager John Reardon presented a giant check to the Board of Education for \$8,099 earned through the A+ School Rewards Program. Reardon explained certain items purchased at the store can earn money for the school system, and Colchester raised the eighth-highest amount of money of 250 Stop & Shops in New England.

Superintendent of Schools Karen Loiselle-Goodwin said the money will be used to fund technology programs at the middle and high schools.

Retiring teachers from the district received a thankful goodbye from board members and administration present at the meeting. Colchester Elementary School Principal Jacqueline Somberg said the three teachers retiring from the elementary school, Sue Hewes, Beth Pepin and Kathleen Tanner, have a total of 99 years of teaching experience between them.

William J. Johnston Middle School Principal Christopher Bennett commended language

arts teacher Christine DePiano for her endless energy in her more than 30-year teaching career and added that she had taught over 2,300 Colchester students.

Bacon Academy Principal Jeffrey Mathieu said when he sees former students, they often ask about retiring special education teacher Maurice Hebb. "The first question they ask is 'Is Mr. Hebb still there?'"

Hebb thanked current and former administrators and board members for their support over the years. He also pointed out that his career has grown in the Colchester district, where he began as a paraprofessional at the middle school and retired as the head of the special education department at the high school.

The Bacon Academy Junior Engineering Technical Society was honored for placing fifth nationally in its division at the March 12 Tests of Engineering Aptitude, Mathematics and Science (TEAMS) engineering competition. The team also placed third statewide in a field of 38 teams.

Mathieu joked that the school's incentive to get females more involved in math and science has worked, asking the all-female JETS team

of Katie Rosiene, Christine Rehr, Amanda Lacerte, Lydia Krause, Laura Hahn and Jillian Barrack, "Where are the boys?"

Colchester's blue ribbon winners from the Connecticut Invention Convention in May explained and demonstrated their creative contraptions to the board. Among the presenters were Mason Candler with the Automatic Fish Tank Filler, Jason Praisner with the Fuzzy Feet Warmer, Nicholas Putorti with the Lace Saver, Maile Blumberger with the Bunny Buster, Sarah Praisner with the Pet Food Light Alert, Alexis Smelser with the RYH (Remember Your Homework) Bracelet, and Christ Wilson, who won the Connecticut Environmental Forum Award for the Water Wonder.

Kevin Meadows, a volunteer from New Beginnings for Life, LLC, an organization helping disabled adults live independently, was given a certificate of appreciation for his hard work in the school district's mail room.

The board voted to approve a field trip for high school science students to Yellowstone National Park in June 2013. The students will tour the park and study wildlife, geology, and geothermal energy amongst other subjects.

Hebron Selectmen Talk Email, Traffic Lights and More

by **Geeta Schrayter**

With the town budget passed, the Board of Selectmen was finally able to play catch-up at its June 7 meeting and focus on a variety of matters, from email services to traffic lights and the Parks and Recreation Department.

After the town and local board of education decided to stop using the RHAM network as its email host when the cost increased to \$20,000, the search was on to find a new server. At the meeting, that search came to an end as the board moved to enter into an agreement with the Connecticut Center for Advanced Technology (CCAT) for email hosting, archiving and filtering.

Selectman Mark Stuart said CCAT "put together a very attractive package for the town of Hebron and the education system to provide those same services [provided by RHAM] at a very competitive cost."

Stuart added the cost per user is normally \$15 per month, but the amount was negotiated down to \$3 per user per month.

"We're getting a lot more than we ever got from RHAM," he said.

The cost of the host services with CCAT is \$9,885 with 88 percent to be paid by the schools and the remaining 22 percent, or \$2,174.70, to be paid by the town.

CCAT will provide hosting services, archive emails, scan them for inappropriate content and provide virus and malware protection.

The motion passed unanimously.

Also at the meeting, the board accepted easements as part of the Lakewood Estates Subdivision, and moved to schedule a town meeting for the acceptance of Open Space that's also part of the subdivision.

In a memo from Town Planner Mike O'Leary it was explained "the final plans contained areas of deeded Open Space dedicated to the Town of Hebron as well as several easements."

The motion passed unanimously.

Three motions were made that involved the Parks and Recreation Department. The board moved to authorize a service agreement between AHM Youth and Family Services and the town, due to the fact the Parks and Recreation Department "will be taking over the staffing responsibilities of the AHM Teen Center this summer," it was explained in a memo.

In a letter from Rich Calarco, director of Parks and Recreation, Calarco explained the Parks and Recreation Department and AHM had worked together over the past six years to operate the programs during the summer. Now,

he and AHM Director Joel Rosenberg wanted to expand the partnership from the summer "to a year round operation," he wrote.

The venture "will enable the department to expand on the concept of cooperative programming and expand the services and resources available to our community," said Calarco.

Selectman Brian O'Connell called the move "a great progressive job between [Parks and Rec.], the town and AHM."

The board also moved to renew the service contract between the Parks and Recreation Department and Millennium Water for the management and operation of the water system at Burnt Hill Park.

Calarco explained Millennium installed the system and had been contracted for the past several years with approved purchase orders to provide "management and operation of the system." Calarco said he found the company "very reliable and responsive to all our needs."

The cost is \$243 per month, or \$2,916 per year.

Lastly, the management policy for the town's Open Space was approved. The policy was prepared by the Parks and Recreation Department and "encourages sustainable agricultural land use and the conservation and preservation of

land designated Open Space" by the town.

The policy allows farmland designated as Open Space to be "actively farmed" to keep it in good condition, and, when "in the best interest of the Town," to be leased for five-year periods to allow for said farming.

Board of Selectmen Chairman Jeff Watt said Parks and Rec. did a "very good job" on the policy, while Stuart said he was "very impressed."

Additionally, Tierney informed the selectmen the contract for the Route 66 traffic light to be installed at the intersection of Route 66 and Horton Boulevard had been signed by the state Office of Policy and Management, and the contractor had "the go-ahead" to begin work.

On Wednesday, Tierney said the hope was that the project would begin within a couple of weeks, but said the contractor is currently dealing with the Department of Transportation and the permitting process.

"We're hoping to have it up this winter," he said.

The next Board of Selectmen meeting will be held Thursday, June 21, at 7:30 p.m., in the town office building.

Sunny Days Yield Electricity Cost Savings at GHS

by Geeta Schrayter

Everyone loves a sunny day. But these days, when the sun shines over Gilead Hill School, the rays seem extra bright. This is because those beams of light mean more than just warmth and reason to play outdoors – they mean savings in electricity.

After April vacation, a Solar Photovoltaic system of panels – 442 to be exact – that had been installed on the roof of the school began to run, capturing sunlight and transforming it into usable energy.

Erik Bartone, representative with DBS Energy Inc., explained Tuesday the panels capture the light, or photons, that the sun puts out and converts certain wavelengths into electricity.

“But that electricity is in the form of direct current, which is not usable,” Bartone explained, “so what happens is that power is converted into alternating current by a sophisticated inverter.”

As a result, the school is able to acquire cheaper electricity; enough to cover 25 percent of the school’s power needs and even turn back the meter and lower their bill from the electric company.

“The savings for the community are enormous,” said Superintendent of Schools Ellie Cruz. “We’ve already realized about \$15,000 in savings in electricity. We will be able to better calculate [the yearly savings] next year now that they’re up and running.”

Cruz added “not a penny” was taken from the taxpayers for the installation of the system, since the school entered into a contract with DBS, who fronted the money for the panels in conjunction with a grant from the Connecticut Clean Energy Fund.

Bartone explained the grant was applied for about a year ago and covered around 50 percent of the installation costs – DBS then put forth the other 50 percent and entered into a long-term power purchase agreement with the school.

The company owns and maintains the panels, and makes back their money by selling the produced electricity to the school.

“We sell the electricity at a lower rate than the school buying it from the grid,” he said, adding that meant the school didn’t have to

make a capital investment to install the panels and “they can get cheaper power.”

The panels, which have a 25-year warranty but can work “well into the 30-plus [year]” range, Bartone said, have a capacity of 101,000 kilowatt-hours (kWh). That’s enough energy to power 12 households, or the previously-mentioned 25 percent of the school. And on those days the school doesn’t require as much power, such as weekends or summer months, the electricity that’s produced gets sent onto the power company’s lines, and “will spin the meter [at the school] backwards so their bill would actually go down,” Bartone said.

There are quite a few benefits to having solar panels installed, and Bartone explained apart from the economic benefits, by self-generating power you reduce the volatility risk.

“As prices rise or they become volatile, if you’re making power yourself, you kind of avoid those volatilities,” he said.

Additionally, there’s the environmental benefit.

“It’s a clean resource,” he said, adding it was especially beneficial “when power is produced at peak times of day. That’s the time when the power generated from the largest power stations is actually the dirtiest.”

According to the Connecticut Light & Power website, on-peak is defined as noon-8 p.m. Monday through Friday. Bartone explained as the demand for power rises, the system dispatches “dirtier and dirtier” power, while the energy produced by the panels has zero emissions.

“So there are a lot of system benefits,” said Bartone.

Another plus, especially considering this particular system is located on a school roof, is the educational component. Bartone explained DBS is working to create curriculum for students that will allow them to have hands on experience with the technology.

“By the end of 2012 we’re going to be able to offer some really neat system for kids that we’ll provide the various school grades,” he said.

And immediately, Cruz shared the company provided a website that shows the amount of electricity generated on a daily basis, the amount produced over the life of the panels as



Now that a system of 442 Solar Photovoltaic panels are up and running on the roof of Gilead Hill School, sunshine equals savings. The school is expected to reap about \$10,000 in electricity savings as a result of the panels.

well as their equivalent savings in trees, gallons of gas and pounds of CO₂.

On Wednesday, thick clouds and steady rain-fall kept the panels from producing much energy, but the previous day, even with partly cloudy skies, the panels produced 323 kWh. The total energy produced by the panels amounts to 1,819 trees, 1,528 gallons of gas or 30,016 pounds of CO₂.

“The exciting part now is that we can benefit from the education portion,” said Cruz. “Teachers are being encouraged to use the website.”

Plus, she added, referencing what Bartone had mentioned, “DBS will also provide training and instruction to students about solar energy and what this all means in the context of their world and the impact we’re making on the planet.”

And looking forward, the plan is to install solar panels on the roof of Hebron Elementary School as well.

“We’re looking at perhaps putting on 16,000-square feet of solar panels on Hebron Elementary School,” said Cruz, adding the application process had already been started.

Additionally, Bartone added DBS was working to finalize a system for RHAM High School and was “looking at RHAM Middle School as a potential” as well.

If all the schools in Hebron end up with panels, Bartone noted “it would be one of the first school districts in Connecticut to have renewables on all of their school facilities,” adding a bit of extra shine to an already bright situation.

To take a look at the impact of the panels, visit mypvpower.com/dashboard/1359.

Final Recommendations of Andover Hop River Study Presented

by Geeta Schrayter

On June 12, the final recommendations from a two-year study addressing safety and development potential on the Hop River Corridor were presented to a few residents and town officials.

The study, which was conducted by the Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) and the Department of Transportation, includes recommendations for changes to five different areas along Route 6: Bolton Notch and Bolton Crossroads, Coventry Ridge, Historic Andover and Lighthouse Corners in Columbia.

The purpose of the study, according to CRCOG, was to “address safety, access management and development potential/growth” along Route 6 in those areas.

Basilua Huang, who presented on behalf of CRCOG, added the goals of the recommendations were to “improve safety, mobility and accessibility for all users” while preserving the character of the different areas.

At the meeting, Board of Selectmen member Elaine Buchardt expressed excitement over the recommendations, but reminded those present the changes weren’t something that would happen overnight.

“I’m pretty excited about this vision,” she said. “Most of them, of course, are things that are going to happen 10-20 years from now, but you have to have a plan to put things in place – we’ve got a plan. ‘Andover Village’ is our vision.”

Jeff Parker, a representative from Clough Harbour & Associates, who helped develop the plan, explained just what that vision entailed.

He said a few key goals were to address speeds, improve safety and provide opportunities for future development in the historic portion of Andover where the library, church and post office are located.

In CRCOG’s draft report, a summary of the area’s issues included a lack of “safe and accessible” pedestrian and bicycle connections, a lack of street networks to support the town’s vision “for a future mixed-use village,” and a lack of speed mitigation measures to reinforce the posted speed limits.

The study recommended modifications be made to Route 6, but suggested leaving it as a single two-way street. In a previous presentation held in December, the plan included a split Route 6, where the existing road would be narrowed and converted to a one-way lane heading eastbound and a new westbound road 300 feet to the north.

However, after comments from the public, that change was removed. But Parker noted the possibility remained to add it in the future, should sentiments change. He continued on to say the roadway would still be made smaller, creating the opportunity for medians, a sidewalk and smaller lanes.

In the previous recommendation, the section of the Hop River Trail that passes through the area had been lowered to street level as well.

“But we heard from the public that it’s more desirable to leave it elevated” so the plan was revised, said Parker.

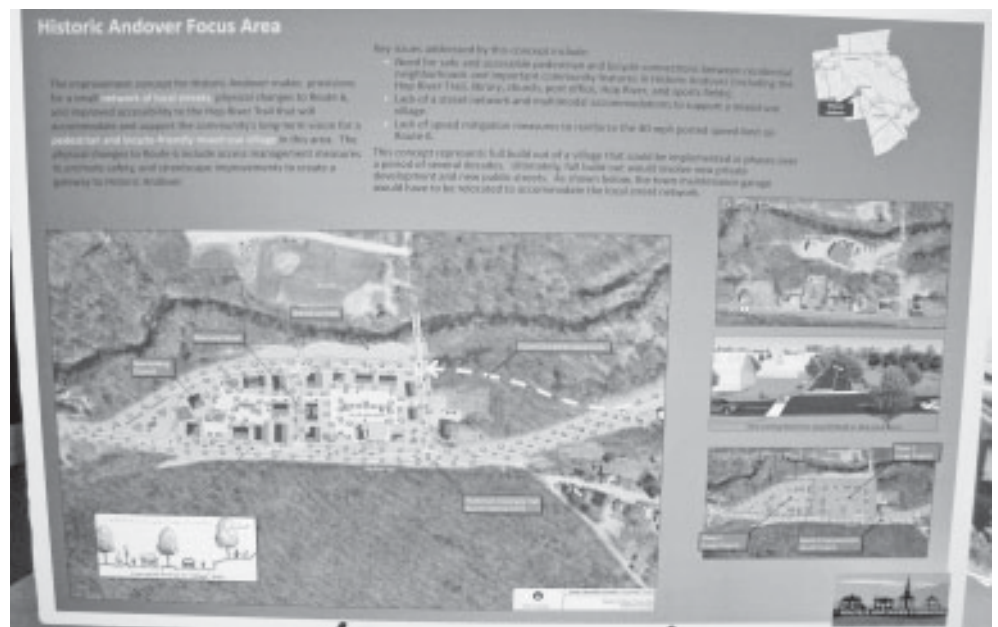
Other improvements included better pedestrian crossing, signals and signs.

After explaining the various recommendations, Parker went into detail on an implementation plan for the section. He explained the various projects were broken down into phases. Small projects would take less than five years to complete, required limited design and planning and would cost less than \$2 million; medium projects would take 6-10 years, require some planning and would cost between \$2-5 million; large projects would take more than 10 years, may require significant planning and design and would cost more than \$5 million.

The proposed changes in Andover were a mix of small and large projects. Parker explained the modifications to Route 6 were small-scale, while development of Andover Village could possibly occur in two phases, and would most likely be done with some private development.

“Both are large scale,” he said, “because it does involve some redevelopment [including] relocating the town garage as well as major changes to the physical landscape.”

In the draft report it was explained in further detail the overall improvement plan for Andover. The plan was broken into four poten-



Recommended changes for historic Andover as a result of a two-year study on safety and development along Route 6 included narrowing the roadway, adding medians and improved pedestrian crossings, as well as plans for a future mixed-use development.

tial projects; two small and two large.

The first is to upgrade the pedestrian crossings, construct new sidewalks and implement “low-speed village arterial improvements” along the road such as lighting, street trees and the landscaped medians.

The second is to provide new signs directing individuals where to park and access the Hop River Trail.

The last two projects include the large-scale changes recommended to create Andover Village.

The first would implement “the transportation elements of the Historic Andover Focus Area” adjacent to Long Hill Road, “that would create the framework for the eastern half of the future village development opportunity.” The second project would provide the street network for the western half.

But now that the study is complete, it in no

way means these changes will suddenly come to fruition. The presented recommendations didn’t magically come with a plate of funds, a big factor if any of these plans want to become reality.

Parker explained the next step is for the public to comment through early July and inform town officials of the changes they’d really like to see.

Then, he continued, the hope is for said officials to pick projects and move forward with them; identifying funding opportunities and progressing to the next stage.

“Our hope is that what we’ve developed doesn’t end with a paper document on a shelf,” he said.

For more information on the results of The Route 6 Hop River Corridor Transportation Study, visit crocog.org/transportation/current_stud/Route6.html

Cupcakes and Celebrations at Andover School Board Meeting

by Geeta Schrayter

At the beginning of Wednesday's Board of Education meeting, the library was filled with excited chatter, gleaming trophies, cupcakes and kids in jerseys, as the third and fourth grade basketball team was acknowledged for winning the March tournament with The Eastern Connecticut Basketball Association.

"What a tournament they played," said selectman Jay Linddy. "It was all teamwork," he continued, adding the teams did an outstanding job.

The teams played three games in the tournament, and most of them were close calls. On Thursday, Linddy explained they won their first game with only a few seconds remaining.

"With six seconds left Andover scored and won it 30-29," he said.

The second game caused a similar scene. "Once again, it was [a score] in the last 20 seconds," said Linddy, and the team won 18-16.

Then, in the final game of the tournament the team trailed by 12 points in the first period, and all seemed lost.

"We never thought they would come back," said Linddy, "but they came back" and ended up winning the championship 38-32.

"You guys just did a great, great job playing as a team," he gushed at the meeting.

Two more students were then recognized before board members attended to their regular agenda items. Sixth-graders Erica Day and

Tyler Moore were each acknowledged for their academic accomplishments, community service and "in general, being a good student," said Superintendent of Schools Andy Maneggia.

The two were presented with the Superintendent's Award for 2012, which Maneggia said has been in existence for about 20 years.

"A few years ago, superintendents got together and decided we had many fine students in the state and should recognize them," he said. "At the time, the only students who were getting press were those in trouble."

Maneggia continued to say the decision had been made at Andover to present the award at the end of the school year "so we could see students' growth and involvement."

He added there were many fine students in Andover, and Day and Moore had "really excelled" in those areas that are considered.

The two students, who spent their final year at Andover Elementary School in the same class, were then acknowledged by their teacher, Melissa Correia.

Correia said it was a pleasure to have both students in her class, and called Moore conscientious, inspirational and trustworthy. She said he understands the value of work, was asked to participate in the playground mentoring program where he interacts with younger students, and doesn't make choices based on others but "based on what he knows is right."

Day was said to appear quiet and timid, but Correia saw another side to her the first time she spoke in front of the class, as she made eye contact and "exuded confidence." Day was described as captivating, lively and benevolent with a positive attitude "that will take her far."

Next year, both students will move on from Andover Elementary School and begin their educational career at RHAM Middle School.

After the celebrations, board members got down to business. Maneggia informed the board that at present, the school was out of compliance with state regulations regarding paperwork for an Asbestos Inspection/Management Plan.

Maneggia explained when he began his career with Andover Public Schools, he'd been informed there was no asbestos in the building. However, that wasn't entirely true.

"That is 99 percent true," he said, "but it's not 100 percent accurate."

Maneggia said there was some asbestos on the other side of a maintenance tunnel, "not in a vicinity where children or staff can come in contact" with it. He explained there's some asbestos insulation surrounding some of the pipes on the other side, which means the school is not an asbestos-free building.

Buildings that contain asbestos are supposed to file Asbestos Inspection/Management Plans with the state, but due to the fact the school was thought to be free of asbestos, one hadn't

been filed for over 10 years.

Maneggia informed the board that environmental specialists had been hired to complete the plan, which has now been submitted for review. Additionally, the company, Fuss & O'Neill, would now conduct an annual inspection.

"We're in good shape now," said Maneggia, reiterating the fact it's in an area that is out of reach to staff and children so there were "no worries." Concern would only arise if someone needed to go into the area and work on the heating pipes the insulation surrounds, he said.

Maneggia wrote in a memo all work is anticipated to be completed July 1.

Also at the meeting, school lunch prices were increased from \$2.10 for hot lunch to \$2.25. Maneggia reminded the board members he'd told them last year that, because the school is part of the National School Lunch Program, prices needed to increase to help offset the cost of free and reduced lunches. At the time, the decision was made "to move gradually" towards the required target of \$2.46. The increase, he said, was a result of that.

The motion to approve the cost of \$2.25 was approved unanimously.

The next Board of Education meeting will be held Wednesday, Aug. 8, at 7 p.m., at the Andover Elementary School library.

Hebron Switches Dispatch Center

by Geeta Schrayter

At the Board of Selectmen's meeting on June 7, the decision was made to switch emergency dispatch centers, from Colchester Emergency Communications who the town has been with for over 35 years, to Tolland County Mutual Aid Fire Service Inc.

On Wednesday, Interim Town Manager Andy Tierney explained the town sent out a Request for Proposal in April in order to look for cost savings.

Proposals were received from four dispatch centers, and of those, Colchester Emergency Communications (KX) and Tolland County Mutual Aid Fire Service Inc. (TN) were selected as the top two.

Members of the Hebron Fire Department were at the meeting to recommend the board award the contract to TN, which was described in an executive summary as "very progressive,

well-organized and well-managed." On the agency's website it was also noted TN provides standard procedures for its member agencies – as opposed to letting each one formulate their own – which helps with resource and disaster planning.

Tyler Millix, operations director with TN, was present at the meeting and mentioned a perk of utilizing a regional dispatch center was they can provide services to municipalities "that they can't bear on their own" – such as TN's dive team.

He explained switching over to TN would aid in response time to emergencies because the alarms are monitored by the company, which is based in Tolland.

"There's no third party involved," he said, adding alarms were typically monitored in places such as Florida or Arizona and meant "a

greater loss of time" as calls would be received, processed, then called into the appropriate local department, where the situation would need to be explained a second time to responders.

Millix also noted TN has multiple tower sites they can utilize to ensure the town has adequate coverage, along with vehicle repeaters to use if necessary. If a tower doesn't provide clear service in a particular area, Millix explained using the vehicle repeater — and therefore a radio frequency – can sometimes solve the issue.

But Tierney explained both dispatch centers had their perks, and what it came down to was cost: KX is nearly double that of TN, and the annual cost has increased \$7,000, since 2002. The cost of TN is per capita, and over the last five years the annual cost has remained \$2.90 per person. In a cost comparison of the two centers, it was shown in fiscal year 2012-13 the

cost of KX will be \$51,888 compared to TN, at \$28,916.

"We enjoyed the regionalization with [KX] and all the other towns involved," said Tierney, "but this is something that's going to produce big savings over time."

Although the board voted unanimously to allow Tierney to award the five-year contract to TN and notify KX of the contract termination, it won't take effect immediately. Tierney made it clear it was the intention of the town to give KX an adequate amount of time to make the transition, "to give them some time to absorb us moving so it doesn't impact the other towns."

As a result, the new contract with TN comes into effect fiscal year 2013-14, and the contract with KX will be terminated effective July 1, 2013.

Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

I figured it wouldn't take long and it didn't: A.J. Pollock, the 2006 RHAM High School graduate who spent a few weeks in the big leagues earlier this season, was back – briefly – with the Arizona Diamondbacks last week.

A.J. was recalled from Triple-A Reno when Arizona first baseman Lyle Overbay was placed on paternity leave last Wednesday, so that the latter could be with his wife, who had just given birth to the couple's fourth child the day before. It was actually the second time in as many weeks A.J. had returned to the bigs, both times under similar circumstances; he was recalled for the May 30 game when outfielder Jason Kubel was placed on paternity leave in anticipation of the birth of his second child.

However, A.J. didn't see any action during his brief May 30 recall. That wasn't the case last Wednesday, as he was in the starting lineup for the Diamondbacks' home game against Colorado. He wound up going 2-for-5 with an RBI and a stolen base against Colorado.

Baseball rules dictate a player can be put on paternity leave for no more than three days, so Overbay returned to the Diamondbacks on Friday, and A.J. headed back to Reno.

While I'm sure A.J. would like to be back with the big-league club for more than a day at a time, it must be a nice feeling that, whenever the D-Backs have a temporary roster hole to fill, he's apparently their first choice. That's nothing to sneeze at. As I said last month, I think it's only a matter of time before A.J. gets to stick around the major leagues for good.

* * *

Now here's a stupid Top 10 list – with even stupider results. The always-classy (cough, cough) *New York Post* recently asked readers to rank the 10 most “hated people in America.” The results were published June 1, and they were a little surprising. Casey Anthony heads the list, and is followed in order – “in order” being the key words here – by: Kim Kardashian, Jerry Sandusky, Bernie Madoff, Michael Moore, John Edwards, O.J. Simpson, Mel Gibson, Tiger Woods and Paris Hilton.

I can see why Anthony was ranked No. 1; lots of people were absolutely disgusted that she was acquitted of allegedly killing her 3-year-old daughter. Considering the age of the child, and that the acquittal happened just last year, it's no big shock people ranked her as No. 1.

But Kim Kardashian is No. 2? Yes, the over-exposed Kardashian – indeed, the whole Kardashian family – is annoying, but readers seriously ranked her more hate-worthy than accused child molester Jerry Sandusky, life-ruiner Bernie Madoff and “let's cheat on my dying wife and then cover up the love child it produced, possibly with campaign donations” John Edwards? Granted, I don't hate anybody on this list – sort of difficult to harbor such strong feelings toward someone you've never even met, one would think – but the fact so many people viewed the ultimately-harmless Kardashian as more worthy of contempt is a rather sad commentary on people's priorities these days.

(For the record, I also found the inclusion of Michael Moore on the list – also above Edwards and O.J. Simpson as well – just plain stupid, but considering the list of names people could choose from was compiled by the editors of the conservative *Post*, it wasn't all that surprising.)

* * *

Two attacks that were in the news recently have left many joking that a “zombie apocalypse” is nearing – but I think these attacks need to be taken far more seriously than that.

In late May, a Maryland man, Alexander Kinuya, was arrested after he told police he killed his roommate and then ate his heart and part of his brains. (The other chopped-up body

parts were found in Kinuya's home as well as in a trash container outside a nearby church.) Police said they do not know a motive for the killing (Kinuya had displayed violent behavior recently; he was arrested earlier in May for allegedly fracturing a classmate's skull with a baseball bat, in what police called a random attack), nor would they say if drugs or mental illness played a role in the crime.

Police do, however, believe drugs were behind an attack that, in some ways, was even more gruesome (as at least Kinuya killed his victim before eating him): a case in Florida where a naked man stripped the clothes off another man and then proceeded to chew the flesh off his face. When a police officer approached the attacker, 31-year-old Roy Eugene, and ordered him to stop, Eugene turned and *growled* at him, and then proceeded to keep chewing away at his still-living victim. The officer then shot Eugene, but he just kept on going. It took several more shots to finally kill the attacker.

The victim, who police said appeared to be homeless, was rushed to the hospital. He lost 75 percent of his face in the attack, including an eye, his ears and his lips.

Police have said they suspected Eugene was high on an LSD-like drug known as “bath salts” at the time of the attack. Police union president Armando Aguilar said the drug has been known to cause users to go “completely insane and become very violent.” He said four other drug-use incidents in the Miami-Dade area bore resemblances to Eugene's attack (although presumably nothing quite so gruesome).

Like I said earlier, the Maryland case, and particularly the Florida one, set off a wave of joking speculation across the Internet that the “zombie apocalypse” is upon us. There were bunches of comments posted online along the lines of “I'm getting ready for the zombies; are you?” Now, I enjoy a good zombie movie as much as the next guy, but they're just fictional entertainment. What happened in Florida and Maryland were real events – and no laughing matter.

The use of “bath salts” appears to be rising, quite sharply in fact. According to the Drug Enforcement Administration, reports of cases involving drugs with MDPV – the amphetamine-like chemical featured in bath salts and a host of other drugs sold with names like “zoom,” “cloud nine” and “ocean snow” – went from just two in 2009 to 338 in 2010 to 911 in the first nine months of 2011 alone. That's a pretty scary climb, folks.

Also, these drugs appear to be eliciting some pretty scary reactions. No more are people content to laugh at a bad movie while eating an entire bag of pork rinds, or sit in a bathtub and imagine they're watching the 1919 World Series. (Yes, that was a *Mad Men* reference.) They suddenly feel the urge to go out and do terrible, horrible things, to themselves and to others.

Another news item aiding the “just say no to drugs” cause: a California man was recently ruled competent to stand trial in the 2010 mutilation of his friend and Mixed Martial Arts training partner. Jarrod Wyatt, 27, allegedly ripped out his friend's still-beating heart and removed his tongue and skin – also while the friend was still alive. (The friend, 21-year-old Taylor Powell, ultimately bled to death.) Wyatt, it has been alleged, had drank some tea spiked with hallucinogenic mushrooms shortly before the attack.

As a friend commented after all this news broke, these would make pretty great case stories to share in DARE classes. If hearing accounts of people ripping other people's hearts out, or chewing off their faces, doesn't convince kids to stay off drugs, probably nothing will.

* * *

See you next week.

Foul Play Not Suspected in Marlborough Woman's Death

by Katelyn Kelleher

The death of a Marlborough woman whose body was found in the backyard of a South Main Street home Tuesday, June 5, was not believed to be suspicious.

State Police Lieutenant Paul Vance said the woman's death was “non-criminal.” He said an autopsy was inconclusive and further study

is needed but there were no obvious signs of trauma on the body.

Police arrived at the 101 South Main St. home around noon last Tuesday and removed the body and left the scene near 7 p.m.

Police have not released the woman's identity.

East Hampton Police News

5/25: a 14-year-old juvenile of East Hampton was issued a summons for third-degree assault, East Hampton Police said.

6/3: James Klimas, 23, of 178 Carriage Crossing, Middletown was arrested for failure to drive right, DUI, possession of drug paraphernalia, possession of less than four ounces of marijuana and possession of heroin, police said.

6/6: Sandra Lee Mascolo, 41, of 2114 Townbrook Dr., Middletown, was arrested on two counts of first-degree failure to appear and three counts of second-degree failure to appear, stemming from five separate incident, police said.

6/6: Elizabeth M. Echevarria, 29, of 11 Starr Pl., was involved in a one car motor vehicle accident on Route 16 near the East Hampton town line. Echevarria was arrested for DUI, failure to drive right and driving an unregistered and uninsured motor vehicle, police said.

Colchester Police News

6/5: Stanley Warzecha, 56, of 21 Hills Dr., East Hampton, was charged with DUI and speeding, State Police said.

6/6: Rance Carli, 52, of 40 Mill Ln., Salem, was charged with second-degree forgery, third-degree identity theft and title fraud, State Police said.

6/6: Timothy McGuire, 24, of 290 Foote Rd., Glastonbury, was charged with DUI, State Police said.

6/7: A 13-year-old and a 16-year-old were

Marlborough Police News

6/7: Angela Loin, 34, of 16 Town Line Dr., East Hampton, was charged with DUI and traveling unreasonably fast for conditions, State Police said.

6/7: A driver evaded the scene after hitting another vehicle parked on the right side of the curb area of the Liberty Bank parking lot on East Hampton Road, State Police said. The left side of the vehicle was damaged and there was debris on the ground.

6/8: Elton Turek, 51, of 32 Roberts Rd., was charged with failure to drive right and DUI, State Police said.

6/10: Gregory Iwerks, 21, of 527 Swain Ave., Meriden, was charged with DUI and speeding, State Police said.

Hebron Police News

6/7: Betty Arel, 50, of 102 Wellswood Rd., was charged with DUI and failure to drive right, State Police said.

both arrested and charged with third-degree assault and breach of peace as a result of a fight on the town green, State Police said.

6/8: Richard Keefe, 52, of Hebron, was charged with DUI, operating a motor vehicle with registration or license suspended/revoked/refused, and failing to meet minimum insurance requirements, State Police said.

6/11: Russell Culver, 33, of 30 Copley Rd., Middletown, was charged with sixth-degree larceny, State Police said.

Obituaries

Colchester

Julia R. Scovell

Julia R. Scovell, 102, of the Colchester and Salem area, passed away Saturday, March 17, at Middlesex Hospital. She was born May 5, 1909 in Old Saybrook, daughter of James Judson and Fannie Mercy Ross Spooner.

She was predeceased by her son Neil R. Scovell, daughter Shirley A. Shinault, and 10 brothers and sisters.

Surviving are her grandchildren, Dale Scovell, Dana Shinault, Jann Lezone, Stacey Scovell and Silvia and Keith Buck.

Graveside services were held Saturday, June 9, at Riverside Cemetery in Old Saybrook.

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

Colchester

Jennie Pugatch Cuthbertson

Jennie Pugatch Cuthbertson, 87, of Colchester, widow of the late Philip Cuthbertson, passed away Thursday, June 7, at Harrington Court GHC Center in Colchester. Born Jan. 28, 1925 in New York City, she was the daughter of the late Emil and Jennie (Shimik) Pugatch.

On June 23, 1951, she and Philip were married in Norwich and shared nearly 51 years of marriage before he predeceased her on May 22, 2002.

Jennie worked at Pratt & Whitney and Electric Boat as a draftsman prior to her working as a rural carrier for the U.S. Postal Service for many years before her retirement. In her spare time, she was an avid gardener.

In addition to her husband, she was predeceased by three brothers, George, Joseph and Emil Pugatch. She is survived by her sister-in-law, Helen Pugatch of Colchester; a niece and nephew, Joanne Philips and husband, Don of Colchester and Gregory Pugatch and wife, Susan of East Hampton; and numerous extended family members and friends. Care of private arrangements has been entrusted to the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home of Colchester.

Colchester

Irene Harasimowitz

Irene (Stankiewicz) Harasimowitz, 75, of Colchester, beloved wife of 50 years of Anthony, passed away peacefully Saturday, June 9, at home, surrounded by her loving family. Born Oct. 24, 1936 in Hartford, she was a daughter of the late Felix and Agatha (Lesick) Stankiewicz.



Irene was a 1954 graduate of Bacon Academy in Colchester. She worked in various positions for Travelers in Hartford for 38 years before her retirement. In her spare time, she enjoyed gardening and loved her many pets over the years.

In addition to her loving husband, she is survived by her sister, Barbara Brainerd, of Colchester; her brother, Theodore, of East Hampton; and numerous nieces, nephews, extended family members and friends.

Friends called Monday, June 11, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. The funeral liturgy was celebrated Tuesday, June 12, directly at St. Joseph Church, 120 Cliff St., Norwich. Interment followed in St. Joseph Cemetery, Norwich.

In lieu of flowers, donations in her memory may be made to the Hospice SECT, 225 Dunham St., Norwich, CT 06360.

For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

Marlborough

Maurice F. Vaillancourt

Maurice F. Vaillancourt, 75, formerly of Marlborough, died Saturday, June 9, after a long battle with lung cancer at Kindred Crossing – East in New London surrounded by family.

He was born July 9, 1936, in Sabattus, ME, to the late Fernand V. and Jeanne M. (Gosselin) Vaillancourt, and moved to Collinsville in 1941. He graduated from Canton High School in 1954 and Hartford Regional Technical School as an electrician in 1956.

He went on to serve in the U.S. Marine Corp from 1956-1958 receiving his honorable discharge with the rank of corporal. Upon his discharge, he worked as an electrician until 1960, and then became a machinist and toolmaker for Pratt & Whitney in East Hartford, then United Nuclear in Uncasville until 1989. Upon his retirement from UNC, Maurice owned and operated Video Central, a video rental store on Central Avenue in Norwich.

Maurice married Betty Pelkey in 1960 and moved to Marlborough in 1965. He moved to Norwich in 1987. He loved fishing, taking long walks in the woods and just sitting by the ocean.

Maurice is survived by his daughter and son-in-law, Victoria L. and Mark S. Bear of Amston; a son and daughter-in-law; Mark T. and Linda K. Vaillancourt of Castroville, TX; a brother and sister-in-law, Roland M. and Valerie Vaillancourt of Travelers Rest, SC; his ex-wife and very good friend, Betty Nicholas of Norwich; along with several nieces, great-nieces and great-nephews, and cousins.

The family would like to thank the staff at Kindred Crossing HC and Beacon Hospice for the care they provided to our dad, always treating him with compassion and dignity.

Calling hours will from 3-6 p.m. today, June 15, at Church & Allen Funeral Home, 136 Sachem St., Norwich, with military honors rendered at 4 p.m. Burial will be private at the convenience of the family.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to the American Cancer Society or Beacon Hospice.

To leave a condolence for the family, visit churchandallen.com.

Colchester

Dennis Dodier

Dennis Dodier, 66, of Colchester, passed away Tuesday (June 12, 2012) at Middlesex Hospital from injuries sustained in an automobile accident on Dec. 24, 2011. Born Oct. 15, 1945 in Wolfboro, NH, he was a son of the late Frank and Ruth (Churchill) Dodier.

Mr. Dodier had worked in construction as a truck driver and heavy equipment operator. He was a member of the Teamsters Locals 493 and 559.

He is survived by two daughters, Denise Carbo and her husband, Dan of East Haddam and Nichole Gwinnett and her husband, John of Ft. Myers, FL; four grandchildren, Alexander, Jared and Ethan Carbo and Brandon Gwinnett; two siblings, Lenard Dodier and Pam Clifford, both of New Hampshire; and numerous extended family members and friends.

A celebration of his life will be held at 7 p.m. Friday, June 22, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. Friends may call from 5-7 p.m., prior to the service. Services and burial will be held in Wolfboro, NH.

In lieu of flowers, donations in his memory may be made to Middlesex Hospital Hospice, 28 Crescent St., Middletown, CT 06457.

For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.



Hebron

Annamarie Balisano

Annamarie (Coates) Balisano, 64, of Amston and Naples, FL, beloved wife of Patrick for 32 years, passed away Tuesday, June 12, at Hartford Hospital, surrounded by her loving family. Born Aug. 2, 1947, in Middletown, she was the daughter of Stefania (Otfinoski) Coates of Amston and the late Thomas Coates.



Mrs. Balisano worked for the Connecticut Department of Motor Vehicles for 36-plus years and was the first woman to be promoted and serve as hearings officer. She was revered for her ability to resolve consumer issues and was later assigned to the office of the commissioner of DMV before her retirement.

In addition to her mother and husband, she is survived by daughter, Lindsey Balisano-Hebler, her husband, Bryan Hebler and their son, Walker Patrick Hebler, all of Amston; siblings, Thomas Coates and wife, Esther of Middletown, John "Jackie" Coates and wife Karen of Hebron, Margaret Stoli and husband, Frank of Hollis, NH. Maureen Coolidge and husband, John of Wellesley, MA and Stephen Coates and Holly Marrero of Marlborough; several nieces, nephews and extended family members and friends.

The funeral liturgy will be celebrated at 1 p.m. today, June 15, directly at the Church of the Holy Family, 185 Church St. (Route 85), Hebron. Interment will follow in St. Peter's Cemetery, Hebron. There are no calling hours.

In lieu of flowers, donations in her memory may be made to the Helen and Harry Gray Cancer Center, P.O. Box 5037, Hartford, CT 06101-9960 or to the Florida Cancer Specialists, 6300 Pine Ridge Road, Suite 2012, Naples, FL 34119.

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

Marlborough

Myrtle I. Nowsch

Myrtle I. (Laine) Nowsch, 93, of Marlborough, widow of the late Milton Nowsch, died Wednesday, June 6, at Manchester Memorial Hospital. Born Aug. 20, 1918, in Manchester, she was the daughter of the late Louis and Neva (Dickinson) Laine.

Myrtle had lived in Marlborough since 1950 and was an original member of the Loyal Order of Moose. She had been deputy grand regent of the Loyal Order of Moose and a member of the International Board of the College of Regents of the Moose. Myrtle was also a member of the Marlborough Senior Citizens.

She is survived by her son, Donald Nowsch of Marlborough; two daughters, Nancy Varney and her husband John of Marlborough, Jeanne Porter of Marlborough and her companion Ray Ford; a brother, Roger Laine of Marlborough; six grandchildren; and 14 great-grandchildren.

She was predeceased by her brother, Alfred Laine, and her sister, Genevea McNulty.

The family would like to thank the nurses and staff at Manchester Memorial Hospital for the care they gave Myrtle.

Funeral services were held Monday, June 11, in the Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton, with Rev. Robert Faulhaber officiating. Burial followed in the family plot in Marlboro Cemetery. Friends called at Spencer Funeral Home Monday morning before the service.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the Roy B. Pettengill Ambulance Association, P.O. Box 308, Marlborough, CT 06447. To leave online condolences, visit spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

Colchester

Bruce P. Chenette

Bruce P. Chenette, 61, of 36 Broadway, died early Friday morning, June 8, at Apple Rehab in Colchester. He was born in Norwich on Feb. 1, 1951, the son of Therese (Robert) Chenette of Preston and the late Lucien J. Chenette. Bruce was last employed as a truck driver for the Town of Bozrah before being disabled.

Besides his mother, he is survived by two sons, Vern and Kevin Chenette; two daughters, Melissa and Amy; six brothers, Allan Chenette of Preston, Gary Chenette of Voluntown, Craig Chenette of Florida, Glen Chenette of Griswold, James Chenette of Norwich and Mark Chenette of Baltic; one sister, Rachel Schrader of Baltic; and numerous nieces and nephews.

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated Monday, June 11, at Sacred Heart Church in Taftville, meeting directly at the church. Burial followed in St. Joseph Cemetery, Norwich. There were no calling hours.

Guillot Funeral Home, 75 South B. St., Taftville, is in charge of arrangements.

Marlborough

Patricia Hinckley Aust

Patricia Hinckley Aust, 69, of Marlborough, passed away peacefully at home Tuesday, June 12, after a brief illness. Born in Providence, RI, on Sept. 3, 1942, daughter of Charles and Constance Hinckley, she was married to Erich J. Aust for 45 years. The couple lived in Marlborough for the past 36 years.



Pat was a graduate of Hillsdale College, held a Master of Social Work degree from the University of Connecticut and also attended St. Andrews University in Scotland. She had a long and distinguished career as a licensed clinical social worker, working in protective services, adoption, foster care and other areas. Her last 20-plus years were spent as a social worker in the East Hartford school system. She was especially interested in ADD and served on the Connecticut ADD Task Force. She was active in Pat CHADD (Children with ADD) and LDA (Learning Disabilities Association) during her career.

Pat was also an accomplished writer. She published two books of young adult fiction and a third was accepted for publication at the time of her death.

After retirement in 2002 she continued her writing and activities with LDA. She also volunteered at Interval House where she became especially interested in domestic violence issues. She started an Internet blog on the subject which has followings from many different countries.

Besides her loving husband Erich, she is survived by her daughter Laura Aust Olkin of Windham; her son, Paul J. Aust of New York, NY; her sister, Priscilla Carroll of Andover; her brother, Charles Hinckley of Milford; Robert Hinckley of Woodbury; as well as sisters-in-law Martha DiMezza of Rhode Island, Nancy Aust of Plantsville and Kathy Hinckley of Woodbury. She also leaves numerous nieces and nephews, as well as a host of friends and co-workers who loved her dearly.

Calling hours will be from 5-8 p.m. today, June 15, at Glastonbury Funeral Home, 450 New London Tpke., Glastonbury. A memorial service will be held at 11 a.m. Saturday, June 16, at Marlborough Congregational Church, 35 South Main St., Marlborough.

In lieu of flowers, contributions can be made to LDA or the American Cancer Society.

For tributes, online condolences or directions, visit glastonburyfuneral.com.