

RIVEREAST

News Bulletin

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May the Force Be With You... Last Sunday's Pumpkins 'N Pooches event in Colchester had dogs – and even a pig – celebrating Halloween a bit early this year. Pictured above are the first place winners of "Best Ensemble" resembling Star Wars characters. From left, Maddie Ouellette, 15, of Lebanon, dressed as Princess Leia stands next to her older sister, Katie, 17, as Darth Vader and their schnoodle as Yoda, and Chewbacca, their 10-month-old teacup pig. A story and more photos appear on page 17.

by Elizabeth Bowling

A decision made by Middletown Superior Court Monday will allow East Hampton's Chatham Party candidates to appear on the ballots for the November municipal election, despite errors in their candidate endorsement paperwork.

The candidates failed to sign their endorsement paperwork despite a state statute that required minor party candidates to do so as of July 2011.

According to a press release from the secretary of state's office, an order by Judge Edward Domnarski endorsed a stipulated agreement by the East Hampton Town Clerk and the minor party candidates ordering the candidates be placed on the ballot for various municipal offices despite their failure to comply with the law.

East Hampton Town Clerk Sandra Wieleba said this week she was quite pleased with the court ruling.

"I'm ecstatic. I'm very happy," she said. "I respect all the people who are running."

Secretary of State Denise Merrill said, "Judge Domnarski's decision is good for the voters of East Hampton. It is always in the best interest of voters to have choices on the ballot, and I am relieved the judge resolved this issue."

She added, "I am glad the ballot in East Hampton is now set in a way that benefits the minor party candidates, the town clerk, and, most importantly, the voters."

Chatham Party Chairman Kyle Dostaler said he agrees with Merrill that keeping the minor party on the ballot is in "the best interest of voters."

Going forward, Dostaler said, "I hope that

the election goes very smoothly without any issues."

Sue Weintraub, incumbent chairwoman of the Town Council and a Chatham Party candidate, said, "We're running and glad to be back and be able to spend all of our time campaigning."

She added, "I'm pleased that democracy is being upheld."

"The precedent [for Domnarski's decision] was set very clearly by the Stamford judge," Weintraub said, referring to a decision made by Stamford Superior Court last week that kept the third party in Westport on the ballots. The minor party candidates of "Save Westport Now" had made the same clerical mistake as the Chatham Party candidates – they failed to sign their endorsement paperwork.

At Tuesday night's Town Council meeting, council member and Democratic Town Committee chairwoman Barbara Moore asked that the town attorney attend the next council meeting to provide a summary of legal fees involved in the Chatham Party's suit.

Council member and Republican Town Committee member Ted Hintz agreed that he, too, would like to hear from the town attorney. But Hintz said he wanted to learn more about the case's entire process in general.

"It's not as cut-and-dry as everyone seems to think," he said.

Dostaler said, "It'll be very good to get the facts from [the town attorney]."

The East Hampton municipal election is Tuesday, Nov. 5, from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. at the East Hampton High School gymnasium.

Chatham Party Back on Ballot

Hebron's Camp Hemlocks Slated to Close

by Geeta Schrayer

Easter Seals Coastal Fairfield County recently announced it would close Camp Hemlocks in Hebron later this fall – and several area residents this week expressed their dismay with the decision.

The camp has provided a place for individuals with disabilities to experience camp life since 1950, when it was established in Trumbull. In 1974, Camp Hemlocks moved to its current location in Hebron, in order to accommodate a larger number of campers from Connecticut and Rhode Island.

In addition, the camp's location has also afforded area residents – disabled or not – the opportunity to utilize the heated swimming pool on the grounds for swim lessons and recreational swimming during the cooler seasons.

But things haven't been smooth sailing at the camp lately. In a release sent out by Easter Seals Sept. 30, it was explained the camp hasn't operated at full capacity for a number of years, and resources aren't available to continue funding the maintenance and operational costs of the camp.

Glimpses of the camp's financial troubles could be seen back in 2011, when the camp closed for the winter season due to a lack of funding. However, when news arrived that the camp would remain open last winter, it seemed as though Hemlocks was here to stay.

Program Director Peter Trathen told the *Rivereast* last year, "We want to reassure everyone that after speaking with the community and our supervisors, we're here to stay."

"We're not going anywhere," he had said.

But things don't always go as hoped, and while Easter Seals Executive Director Dr. Roslyn Burton-Roberston said in the release saying goodbye to the camp would be with a "heavy heart," it's something that was nonetheless slated to happen.

"Closing Camp Hemlocks is a decision that was not made lightly," she wrote, "but after extensive review, this was the best decision for the organization and the people we serve."

Moodus resident John Quinn, who was CEO of Easter Seals Connecticut from 1981 to 2007, said this week he was "surprised" when he

learned of the camp's impending closure, but said "it's never been easy financially."

"It's a non-profit. It depends on contributions," he said.

"I have no idea since 2007 what the contribution level has been like" he furthered, but added "maybe since they announced [the decision to close] a donor will come forward."

Quinn added the camp has been a "tremendous asset" for people.

"The positive thing is that it was built with people in mind who had disabilities. If someone has a disability they can come and feel just like everyone else having a camp experience. That's the most important thing about it," he stated.

Hebron Board of Selectmen Chairman Jeff Watt said this week it was "disappointing" Easter Seals hadn't been able to find a way to keep the camp open, but added, "They've given a lot of good services to the local communities out here and I wish the staff the very best."

"I think the services that they gave to the children through Easter Seals were very important."

tant," he said.

In nearby Colchester, First Selectman Gregg Schuster felt similarly.

"Obviously, it's disappointing," he said. "Camp Hemlocks has been a great facility to learn how to swim or do other swimming activities for many years."

As a child growing up in Colchester, Schuster said he swam at Camp Hemlocks quite a bit.

"So it's definitely sad, and hopefully something can be done to use the facility in the future," he said.

On Camp Hemlocks' Facebook page, facebook.com/escamphemlocks, various individuals reminisced about their past experiences there, rather than toward a future where the camp no longer existed.

For Pauline Ellis, it was hard to imagine the camp closing.

"So many friendships [were] created [there]," she wrote. "Some marriages happened. This camp has given so much to so many it is sad to see it closing and the magic

See Camp Hemlocks Page 2



Easter Seals Camp Hemlocks, which has been located in Hebron since 1974, is scheduled to close later this fall. Easter Seals Coastal Fairfield County said in a news release the decision, which was due to financial reasons, was "not made lightly," but rather was "the best decision for the organization" and the people it serves.

Camp Hemlocks cont. from Front Page of the camp disappear."

Linda Stewart Blakita added the closing shouldn't happen, and mentioned all the services the pool afforded.

"This pool is the only one to serve the neighboring communities, both for swim lessons, family swims, senior arthritis swim, water aerobics, baby swim, and especially all those with special needs," she wrote. "I am so sorry to hear this news."

Meanwhile, Ashley MacSuga-Gage called the decision "heartbreaking and wrong."

"I am who I am today because of working at Easter Seals Camp Hemlocks for over five years," she wrote, adding the experience propelled her to work in special education.

"I truly hope that Easter Seals will reconsider this decision and will keep open a place that offers safety, joy, and inspiration to individuals with and without disabilities," she said.

And reconsidering the decision is what Windsor resident Katie Bianchi, who was a camp counselor this past summer, is hoping Easter Seals will do with the help of a petition she started on the website [moveon.org](#).

"The camp provides a wonderful opportunity for children and adults with intellectual and physical disabilities to have a feeling of independence," she said Thursday. "It allows them to be themselves and show their friends their

abilities rather than have most people recognize their disability."

Bianchi went on to say it would be a shame for those individuals to lose the friendships that form at a place "most consider to be their home away from home." Bianchi added the camp was important to many people – not just herself – as can be seen by the petition. As of press time, the petition had over 1,700 signatures from people pushing for the camp to remain open.

But in the Easter Seals release it was clear there had already been discussions on how to make the transition for families who attended the camp as smooth as possible, and what Easter Seals planned to do moving forward.

The camp will remain open long enough for the non-profit to honor any existing contracts. Then, priorities will shift, and the focus will be on the expansion of existing services in Fairfield County.

But for those used to finding such services at Camp Hemlocks in Hebron, the expansion of other locations will be little consolation as they grapple with the closure of a camp that has been providing, as the camp's website puts it, "exceptional services to ensure that all people with disabilities or special needs and their families have equal opportunities to live, learn, work and play in their communities" for the past 60 years.

East Hampton Police News

9/23: Shawn Aldrich, 29, of 16 Hayes Rd., was issued a summons for operating a motor vehicle causing unnecessary or unusual noise, operation without insurance and operating an unregistered motor vehicle, East Hampton Police said.

9/26: Two juveniles from East Hampton were issued summons, police said; one for possession of tobacco by a minor and delivery of tobacco to a minor, and the other for possession of tobacco by a minor.

9/27: Police responded to CVS Pharmacy located at 52 East High St. for reports of an unresponsive female slumped over the steering wheel of her car. Officers awakened the driver of the vehicle and identified her as Francesca Colonna 25, of 34 Hall Trl., Marlborough, police said. She was charged with DUI, possession of narcotics, possession of drug paraphernalia and illegal storage of narcotics, police said.

9/29: Police responded to a report of a person sleeping in a running vehicle with the headlights on in the visitor's parking lot of 85 North Main St. Sarah B. Paxton, 32, of 11 Dogwood Dr., was placed under arrest and charged with DUI and operating an unregistered motor vehicle, police said.

9/30: Police placed Robert Saltus, 31, of 18 Middletown Ave., under arrest pursuant to an active arrest warrant. He was charged with second-degree criminal mischief, sixth-degree larceny, third-degree burglary and conspiracy to commit third-degree burglary, police said.

9/30: Eva Marie Terrones, 24, of 256 South Marshall St., Hartford, was arrested pursuant to an active arrest warrant for third-degree assault of an elderly person and disorderly con-

duct, police said.

9/30: Russell Culver, 35, of 30 Cooley Ave., Middletown, was arrested pursuant to an active arrest warrant, and charged with violation of probation and fourth-degree larceny, police said.

9/30: Maegan Brzostowski, 24, of 44 Middletown Ave., East Hampton was arrested pursuant to an active arrest warrant and charged with sixth-degree larceny and third-degree conspiracy to commit burglary, police said.

9/30: Kathleen Hauser, 60, of 396 East Center St., Manchester, was placed under arrest pursuant to an active arrest warrant. Hauser was charged with operating under the influence, police said.

10/1: Deborah J. Taylor, 60, of 208 Main St., Portland, turned herself in pursuant to an outstanding arrest warrant, police said. Taylor was charged with violation of a protective order, police said.

10/2: Police said they arrested Dylan James Moore, 23, of 40 Middlesex Ave., Chester who had seven outstanding PRAWN warrants. As an officer tried to take Moore into custody, police said, he resisted arrest. Moore was charged with five counts of first-degree failure to appear and two counts of second-degree failure to appear, all from separate incidents stemming from East Hampton Police Department and Connecticut State Police, Troop F. Police added that upon Moore's arrest, a search of his person was conducted and heroin and drug paraphernalia were discovered. Moore was charged with possession of heroin, possession of drug paraphernalia and resisting a rrest/interfering with an officer, police said.

From the Editor's Desk

Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

I acquired a new car in August, and with it came a three-month trial of XM satellite radio. I gotta admit, I've been enjoying it. It's great for variety, something that greatly appeals to me, as my music tastes can be a little, well, eclectic. [The station presets on the XM in my car include: Top 40 pop, the Broadway showtunes station, country, Pop2K (which plays hits from 2000-09), '60s on 6 (which is what it sounds like; just music from the 1960s, on station slot number 6 on the XM dial), a station dedicated to old-school hip-hop, a station that plays nothing but Elvis Presley music, and even a station that plays old-time radio shows from the 1940s and '50s.]

While I listen to all those stations, and more, I find myself often circling back to '60s on 6. Not only is there a nice selection of songs – not just the same old handful of '60s tunes you tend to hear on Big D 103 these days – but a lot of times the DJ offers some interesting stories about the makings of songs I've heard for years.

Such was the case last weekend, when I found myself listening to '60s on 6 while on a drive. When I flipped over to the station, the DJ was in the middle of a story about "Get Together," a song I had heard many times over the years, and associate pretty heavily with one of my all-time favorite films, *Forrest Gump*. It's a great song, with a very inspirational message of choosing peace over war. "Everybody get together, it's time to love one another right now" sings the familiar chorus.

The song, as you may know, was made famous by The Youngbloods. But does that mean they were the first guys to record it? Nope.

Five years before the song hit No. 5 on the Billboard charts, "Get Together" was released by The Kingston Trio, a folk group best known for songs like "Where Have All the Flowers Gone?" and "Tom Dooley." While the Trio's version of "Get Together" cracked the Top 40 – indeed, it was the group's last Top 40 hit – the song didn't have a lot of legs to it, and ultimately petered out.

Over the next few years, such artists as Jefferson Airplane and The Carpenters would try to make the song into a long-lasting hit – and each attempt failed. (The Carpenters version, which the DJ on Sunday played a little bit of, was weird. As I've written here before, I love The Carpenters, but Karen's slow, silky voice is so unique, she definitely places her own stamp on songs.) Among those attempts was The Youngbloods' version – which was cut in 1967 and went nowhere.

Enter the National Conference of Christians and Jews.

In 1969, the conference put together a public service announcement for the radio encouraging brotherhood, as bringing diverse groups of people together in harmony is indeed the group's mission. The organization decided "Get Together" fit their message perfectly, and used it – specifically, The Youngbloods' 1967 rendition – in their spot.

Before long, as the DJ relayed the story last Sunday, folks were calling up radio sta-

tions across the country, wondering what that great song was that was played in the PSA. So, "Get Together" was re-released, and before long, had hit the Top 5.

It was a very interesting story. While it's tempting to think most songs are hits from the second they hit the radio waves, that's not exactly true. Some songs need time to grow, others are perfectly good songs but just need to be recorded by other artists, and sometimes fate needs to step in, in the form of a radio or TV commercial. "Get Together," you could argue, needed all three. But it was well worth the wait.

Sometimes you just can't keep a good song down.

* * *

A blog I look at pretty regularly is one written by veteran TV sitcom writer Ken Levine. Levine's credentials are pretty top-notch – he and his writing partner David Isaacs ran *M*A*S*H** for a few years, penned a couple early scripts for *The Simpsons* and wrote many episodes of two of my all-time favorites, *Cheers* and *Frasier* – so when he makes comedy recommendations, I generally pay attention.

Recently, he held a contest on his blog where he provided the set-up, and readers got to submit what they felt would be the funniest punchline. Okay, maybe "contest" wasn't the right word. The entries didn't exactly win anything. However, they were critiqued by Levine – and like I said, with his history, I think burgeoning comedy writers could do far worse than to listen to what he had to say. Levine listed some of the submissions on his site. The set-up was "Danny was so afraid of commitment that...." and here are some of the punchlines to that Levine deemed the best:

- "...he still does not have a favorite Beatle."
- "...his umbilical cord was a bungee."
- "...he moved to Utah for more choices."
- "...he'd only date twins."
- "...he signed a pre-nup with his inflatable girlfriend."
- "...he lives in Four Corners."
- "...he'd only date hermaphrodites."
- "...his marriage license had an expiration date."
- "...he married a Kardashian."
- "...he asked Congress to authorize his actions."
- "...he only listened to 'unfinished' symphonies."
- "...he started writing his first novel on an Etch-a-Sketch."
- "...his imaginary friend was an imaginary acquaintance."
- "...he carried his groceries in his coat pockets because he couldn't make the call between paper or plastic."
- "...his longest relationship was with his divorce lawyer."
- "...he rented a burial plot."

* * *

See you next week.

RHAM School Board to Study Field Trip Costs

by Geeta Schrayer

After some concern about costs were expressed by members of the community, the RHAM Board of Education decided to form a subcommittee to examine field trips at the schools.

Board of Education Chairman Danny Holtsclaw said the topic has come up more than once as individuals wondered about both the cost and value of some of the trips offered. At last month's board meeting, he furthered, Hebron residents Dominic and Nancy Marino (the former a recently-resigned member of the Hebron Board of Education), expressed their concerns about the trips, specifically the trip to Florida with the RHAM music department.

In a letter the Marinos sent to the board they called the trips "a form of economic discrimination and/or classism since only those who can afford such lavish trips can attend."

With two children involved with the music department, the cost of attending the trip would be \$2,550 – an amount the Marinos said was "inaccessible."

The letter went on to say field trips are catered to those who can afford to pay for them, "are not based on academic merit or other factors" and leave students who are left behind feeling excluded. Although some fundraising opportunities are available to help defray the costs, the Marinos wrote they were "inadequate" and included items that are hard to sell like "overpriced baked goods, gift wraps, etc."

The Marinos said both of their children were excellent students who have received music awards and scholarships, but they're "deprived

of opportunities based on economic and financial constraints."

As a result of the Marinos' concerns, Holtsclaw said "I thought it would be a good idea for the board to do due diligence and look at all these programs in general," as well as "the effects of fundraising [and] the value of the programs, and get a sense from students and the community as to what is the best way to proceed: if any changes need to be done, or to proceed as is."

RHAM High School Principal Scott Leslie called the committee "a good thing."

"I think it's warranted," he said. "It's always a good thing for the board to look at any programs that any of our parents have concerns with. So I think from that perspective it's not a bad idea."

However, he went on to explain the different types of field trips that usually took place, and said he wasn't sure there was much that could be done.

First, a particular class might go on a day-time field trip. Leslie said that, while no money is budgeted for the cost of these trips, if a student can't afford the cost and the family informs the school, the school can cover the cost using surplus money from the student activities fund.

But, he added, "that tends to be a very small number of students, and we're also not talking about field trips that tend to be terribly expensive."

Then there are overseas trips, which usually take place over the summer or during school vacations and aren't tied directly to curriculum.

They're optional, and "there's no need for students to participate in order to do well in class," Leslie said, adding no type of financial help was offered for those trips.

Lastly, there's the music trip – the trip the Marinos wrote about in their letter. Leslie said the trip was unique, since it's for a specific group of students: those in chorus and band. While the regional school district doesn't provide any money for the trip, Leslie said RHAM Music Boosters is "generous" in providing grants for students that may not be able to afford the trip.

"I imagine some schools may not offer any financial assistance," Leslie said, "so having an organization like Music Boosters is a real godsend that provides significant funding for students."

However, while Leslie applauded the forming of the subcommittee, he wasn't exactly sure what it'll be able to accomplish.

Leslie added the challenge for the subcommittee is in the fact none of the money that helps cover the cost of the music trip comes from the district, and "I don't think we can mandate that an outside group does more than they're already doing."

"I'm not sure what the subcommittee could do in terms of [offering more assistance] unless they decided to make district money available to go on these trips," Leslie said. "But I certainly wouldn't advocate that because they're not trips that are required for the curriculum."

Over at the middle school, Principal Mike

Seroussi said its major trip was one for eighth-graders to Washington, D.C., and in order to help ensure all the students who want to are able to attend, discussion on the trip begins the year prior, and in addition to fundraising opportunities, scholarships are available.

"We have made sure any child that wants to go gets to go," Seroussi said, adding there are usually about 60-70 students that stay behind, but local field trips – like to the Connecticut Science Center – and other activities are scheduled for those who don't attend.

In addition to D.C., a couple of day field trips are planned for the year including a trip to see the play *A Christmas Carol* at Hartford Stage, Seroussi said. And, like Leslie, Seroussi said the school works with families who have financial struggles.

"Students who can't afford it – we work with the families to make sure everybody goes," he said. "There is nobody that stays behind."

Seroussi said he wasn't sure what the subcommittee would decide, but "whatever they recommend is what we'll go with."

"I understand the burdens today," he said. "Some of the field trips, they can be very educational for kids and in some ways may be the only chance they get to do these things. But on the other hand, they have to weigh that with all the other factors" such as costs.

And weighing those factors is exactly what the subcommittee, which will be appointed at the board's Oct. 21 meeting, will be tasked with doing.

Colchester All-Day K Gives the 'Gift of Time'

by Melissa Roberto

Just one month into the school year, Colchester Elementary School Principal Anne Watson confirmed at Tuesday's Board of Education meeting that the district's expansion of all-day kindergarten – which is new for the 2013-14 year – is well on its way to improving the education of Colchester's youngest scholars.

Watson spoke on behalf of the elementary school's all-day kindergarten teachers, who she said are appreciative to have a program that gives "the gift of time."

To show the board just what doubling the amount of in-school time has accomplished for kindergartners, Watson shared with the board a video containing pictures of students in the classroom. The pictures showed kindergartners working in groups, being active inside and outside, writing on SmartBoards, and using blocks that incorporate math.

"They feel it's a wonderful thing," Watson said on behalf of the teachers.

Watson – also new to the district – tested board members on the advantages they noticed from her presentation. She agreed with members who recalled an increase in student-to-student interaction, movement in the classroom as well as math and writing activities.

Watson added occupational therapists come in throughout the week to help kindergartners use fine motor skills like forming things with putty. Additionally, she said the increase in time allows for more math and writing lessons than what half days allowed. She thanked the board for helping bring the initiative to the district.

"Thank you so much," Watson told the board, "because we're going to see great progress and we already have."

To which Board of Education Chairman Ron Goldstein replied, "Giving the gift of time was important to us all."

The CES principal then shared another video highlighting improvements in first-grade writing lessons, which she said have been positively impacted thanks to resources made available from an early literacy grant. Though the video didn't feature footage inside CES, it showed an example of a lesson currently being taught at the local elementary school that focuses on writing. The lesson teaches students how to assess their work and set goals for themselves, Watson explained.

"It's a shift and it's substantial," Watson concluded.

* * *

Also at Tuesday's meeting, school board

members were positively floored by a presentation given by student Board of Education members Courtney Vitale and Mitchell Hallee.

The current Bacon Academy students delivered a PowerPoint presentation regarding a petition delivered to the board last spring from the high school's community activism class requesting that Colchester serve GMO-free and/or organic food alternatives in the school district's cafeterias. The petition was signed by 288 people, mostly high school students.

The student members' presentation outlined a plan to address the petition request. Vitale and Hallee broke down the plan into three steps: investigating current operations at all school cafeterias, identifying and investigating GMO programs in other schools and to identify and evaluate the options. In depth, these steps included speaking with cafeteria staff and workers, staff and students, as well as contacting schools outside of the district who already have programs in place, and analyzing the possibilities of a completely GMO-free program, a partially GMO-free program or no change at all.

Additionally, the student members said they'd factor in the legal, financial and practical aspects of GMO programs. The two plan to deliver their findings to the board during the

Jan. 14 Board of Education meeting.

Resident Dave Wasniewski, a member of the town's Agriculture Commission, was seated in the crowd, and commented positively on the students' presentation. He said it applies to issues that other town bodies, like the commission, are seeking to solve.

Additionally, administrators and board members smiled from ear to ear during the presentation and applauded the students for a job well done.

Board member Michael Egan thanked administrators for instilling "intelligence" and giving students in the district the tools they need to make positive impacts like the two student board members represented.

"What you're doing has such an important role," Egan told administrators. "These guys are the ones taking on these issues ... It's amazing."

Goldstein also seemed driven by the students' plan. He deemed it a "quite-comprehensive approach."

To Goldstein's request, the board then "enthusiastically" endorsed the students' plan.

* * *

The next Board of Education meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, Nov. 12, at 7 p.m., in the Bacon Academy Media Center.



At left, Maria Barton, and daughters Tabitha Wilson, 17, Veronica Wilson, 12, and Bethany Barton, 6, stand with their first-place pup, Malcolm, who won best in show at last Sunday's Pumpkins 'N Pooches event for his rambunctious running trick with a basketball. The decorated pumpkins, shown right, that were submitted in contests proved to be just as creative. In the 7-9 age category, a pumpkin painted blue resembling Cookie Monster from Sesame Street and a *Despicable Me* minion were among some of the favorites.

Dogs, Pumpkins Fill Colchester Town Green

by Melissa Roberto

Fall activities were in full effect in Colchester last Sunday, Oct. 6, thanks to fancy canines and pumpkins that filled the town green to participate in Colchester's 15th annual Pumpkin 'N Pooches autumn fair and dog festival.

And although the morning rainfall and ominous clouds weren't the most fitting for the outdoor event, they certainly didn't cast a shadow on the spirit of Halloween – and dozens of wagging tails were proof of that.

Each year the Colchester Lions Club organizes the event to raise money for local, regional and national charities.

As expected, the costume and silly dog competitions were one of the most popular aspects of Sunday's event. These competitions allow pooches to flaunt their costumes and talents in front of a panel of three judges. Laughter and applause could be heard even from the outskirts of the green, as owners and their four-legged friends resembled movie characters, clowns and devils, referees and monsters, bats and angels, and the list goes on.

Photo contests and pumpkin-decorating contests also took place, giving those less furry contestants a shot at showcasing their talents.

Despite the damp air, the town green still saw a lot of activity Sunday. Colchester Lions member and Pumpkin 'N Pooches event chairperson Charlene Picard said over 70 vendors were on site selling local art, crafts and many sold healthy pet treats. Moonbounces were on site for the younger attendees and hayrides around the green were available into the late afternoon.

On the canine front, dog and Frisbee demonstrations were given and puppies from Freedom Guide Dogs were also on site.

This year's best ensemble for the dog costume competition was awarded to a crew resembling Star Wars characters. Katie Ouellette, 17, of Lebanon, was dressed in a black outfit and cape as Darth Vader, and her sister, Maddie,

15, turned a white sheet into a dress and had braids in her hair to resemble Princess Leia. Though it seemed the pets they brought with them were the ones who stole the crowd's attention. Tagging along were Rusty, a schnoodle (schnauzer poodle mix) in a Yoda costume and a head-turning Chewbacca, a 10-month-old teacup pig, who was heard squealing throughout the contest.

Picard said she believed it was the first time a pig had ever been in the running but added the Lions Club is "about including and not excluding."

A certain Parson Russell Terrier named Malcolm also turned heads during the silly dog competition. He and his owners, mom Maria Barton, Tabitha Wilson, 17, Veronica Wilson, 12, and Bethany Barton, 6, all of Moodus, took home the best in show honor. The honor was primarily due to Malcolm's energetic running – or some may say dribbling – with a basketball in circles around the green.

Maria Barton was pleased with this year's event and Malcolm's first place standing.

"It's great that he won," she said. "He's obsessed with the basketball. He ruins every basketball we have at the house!"

As for the funniest contest, a five-year-old beagle Labrador mix named Savannah took home first place sporting a cheerleader ensemble. Savannah was dressed from head to toe. She wore a form-fitting red and blue uniform detailed with the word "cheerleader" on the back, wore a bright yellow wavy long-haired wig and even her toes were painted red and blue to match. Her owners, Leslie and Doug Putnam and their two kids Carly, 11, and Spencer, 8, said they found Savannah's costume in a Halloween store. They plan to dress her up in the same get-up on Halloween night. And dad Doug hinted the town of Colchester may be seeing more of her at local sports games in the future.

"She's recruiting for the Bacon Academy



cheerleading team!" he said with a laugh.

Other costume categories included cutest, scariest and most original. The silly dog categories were best kisser, waggiest tail, most unusual trick, furriest, longest ears, tiniest and largest dog.

With the dog competitions deemed successful by onlookers, Picard said this year's decorated pumpkins were also "really amazing." One creation Lions members enjoyed looking at was a snowman made out of three pumpkins painted white. Others included a pumpkin replica of an angry bird from the popular Smart phone game, a cookie monster painted blue with cookies crumbs escaping its mouth and a couple minions from the popular *Despicable Me* movies.

One pumpkin display Picard enjoyed was a painted pumpkin resembling Cinderella's coach, which, according to the Disney movie plot, was once a pumpkin before Cinderella's fairy godmother stepped in. The coach was painted white and adorned with gold glitter and wheels, and a Barbie and horse were also paired with it. The pumpkin received first place in the 13-16 age category.

In addition to laying their eyes on adorned puppies and pumpkins, attendees buzzed about the green taking in all of the offerings, which included tasty treats like hot fudge sundaes and fried dough, and hot dogs and hamburgers, some of which were sponsored by the Colchester Lions.

Picard said the early morning weather originally had Lions questioning whether the event should continue throughout the day. Though the decision to stick it out seemed to be the right one, as Picard said she was "very pleased" with its turnout and deemed the event a success.

She also seemed pleased with the amount of money raised, adding that the total amount met the Lions' goal.

All of the money that was raised during the



Six-year-old chihuahua Murray is always one of the tiniest contenders in the Pumpkins 'N Pooches dog competition. This year he showed up to the event decked out in a tiny Mexican hat and blanket. Olé!

event will go into the Lions club general fund. Each year the club donates to scholarships and organizations. A lot of the money goes towards programs for the visually impaired. These programs include the Connecticut Lions Eye Research Foundation, Lions Low Vision Center of Eastern Connecticut and Freedom Guide Dogs for the Blind. Locally, the club donates to scholarships and holiday food baskets for people in Colchester.

For more information about the Colchester Lions Club visit colchesterlions.org.

WJJMS Project: What's Next?

by Melissa Roberto

Voters overwhelmingly shot down the William J. Johnston Middle School/Senior Center/Community Center project last week at referendum – but it looks like the conversation won't stop there.

A joint meeting of the boards of selectmen, education and finance is scheduled for next week, to assess the needs of the town and determine what the next steps are.

The \$57.26 million building project proposal was rejected by a 1,993-693 tally at the Oct. 1 referendum. The proposal included additions and renovations to the existing WJJMS, along with the incorporation of a senior center and community center on site. Following the bold defeat, town officials seem to agree that needs within the town's buildings – specifically the middle school and senior center – still exist.

The discussion of scheduling a tri-board meeting was prompted by selectman Jim Ford and added to the agenda at last Thursday's selectman meeting. Ford said he felt the meeting would allow members to "sit down reasonably quickly, assess where we are and what the mandate was from the citizens and as a group move forward."

Ford said different scenarios like splitting the project up and the potential of a new project are some alternatives that could be up for discussion.

First Selectman Gregg Schuster said he

agreed with the scheduling of a tri-board meeting. However, he reminded the selectmen to be aware of the June 30 deadline school districts are given each year to submit an application to receive state reimbursement for school construction.

If the school is involved in another project, Schuster said "boards would have to start voting in March" in order to have a May referendum and meet the June 30 deadline. He also spoke about legal steps concerning a new project. If there are any, he said he'd like to be prepared for those "even" by the next selectmen meeting.

Ford said his idea of a tri-board meeting wasn't intended to extend the process. He said he didn't want the process to be rushed either.

"There was a very serious mandate in that referendum that said there was something the public did not want," he said. "We need to take a hard look at it and put together a program that will allow us to hopefully achieve the purpose that we all well know needs to be done."

As of right now, that purpose is undefined. Selectwoman Rosemary Coyle said she wasn't sure if the former building committee would be willing to continue if a piece of the former proposal was looked at again. Coyle and fellow selectmen Greg Cordova and Stan Soby were also in favor of a tri-board meeting.

"There's some serious issues here that have

to be addressed," Cordova said in regards to the middle school.

Coyle shared benefits of a tri-board meeting.

"People have different positions and different points of view and that's a good thing," she said. "[It] helps in the process and decision."

From the audience, citizen Mike Caplet – running for the Board of Selectmen this November – said he was discouraged that a backup plan wasn't already in place regarding the project. He also applauded Ford for prompting discussion about the aftermath of the referendum vote. Another citizen, Gary Siddell, spoke of his fear of moving a new project along too soon.

"I'm just cautious that we don't jump into the next thing without looking at the answers," said Siddell.

At Tuesday's Board of Education meeting, members also seemed to feel the tri-board meeting was necessary. School board chairman Ron Goldstein highlighted that although the building committee's project failed, he feels the work committee members completed is helpful for the future.

"The foundation of what they did will move forward," Goldstein said. "They created awareness in the community of the needs in the town for both a middle school and senior center primarily and also made the town more aware of

the community center and youth center needs."

In regards to the second go-around, if there is one, Goldstein said, "We have to make sure it's the right plan."

Board of Education Vice Chairman Don Kennedy said he was disappointed by the referendum results, but preferred the school to be the focus now.

"Our realm is the school," Kennedy said of the school board. "That's where my preference would be."

Member Michael Egan stated he feels the "first thing" officials need to point out is what the townspeople are looking for before developing the next plan. One citizen from the crowd suggested this could be done by surveying the public via a social networking website that someone could track.

Goldstein was certain that some aspects of the middle school's deficiencies couldn't wait, and said the next fiscal year budget might be impacted by the costs of fixing some.

"There are wounds that need to heal," Goldstein said. "We're going to make sure there's not just Band-Aids. We need to take care of those in a relatively short time."

The tri-board meeting will take place at Town Hall Wednesday, Oct. 16, at 7 p.m. Superintendent of Schools Jeffry Mathieu said the public is encouraged to attend and weigh in.

Like Mother, Like Daughter – Like Granddaughter

by Melissa Roberto

There are a few idioms that can be used to describe a family business that has reached third-generation status. Original owner of hair salon Cuts Unlimited in Colchester Kathy Ewings chose to use "the apple doesn't fall far from the tree."

There's truth in that saying for Ewings, who has watched her daughter and granddaughter come on board as hair dressers at the salon she opened in 1988 – hence why she referred to herself as "the big oak."

Though when Ewings opened the hair salon that formerly stood on Mill Street she wasn't aware her kin would follow in her footsteps. In fact, neither did her daughter Keri Vincent, who took over as owner of the business when it relocated to 203 Lebanon Ave. in 2004.

"She's the brain here," Keri said of her mom.

Ewings, 63, vividly remembers styling her friends' hair in high school. She recalls "always" wanting to become a hairdresser. After she got married and had two children, Ewings received her hairdresser/cosmetology license from the then-Connecticut Institute of Hair Design in East Hartford. She ran the business while raising a family in town, and Keri, now 42, recalled growing up in the hair salon environment.

But that doesn't mean Keri wanted to be a hairdresser like her mom. Instead, Keri said it was something she "never" wanted to do. However, after high school, Keri turned down an offer from the state of Connecticut to become a stenographer. She said business classes were always a part of school she loved, and she wanted to make a career out of it. In the meantime, Keri started working as a receptionist at her mom's salon. It was there that she started to have visions of a future at the salon – not as a hair stylist, but as a business owner.

"At that time, you couldn't manage a salon unless you held a [hairdressing] license for two years," Keri explained. "I got a license just to help run the business but not to [style hair]."

However, once she started taking classes at the same hair institute as her mom, Keri said she picked up a knack for hair styling. Keri suddenly had a change of heart and, looking back now, she thinks her avoidance of becoming a hairdresser was out of fear.

"I didn't think I would ever be able to do it," Keri said. "I sat here as a receptionist and I watched all the girls work and I was lost and confused. I could never figure out how they put

it all together."

Fast-forward to the present day and Keri is not only the owner of the salon but she's a hair stylist too. Now, she said, she "can't imagine not doing it."

"This business has supported me with really good opportunities," Keri said. "I was able to raise my family with a great, flexible schedule and build a really good clientele."

Keri lives in Colchester with her husband John and three daughters, Kaleigh, 21, Kristi, 18, and Karissa, 17. Last month Keri and Kathy proudly welcomed Kaleigh to the business – a move that marked it a third-generation family business.

For Kaleigh, the instinct of becoming a hairdresser, like her grandmother, set in early. When she graduated high school in 2010, she knew hairdressing is what she wanted to do with her life.

"I would tell people that's what I want to do, but people discouraged me," she explained. "They would say it would be an easy job for me because of the family business."

Though Kaleigh had already signed up at a hairdressing school, and her family was supporting her, peer pressure finally got to her, and at the last minute she enrolled at Three Rivers Community College for nursing.

"I was all set to go and I backed out," Kaleigh said. "My family was very supportive about it, but everyone else was being downers."

But she couldn't lose her passion for hairdressing, and about halfway through the curriculum, she went back to her dream. In 2012, she signed up at the Paul Mitchell School in North Haven and finished classes this June.

"It was a long time coming and it feels great," she said of the license she received last month. "I couldn't imagine not doing it now. I'm just so happy I didn't listen to anyone, and did what I wanted to do from the beginning."

And now, it seems the three women feel quite accomplished and happy with their growing business. On Monday, the three recalled many of the aspects of the job they enjoy. Each gave credit to their "amazing" clients for making their job enjoyable. Kathy explained being a hairdresser requires a lot of communication with clients.

"One of my clients once said, 'You're like my psychologist!'" Kathy said with a laugh.

Keri, too, agreed that getting to know clients comes with the responsibility of being a good hairdresser.



Initial owner of Cuts Unlimited in Colchester Kathy Ewings, seated, is joined at the business by her daughter, Keri Vincent, left, and granddaughter, Kaleigh Vincent, right. Last month, Kaleigh obtained her hairdressing license and now joins her family members for work at the salon, making it a third-generation operation.

"Every half hour to an hour we have to stop, change gears and start over and remember what happened six weeks before," she said. "All day long we do this and still try to perform good service and make people happy."

The two elder generations also explained how fun it's been to watch hair trends come and go, and sometimes return, over the years. They said they're already learning from Kaleigh about the latest trends.

Additionally, meeting the third-generation status isn't the only accomplishment the business reached in 2013. Earlier this year Cuts Unlimited celebrated its 25th anniversary in Colchester. Asked if they see another successful 25 years ahead, both Kathy and Keri turned to Kaleigh, who said if the opportunity arises in the future she'd happily take over the business.

"I am such a die-hard Colchester fan," Kaleigh admitted. "I'm so proud of my family

and how we're all here. I'm just proud of my mom and grandma for keeping this salon around."

The three also credited their "amazing" four hair stylists – Sandy Silva of Lisbon and Bonnie Madel, Tonya Tallman and Maria Balaban, all of Colchester – for helping the business succeed. Later this year, all of the stylists will be present at the salon for a one-day "cut-a-thon," in which the stylists will take walk-ins and offer hair cuts at a discount price. All of the proceeds will go to the Colchester Food Bank.

Cuts Unlimited, located at 203 Lebanon Ave., offers an array of services varying from hair cuts, coloring, styling, and more. The business is open Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 9 a.m.-8 p.m., Thursdays from noon-8 p.m., Fridays from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. and Saturdays from 9 a.m.-2 p.m. It is closed Sundays and Mondays.

To reach the salon, readers can call 860-537-0666.

Meet Colchester's Board of Ed. Contenders

by Melissa Roberto

As of this week, four Colchester citizens are seeking seats on the Board of Education and there are four seats available.

Of the four contenders, three are currently seated and seeking re-election. Those members are Republicans Ron Goldstein and Mitch Koziol and Democrat Don Kennedy. The fourth, a newcomer to the political scene, is Colchester Independent Party candidate Michael Voiland.

Town Clerk Nancy Bray confirmed this week that, while four citizens seeking four open seats may not constitute a race right now, parties with available slots can still fill those slots up to the Oct. 28 deadline. Republican Town Committee Chairman Brenden Healy said current member John Reever, who initially was running for re-election, recently decided to pull out of the running due to family reasons. He said the Republican committee will try to fill that slot in time for the election.

Goldstein, the current school board chairman, has already served one four-year term. Prior to his spot on the school board, he served on the Board of Finance for 15 years, acting as the liaison for the education board during that time. When it comes down to it, Goldstein said education issues have always been an aspect of town he's "most passionate" about. Mainly, he said, because he loves the district.



Ron Goldstein

Goldstein highlighted what the district has accomplished in the last four years. He described this year's implementation of all-day kindergarten "a significant milestone," and was proud to say William J. Johnston Middle School has been a Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) school for the last two years. He recognized Jack Jackter Intermediate School as the only school in the district with the Higher Order Thinking (HOT) program and at the high school level, Goldstein said there have been "tremendous" percentages of Advanced Placement (AP) test scores and the number of students taking them.

Looking four years ahead, Goldstein said his goal for the school board would be for it to "continue to change and improve."

The next term also calls for an update to the board's strategic plan, he said, which is a document revisited every "five or six years" that outlines the entire district's guidelines. Also, the next few years will feature a continued discussion of the needs at the middle school, he said.

A lifelong resident of Colchester – with the exception of time spent in Massachusetts when he attended Brandeis University and Harvard Law School – Goldstein said he's fond of serving his hometown. Aside from his volunteer



Mitch Koziol

work, Goldstein runs his own law firm in town and, alongside his mom Renee and brother Bruce, helps manage a property management and development company in Colchester.

"Colchester is a great community and one that I feel quite strongly about," Goldstein said. "I think we've got a very strong board and a strong administrative team that I really consider it a privilege to be a chairman of."

Joining Goldstein on the school board ticket is Republican Mitch Koziol, who has also served on the board since 2009. His vision of another four years on the school board was quite clear. Koziol said his goal is "to try to maintain the excellent schools that Colchester has."

Koziol was born and raised in Colchester and, like Goldstein, found his way back to town after college. He said he's enjoyed witnessing Colchester grow "quite a bit." He currently lives with his wife Kelly and his three children, Madelyn, 7, Lily, 5, and Jack, 2. He said his hope is to continue to serve for the board that helps the town create a strong school district, which in turn affects Colchester as a whole, he said.

"I feel that for a town to be really prosperous you need to have a good school system," he said.

Looking back, Koziol said the last four years on the board wasn't easy, due to economic constraints. However, he was proud of initiatives the board was a part of that saved the town money in the long term, like the virtualization of the district's servers. This technological implementation "took all of the servers and put



Don Kennedy

them on one," he explained, "and this was able to save electricity, power, cooling, for those [computers]."

In the years to come, Koziol said "nothing can be trimmed" from the budget that hasn't been already. In his mind, maintaining what's there is important. He furthered he does not want to see any more programs cut. The board member is currently a performance engineer at United Health Group and his volunteer position on the board allows him to give input on information technology discussions, he said. He's also passionate about increasing technology in the classroom. Lastly, Koziol feels proud to have served on what he said is a "supportive" board.

"The board is very supportive of the district and the teachers realize that," Koziol said. "They get a lot of support from their board members and that's what probably keeps them there. You might not have that support system in other towns."

Democrat Don Kennedy is also a familiar face to board members and administrators and teachers of the town's four public schools. He has been seated on the board since 2008 and was re-elected in 2009. Currently the vice chairman of the board, Kennedy conveyed positive feelings of the district's success.

"On the academic side, results are up pretty much across the board," Kennedy said.

Kennedy furthered the board is "always" looking to improve. If elected for another four year term, Kennedy said he'd like to "maintain the momentum" though the future automatically poses challenges due to state mandates. These include new testing, he said, which is a challenge he feels Colchester is ready for.

A "big goal" for the district Kennedy said he'd like to see maintained and even increase is getting more children to read and write and for them to enjoy it. He added he'd like to see the spike in the number of students taking AP tests, and their scores, to continue to increase. And perhaps the "biggest challenge," Kennedy said the board may be confronted with, is solving the facility needs at WJMS.

Kennedy has been married for 22 years to his wife Theresa and has three sons, Ryan, 18, Sean, 16, and Brendan, 14. He has worked at The Hartford insurance group as a senior technical lead in the IT department for 28 years.

In terms of his skills that he hopes to continue to bring to the board, Kennedy said he's able to see the "big picture, connect the dots from one issue to another and bring past solutions to current issues."

For CIP candidate Michael Voiland, a seat on the Board of Education would be his first stab in town politics but that doesn't mean he's entirely new to Colchester's school district.

Voiland previously served as the Bacon Academy assistant wrestling coach for four or five years, he said, and then assumed the head coach position for another 12-13. His involvement with Colchester's youth continued as he helped lead the youth wrestling program. Having lived in Colchester for almost 25 years, Voiland said he's "always" been interested in serving the community though he admitted his work schedule hadn't always allowed it. But now at a "semi-retirement" stage, Voiland said he has time to give back to his community.

When his three daughters, Sarah, Leah and Rebekah, were going through the school district (they've since graduated college), Voiland said he and his wife BethAnn "stressed to them the importance of their education, building a good foundation and then having them take responsibility for that."

Now running for the Board of Education, Voiland said he would use an "open mind." As working as a senior developer at The Hartford for almost 30 years, Voiland feels his problem solving skills and business experience would also help him serve the board well.

"I have a general concern for the community," Voiland said. "I've seen a lot of kids succeed and I've seen a lot of kids fail and I want to reduce that number. I think that's important."

Voiland added he "absolutely" values education, and is "excited about this whole [election] process."



Michael Voiland

* * *

Election Day is Tuesday, Nov. 5.

Eleven Running for Just Four Finance Board Slots

by Elizabeth Bowling

With municipal elections less than a month away, this year's Board of Finance race in East Hampton – for four available positions – is well underway.

With 11 candidates total, the breakdown is as follows: four Democrats, four Republicans, and three Chatham Party candidates.

All four Democratic candidates running for the Board of Finance would be new to this board specifically, but not to local politics or local involvement.

Alan Hurst is a former chairman of the Board of Education, a former member of the Town Council and a former district governor of the Rotary Club. He's taking his chances on running for the Board of Finance because he wants to continue to help the town.

"I love the town of East Hampton. I love volunteering in East Hampton. I want to offer my expertise," he said, noting that his expertise is in the field of finance.

The 62-year-old chief financial officer at Hermell Products, Inc., a manufacturing company, moved to East Hampton in 1990.

He said he'd like to use his financial knowledge and experience to help control costs and make improvements to the town.

In addition to "keeping taxes low," Hurst said, "water is going to be an issue in our town; gas is going to be an issue in our town. In order to grow our commercial base we need to have a public water system and gas utility."

He said he thinks the best option would be to bring the water and gas up the Air Line Trail from Cobalt – an option that would require some negotiation, he said, because "it would make a whole lot of sense to do both at the same time."

Another issue Hurst said he supports is the high school renovation project, despite its "big price tag."

Jack Solomon is a former member of the Economic Development Commission, a past president of the Rotary Club, a member of the Lake Commission and the owner of Laurel Island in the middle of Lake Pocotopaug.

Solomon, 72, has lived in East Hampton since he retired as director of technology planning for Praxair in 2005 – a job that made him responsible for putting together a budget, he said.

Solomon, who called himself "good with numbers," said that if elected, he would focus on "living within our budget," "spending money where it makes sense" and "investigating" whatever the board wants to spend money on.

Dean Markham, 65, has lived in East Hampton his entire life. He is a realtor for Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices New England Properties. He was also a practicing certified public accountant for 30 years and a former state representative for the 34th Assembly District – making him familiar with both finances and government.

But Markham said he doesn't think bringing in businesses is the answer to improving taxes.

He said, "From the standpoint of East Hampton, [the question is] how can we improve the tax base and the challenges of that in a community that's not in a great position to add or bring in businesses" because of a lack of zoned property?

Instead, he said he thinks the answer may come in the form of "creative re-dos of properties that we have."

One example of a redo that he said is a "good idea" is the current plan for 13 Summit St., which calls for the conversion of one of the old mill properties into condominiums.

He said it would not only bring in some affordable housing, it would also bring a property back into the tax base.

Markham also noted the need for water. He noted that the Summit Street project could "put a strain on the limited amounts of public water that are available."

Markham said the key for success is "working as a team with the council and other boards and agencies to come up with the best ideas" for the sake of the community.

He added, "Group dynamic makes things change for the better."

Mark Vickery, 48, is a member of the Parks and Recreation Commission, the president of the East Hampton High School Sports Boosters, and manages the small business-lending group at Liberty Bank.

Vickery, who has lived in East Hampton for 20 years and coached "every sport under the sun" for the past 15, said that now that his kids are older he's not coaching as much and wants to give back to his community in another way.

"I decided to run for the Board of Finance

because I'm all about giving to the community," he said.

The self-proclaimed "complete numbers geek" said, "I want to make sure the numbers make sense."

This is Vickery's first time running for an elected position, but he said if elected he'd be most concerned with "anything that has to do with the next generation."

Education and athletic fields fall under that category, he said. He added that the lighting of the soccer field was "critical."

Another important issue to Vickery, he said, is making the town more conducive to commerce because "it's businesses that will add to the tax base."

He furthered, "Commercial growth has to go hand in hand with residential growth."

But, he said, water will be an issue because the town's available water is not conducive to having businesses in the center of town.

On the Republican side of the race, four candidates are bringing forth varying skill sets.

After 20 years of service to the Board of Education, Don Coolican, 75, is seeking election to the Board of Finance. Coolican has been a resident of East Hampton for 39 years, and a retired airline pilot for 15.

He said that over the course of his time on the Board of Education, he's seen "excessive spending." He said his opinion has usually been in the minority while serving on the school board, and has had "little control over the Board of Education budget."

That's why, he said, he'd like to bring his expertise to the Board of Finance because he feels that oftentimes members of the Board of Finance don't understand how the Board of Education budget works.

"In general, we have to become very careful in the next few years because we'll see our borrowing increase because of the high school building project," he said, noting that there will be other things that need to be funded in addition to the building project, like roads and water.

Coolican is running for the Board of Finance despite the fact that his four-year term on the Board of Education isn't over for another two years.

Coolican, who has "never lost an election," said, "Either way I'm going to be hanging around here for a couple more years."

Lori Wilcox is currently on the Zoning Board of Appeals and a member of the Belltown Garden Club. She retired in April after working for 20 years at United Technologies – a job she called "financial in nature."

Wilcox, 56, has lived in East Hampton for nearly 30 years and said that now that she is retired and has more time, she's interested in a position on the Board of Finance to "try to be a good citizen."

She said she's not interested in any specific issue; rather, her priority would be "crafting a budget."

Marc Lambert, 50, is running for an elected position for the first time, but he has plenty of experience in the realm of finance. He is the chief financial officer for a company called Business Lenders. At a more local level, he was the treasurer and a coach for East Hampton Little League, as well as the treasurer and president of the East Hampton Soccer Club.

"I volunteered doing sports-related activities and, now that my kids are older and they require less of my time, it's a way that I can use my background and knowledge to contribute to the town," Lambert said, regarding why he's running for the Board of Finance.

He said that, if elected, he would push the town administration to provide plenty of information so that residents are fully informed

before they vote on the budget.

"I am going to ask the administration, particularly the Board of Education, to provide detail," he said.

He added, "My main concern is to provide as much transparency [as possible] to the citizens of the town because I think for years there hasn't been a lot of information about the budget."

Sal Nucifora isn't new to the campaign process. In the past, he's thrown his hat in the ring for a seat on the state Senate, the Town Council and the Board of Education, but with no luck.

This is his first time running for the Board of Finance, and he hopes he will finally have a chance to help his town.

"As I get older, I want to help contribute to the town I was raised in," he said.

The 44-year-old has lived in East Hampton for 37 years, and currently works as a mechanical engineer at Electric Boat in New London. He is a member of the Chatham Historical Society and a fraternity organization in town.

"I'm a fiscal conservative and I'd like to see the town save money and I'd like to ensure that the town maintains roads and bridges and infrastructure and does so as cheaply as possible," he said.

One of Nucifora's goals is to keep the town beautiful, rural and homey, like it's been his entire life.

He said that because he's running as a Republican, he's seeking to bring about "better change than what the Chatham Party represents."

Nucifora said he is in favor of putting in a usable bathroom at the historical society because the society is "a great asset for the town" and "represents East Hampton."

In addition to bringing water to the historical society, Nucifora said he's interested in the town's water situation in general.

"I think we should have clean water for everyone in East Hampton. I think it's a travesty that some business and homes have contaminated water," he said. "I would like that rectified, one way or another."

He also said he is in favor of keeping the lake as clean as possible, as well as bringing small businesses into town so that there will be a larger tax base.

Finally, after weeks of uncertainty, the Chatham Party will officially have the names of three candidates on the ballots for the Board of Finance.

Paul Hoffman, 56, who has lived in East Hampton since 2001, is a newcomer to the Board of Finance. Hoffman, a registered Democrat, has been a town moderator at local referendums for almost two years and serves as an alternate member on the Planning and Zoning Commission since March of last year. He is a full-time graphic designer and owns his own consulting company.

Hoffman said he is running for the Board of Finance for "more than one reason." But he said his primary reason is that "current Board of Finance members were too polarized and too interested in promoting their own party."

For example, Hoffman said that he felt the members of the Board of Finance made "short-sighted statements" and decisions about lighting the high school soccer field and the loca-

tion of town administration.

Regarding the soccer field lights, he said, "The original plan [that was designed to be a part of the high school building renovation project] was far more complete" than the plan the town is going through with, which will cost about \$200,000.

Regarding the location of town administration, Hoffman said the superintendent of schools and her staff are located in a too-small building off Main Street. He said the Board of Finance had an opportunity to move that administration to the high school as part of the high school renovation project – which, he said, would allow the town to rent out the current administration building and make money – but didn't.

In addition to Hoffman's interest in being a bi-partisan and non-polarized voice on the Board of Finance, he said he's running to give back.

"I want to be able to give back to my community, but I want to do it in a very practical and long range way," he said.

Patricia Gauthier, 66, is a retired teacher and now owns Patriotic Pet Care, a small local business that provides pet care and pet training.

Gauthier, who has lived in East Hampton since 1971, said this is her first time running for a seat in any elected position.

"I'm interested in fiscal responsibility and long-term budget planning," she said.

If elected, she said she'd like the finance board to do a "needs assessment" for the next 10 years to "prioritize spending."

"We need to have a vision," she said. "I'd like to budget in a way that would prevent crisis."

Gauthier is a self-proclaimed "analytical thinker," "good negotiator" and "team player." She is also vice chairman of the Chatham Party, a volunteer dog trainer with Protectors of Animals, a client advocate at the ABC Women's Center and active in her church. She has two children who went through the East Hampton school system.

Scott Sanicki could not be reached for comment, but according to the Chatham Party's official website, he is currently an alternate member of the East Hampton Planning & Zoning Commission. He moved to East Hampton in 2002 and is a Program Chief at Pratt & Whitney where he's been responsible for managing multi-million dollar budgets.

The website quotes him saying, "I am running for office to utilize the skills I have learned through my extensive education and real life work experiences to aid the town staff and residents in ensuring that we, as a community, respectively utilize our shared resources to better our town."

"I believe the Board of Finance should be working hand in hand with our Town Council," the quote continues, "and our town staff to accurately understand not only our short term, but our long-term goals to better improve our community in a financially responsible manner."

* * *

Elections are Tuesday, Nov. 5, from 6 a.m.-8 p.m., at the East Hampton High School gymnasium.



Lori Wilcox



Sal Nucifora



Patricia Gauthier



Paul Hoffman



Marc Lambert

‘Tis the Season for the Paranormal in East Hampton

by Elizabeth Bowling

Halloween is just around the corner, making it the perfect time of year to get spooked – and learn a little something – from the idea of paranormal activity.

About a dozen brave Belltown residents, including one especially brave child, dropped by the East Hampton Public Library Wednesday night to sit in on a lecture by Joe Franke and Orlando Ferrante, the co-founders of the Connecticut Paranormal Research Society.

Between the two of them, the investigators have more than 50 years of experience researching what some would call haunted cemeteries, damned villages, and cursed families.

Though they’re Connecticut-based, Franke and Ferrante have had clients ranging from as far away as India, Germany and Chicago, to as close as Ferrante’s own home in Bethel.

Speaking from his experience, Ferrante said, “If you want to do this stuff, you have to expect that it can follow you home.”

Franke added, “You can get negative entities attached to you or your family.”

He explained that their job is to analyze their clients’ claims and try to validate those claims with evidence.

Franke ensured that the two are in the business “for the right reasons” and not for the

money. He explained that he does this work to help people, not for the fame and fortune that goes along with a movie or television show. In fact, he said he turned down an offer from *Ghost Hunters* in 2003.

“This is a very serious field of business,” he said. “We take a very scientific view.”

Ferrante added, “This is real stuff, folks. This is not what you see on television.”

After covering some of the basics, like the powers and dangers of a Ouija board – which Ferrante said would “tell you what you want to hear to lure you in” – the research team showed a series of photographs taken at seemingly haunted places.

For example, a building in Seymour formerly known as the Carousel Garden was once known for the strange activities that happened inside, like a cash register levitating, glasses flying off shelves, and staff members hearing their names called from far away after hours.

A photo of the outside of the building, which showed white, cloudlike figures, left one viewer saying, “How unusual,” and “Unexplainable.”

The team went on to show numerous pictures, mostly in cemetery settings, that had what they called “orbs.” They explained that orbs are usually dismissed because they look like specks of

dust or reflections of sunlight.

But Franke and Ferrante beg to differ because, they said, the orbs in their photographs can only be seen in photographs, “not with the naked eye.”

One viewer said, “It’s funny how they show up in the picture but you can’t see it in person.”

Moving on from orbs, the researchers showed photographs of what they believe to be apparitions, or, as Franke defined it, a “spiritual manifestation into a human being.”

The first bout of spooky pictures were taken at night, when it was “eerily quiet,” as Ferrante put it. But just when the common theme seemed to be darkness, the experts showed photos from broad daylight that featured children who were reportedly not present at the time the photo was taken.

Franke explained his theory that many spiritual appearances are children because “if someone passes away, they can come back to any age” and perhaps they choose to come back in their youth. But not all spirits come in human form, Franke said. Some are just balls of energy, for example.

Moving on from photographs, Franke and Ferrante delved into voice and video recordings. They said that, in person, the voices could

not be heard, but later, when reviewing their magnetic tape recordings, the voices become prominent.

Recordings are an important part of their investigations, they said, because it’s a way for them to get information that they can’t get simply by being present. Sometimes, like if they’re investigating a building or residency, they leave a recorder on the premises to try to pick up any voices when the house is empty.

Or, even creepier, sometimes they record themselves talking to a spirit or a demon, and they actually receive a response. That’s called an “interactive experience,” Ferrante said.

They explained that they often work with psychics who channel the spirits they investigate. Ferrante said this is a “very dangerous” approach because the psychic totally allows the spirit to take over his body.

After the lecture, one viewer, Michele Zeller, spoke highly of the research team, calling them the “most ethical” she’s seen in the business.

She added, “I believe they’re the most credible.”

Another viewer, sufficiently spooked by what she had just seen, quipped, “I don’t want to go home tonight.”

East Hampton Town Council Approves Agricultural Commission Ordinance

by Elizabeth Bowling

The Town Council voted Tuesday to move forward with an ordinance forming a new agricultural commission in town.

Before voting, though, the council heard public remarks from a slew of residents, including some who were quite skeptical.

Resident Tim Cavanaugh said, “We got to save what we have. And I think regulations and putting pressure on people is going to hurt that. I hope it’s going to be a committee that favors the farming community and wants to bring more farms and promote it.”

Sue Weintraub, chairwoman of the council, responded by reading a line from the ordinance, “The Town of East Hampton wishes to promote, protect and preserve quality of agricultural and farm life and the character of East Hampton as per the East Hampton Plan of Conservation and Development.”

More skepticism came from East Hampton resident Roger Lawson, who asked the council, “What does the government have to know about us farmers?”

Town Manager Mike Maniscalco explained, “This is not a commission that is meant to come down on farmers, to regulate farmers, to look at farmers, to determine whether their practices are appropriate, to determine if they’re meeting zoning regulations, to determine whether their meeting animal control regulations.”

He furthered, “All of those things are way outside of the activities that this commission would do.”

Weintraub said the council got a “very clear signal from two public forums that we had that were very well-attended” by local farmers in support of the commission.

She said, “We’re not trying to tell anybody what to do. This is really to help to create a dialogue and communication between different government agencies” and the farming community.

Other residents, like Dan Tegolini, director of sales at Guida’s Dairy, were in support of establishing the commission.

Tegolini said that from a business standpoint, “We cannot get enough milk here in Connecti-

cut to fulfill our needs.”

He furthered that his company tries to get as much milk as possible at the local level, but only gets about 70 percent in-state. He added that “local” is a “buzzword in retail right now.”

“I’d like to see the town support something like this, not to tell the farmers what to do,” he said, “but to make things better for everybody.”

Resident Mary Ann Dostaler was in favor of moving forward with the establishment of the commission, too.

“I think that this would be a great commission to have,” she said. “It is meant to be completely supportive of the farming community.”

However, she noted that the authority of the commission is “not articulated in the ordinance,” though, she added, she doesn’t think it needs to be. Regardless, she suggested the council clarify what exactly is the authority of the commission.

East Hampton resident Kerry Comisky said she also supports the formation of an agricultural commission, but thinks she understands why some residents are skeptical about it.

Comisky referred to a study by the University of Connecticut that determined there were about 1,500 horses in the state, when in fact there were more like 45,000, she said.

“We hide,” she said. “There’s nobody that can hide a 1,200-pound animal like a Nutmegger.”

Thus, she concluded that some people may be nervous to be pulled out of hiding by the commission.

Mary Krogh was the first resident at Tuesday’s meeting to suggest making amendments to the membership portion of the ordinance.

She recommended that the council increase the number of agriculturally experienced members on the commission.

Later in the meeting, the council members decided to revise the membership section of the ordinance. Originally, the draft stated, “The Agricultural Commission shall consist of seven voting members appointed by the Town Council at least two of which shall be from the agri-

cultural community.” But they decided to increase the minimum number of agriculture-based members to three. They did not limit the number of agricultural members.

Council member Derek Johnson noted the importance of having some non-agricultural members on the commission.

He said, “One of the goals and purposes of the commission is to provide recommendations for what’s the appropriate balance between agricultural and residential property. So I think we want folks that are not in the agricultural community.”

Regarding the implementation of the commission, Johnson said, “I think this is an important step. I think it’s a first step. It may be the last step.”

The council also decided to add that the “animal control officer shall also serve as an ex officio member.”

Maniscalco explained how plans for an Agricultural Commission in East Hampton came to be.

According to the town manager, the town’s animal control officer suggested that East Hampton implement a Right to Farm ordinance after he had some particular difficulty with wild roosters and goats in the community.

Maniscalco explained that Connecticut is a Right to Farm state, meaning state legislation is already in place. By implementing a local Right to Farm ordinance, local staff has something to rely upon, he said, “rather than having to go up that next level to the state.”

The town then held workshops that local farmers and other members of the general public could attend to discuss the Right to Farm ordinance and the potential for an Agricultural Commission, Maniscalco furthered.

“From that first council meeting, it became very apparent to us that there was no communication occurring between the town and our agricultural community,” he said.

The town then started putting together an ordinance based off of Lebanon’s Right to Farm ordinance. After one more workshop, the ordinance was revised, he said. The Town Council

then voted that the ordinance go to a public hearing.

He called the ordinance “straight forward” and “simple.” He said the ordinance “creates a body to act as a communications venue between the agriculture community and the municipality.”

Additionally, the ordinance will “provide a venue for our agricultural community to gain a better understanding of tax laws,” he said.

Town Council Vice Chairman Glenn Suprono stressed the importance of the Agricultural Commission ordinance.

“This document is literally for the benefit of the farmers in this town,” Suprono said. “This document is, if you will, a gateway for your protection as farmers for you to build your commission the way you want to build it with the sanction of town government.”

Council member Ted Hintz sang a similar tune.

He said, “Whatever the commission puts into it is what the farmers are going to get out of it.”

Council member George Pfaffenbach added that an agricultural commission has been “sorely needed in town for a long time. I think it’s very beneficial to the farmer. It gives them a forum where they can meet and have their discussions about tax issues or whatever and bring items like that forward to the council.”

Anyone interested in serving on the new commission can get an application at the Town Manager’s office, 20 East High St., or on the town website, easthamptonct.gov.

The following boards and commissions are also currently accepting applications:

Public Safety Committee, Clean Energy Task Force, Conservation-Lake Commission, CT River Assembly, Economic Development Commission, Ethics Commission, Inland Wetlands Watercourses Agency, and Water and Sewer Commission.

* * *

The next regularly scheduled meeting for the East Hampton Town Council is Tuesday, Oct. 22, at 6:30 p.m. in the East Hampton High School library.

Brody No Longer Just ‘Interim’ at GHS

by Geeta Schrayer

Gilead Hill School Interim Principal Eric Brody can now drop the “I” word from his title.

The Board of Education unanimously agreed to appoint him as full principal of the school at a special meeting last Thursday, Oct. 3.

The appointment came almost one year to the day after Brody was appointed interim principal of the Pre-K-through Grade 2 school. The appointment became active last December, when then-principal Kathy Veronesi stepped in as acting superintendent after the departure of Eleanor Cruz. Prior to that, Brody had been assistant principal at Hebron Elementary School since March 2012.

Superintendent of Schools Jeff Newton said this week he was “extremely excited” about having Brody on board as the official principal after his 10-month stint as interim. He called him a “very caring and nurturing leader” who is highly-qualified and established a “wonderful rapport with staff and students and families.”

In a letter sent to parents Oct. 4, Newton added he was confident Brody would “continue to foster and support instructional programming, implementation, and initiatives, along with all of the wonderful activities that occur at Gilead on a daily basis.”

Board of Education Chairwoman Kathy Shea said this week she was also excited about Brody’s appointment.

Since starting in his role as interim principal Brody has “had a pretty good amount of time to get accustomed to the school,” she said, “and we have heard such glowing reports about him there, so we were very pleased.”

Shea added she felt Brody acclimated “very quickly” to Gilead Hill School, and is working “very well” with the staff, students and parents.

“And that’s what’s really important,” she stated.

Moving forward, Shea said she hopes Brody will continue setting a good direction for, and working with everyone who’s involved with the school.

And according to Brody, that’s exactly what

will happen. He said Wednesday while it was nice to lose the “interim” moniker, the change in title won’t mean a change in much else.

“It’s always nice to be official,” he said, explaining a question he was asked a lot by parents and staff since the school year began was whether or not he would remain in the position.

“I think being able to definitely say ‘yes, this is the person in this role,’ that helps in just bringing some closure,” but “it doesn’t change the work,” he said. “I did the same work Thursday [when I was appointed] as I did on Friday.”

Brody added “the focus is still on the kids and the work we need to do.”

Some of that work continues to be related to the preparation for and implementation of the new Common Core State Standards, teacher and administrator evaluations and student assessments – initiatives which, for any administrator, not to mention a new administrator, also bring challenges.

“Those are big initiatives for any administration, so I think when you’re a new administrator and kind of juggling all these new things, that’s a challenge,” Brody said. “Staff, parents and students look to you as the leader of the building and you’re expected to be able to provide answers and guidance, so trying to learn at the same time as others is a challenge but one I’m up for certainly.”

But Brody added learning alongside the rest of the staff could also help build a sense of community, “because we’re all learning together at the ground floor.”

“It just strengthens the relationships with staff and parents, and provides unity in that we’re all working toward a common goal,” he said, adding he was looking forward to the district’s continued work with the initiatives and finally seeing some of the results of that work.

“We’ve spent a lot of time working on these initiatives, and when you invest that kind of time you want to see it’s well spent,” he said. “So I’m really anxious to see how the implementation of the Common Core is going to impact what our students are learning and what they’re



Eric Brody became principal of Gilead Hill School last Thursday after a 10-month stint as interim. Now that his role is official, Brody, who also served as assistant principal at Hebron Elementary School, said he’s looking forward to “a lot of stability.”

going to do,” he explained.

In addition, Brody said he was looking forward to finally being in one place for an entire school year.

“It’s great to be here from the first day and kind of see how things play out from the very beginning to the very end, so I’m very excited to have a full year as principal of Gilead Hill School under my belt,” he said, adding he was also looking forward to “a lot of stability.”

Brody called the start of his time in Hebron a “whirlwind,” between his moves from one place to another and the changes in administration throughout the district. But now, there

seemed to be some stability. And looking back on those first 17 months in town, and his time as the interim principal, Brody said it seemed Gilead Hill School was where he needed to be all along.

“As I’ve reflected over the past 10 months, this is where I really needed to be,” he said. “I think all sorts of arrows pointed to this job and my role here because it feels right; it feels right to be in the building, working with these parents and these kids. I feel we’ve done a lot of positive work in a short period of time and that’s an indicator for me it was the right fit.”

Bicyclist Sent to Hospital After Crash

A bicyclist traveling through Hebron was sent to the hospital last month after being struck by a car, State Police said.

Manchester resident Robert Mack, 59, was riding his bike west on Route 94 east of the West Street intersection Sept. 24 when he was struck by Hebron resident Heidi Burton, 47, police said.

Police said Mack, who was wearing “high visibility” clothing and a helmet in addition to having a rear flashing red light, was transported to Hartford Hospital for serious injuries.

Burton was found to be under the influence and arrested for DUI. She was also driving with two juveniles who weren’t injured as a result of the crash, police said.

LifeStar Called to Hebron Crash

LifeStar was called in response to an afternoon crash on Route 66 Monday, State Police said.

At around 1:15 p.m. Oct. 7, Amston resident Lenora A. Precourt, 57, was traveling east on Route 66 near Stone House Road when Kelly R. Ryan, 44, of Wallingford, who was traveling in the westbound lane, crossed into the eastbound lane and struck Precourt’s vehicle head-on, police said.

Precourt was transported to Hartford Hospital with non-life threatening injuries; Ryan sustained life-threatening injuries, police said, and was transported to Hartford Hospital via LifeStar, where she remained on Wednesday.

Andover Police News

10/5: State Police said Scott D. Strileckis, 20, of 370 Straits Tpke., Watertown, was charged with interfering with an officer and simple trespassing.

10/5: State Police said Jeffrey Courtney, 18, of 60 Fernwood Dr., Apt. D, Waterbury, was charged with interfering with an officer, simple trespassing and operating a motor vehicle with a suspended license.

Marlborough Police News

10/5: State Police said Jeffrey Hetrick, 35, of 11 Seminole Trail, East Hampton, was charged with DWI and reckless driving.

Portland Police News

10/3: Michele Brainard, 45, of 29 High St., was charged with disorderly conduct and third-degree criminal mischief, Portland Police said.

Colchester Police News

10/1: State Police said Michael Oddis Jr., 21, of 477 Route 149, was charged with third-degree burglary and third-degree larceny.

10/2: State Police said Ralph Byington, 52, of 25 Christy Ln. Ext., Apt. 5E, was charged with risk of injury to a child, disorderly conduct and third-degree assault.

10/2: State Police said Christopher Flying, 35, of 112 Buckley Hill Rd., was charged with DUI.

10/2: Colchester Police said Thomas Robbins, 20, of 53 Lafayette Rd., Marlborough, was issued an infraction for traveling too fast and possession of drug paraphernalia.

10/2: Colchester Police said a Park Road resident reported that an unknown person entered his unlocked vehicle on Park Road on or about 9/17 and stole a Hewlett Packard laptop, a Western digital USB, a phone and Targus

laptop carry bag. Police are investigating; anyone with more information should call Troop K at 860-537-7500.

10/3: State Police said Francisco Falcon, 34, of 112 South Whitney St., Hartford, was charged with DUI, speeding and failure to drive right.

10/3: Colchester Police said Brian Byrne, 33, of 32 Wall St., Middletown, was charged with first-degree criminal trespass, third-degree criminal mischief, disorderly conduct and threatening.

10/3: State Police said Jan L. Sciremamano, 41, of 220 Halls Hill Rd., was charged with DUI, no plate light and failure to stop for an officer.

10/6: State Police said Marian Panek, 58, of 168 Carli Blvd., was charged with DUI.

Hebron Police News

10/2: State Police said Maria Lukignoff, 39, of 273 Derby Ave., Derby, was charged with DUI, reckless driving, and unsafe passing.

10/1: State Police said a car vs. motorcycle accident occurred at approximately 1:51 p.m. Police said Tina Loomis, 41, of 404 East Main St., Jewett City, Apt. 11, was traveling on Route 85 south at the intersection with Old Colchester Road when a motorcyclist, Wayne Warwick, 65, of 72 Northam Rd., Amston, pulled out of Old Colchester Road and collided with Loomis. Police said Warwick was ejected from his motorcycle onto Route 85 and Loomis’ vehicle came to a controlled rest in the right shoulder of Route 85. Warwick sustained minor injuries

and was transported to the Marlborough Clinic by the Hebron Fire Department for evaluation. Warwick was later found at fault for failing to grant the right of way at an intersection.

10/3: State Police said Timothy Sypher, 21, of 36 Old Kent Rd., Mansfield, was charged with second-degree larceny.

10/7: The Hebron Resident Trooper’s office is currently investigating a residential burglary that occurred between the hours of 3:30 p.m. on 10/4 and 11:30 p.m. on 10/5. Police said a laptop and wine were taken, among other items. Anyone with information regarding this incident is encouraged to contact Trooper Daniel Greenwood at 860-537-7555 ext. 4022.

Portland Family-Run Retirement Home Celebrates 60 Years

by Elizabeth Bowling

A local family business will celebrate its 60th anniversary next weekend – Oct. 19, to be exact – and reflected on its rich and women-empowered history this week.

Greystone Retirement Home, which is located at 44 High St., has been run by three generations of women, starting with Lucy Amato, followed by her daughter Lucille Swanson, 68, and her daughter, Luel Swanson, 44.

Amato passed away in 1972, but the family business lived on under Lucille's ownership and, since 2000, Luel's administration. The mother-daughter duo hope their business will continue to thrive for another 60 years.

In 1947, when Amato was 35, she and her husband Baldwin bought the building, Lucille recalled.

Amato originally wanted to start an orphanage, but her husband was hesitant because he thought his wife would become attached to the children. So they decided instead to turn the building into a "home for the elderly," Lucille explained.

They got their business license in 1953 and have been providing their residents a great place to live ever since.

Lucille called her mother "the brainchild of it all and the business person."

After Amato passed away at the early age of 60 after battling cancer, Lucille, who has a background in nursing, took the business over.

"We're such a proud, strong lineage of women entrepreneurs, and that's really what we're celebrating right now," Luel said. "We're not discounting any of the men in our lives and how they've helped."

In addition to the women who run the place, the staff at Greystone is made up of mostly women, Luel said, which provides a lot of strength and love and nurturing – characteristics that are required of those who care for the elderly, she said.

"I love this mother-daughter team. We complement each other so well," Luel said about working beside Lucille. "I tend to be the more strict one. And my mother's a little more..."

"...lenient," Lucille chimed in.

"I couldn't ask for a better mother, and partner, and teammate in ownership for a place that I work," Luel added.

Lucille noted the importance of bringing "new blood" into a business after so many years. And it's possible the next round of youth may come in the form of Lucille's 3-and-a-half-year-old granddaughter.

The home certainly is special to the Swanson women.

"This property is so special. It holds so much history," Luel said. "Our ancestors were here."

"Grandma Amato and I were very close; we were very bonded," Luel added. "For me to walk the property and the hallways that my grandmother walked, and my mother walked,

is such an honor for me and I feel that energy and that strength."

Lucille actually lived in the home for a few years as a child before it was turned into a home for the elderly, she recalled.

The home is full of Swanson family history, but that's not all. It's a historical property for the Town of Portland, too.

The building is actually an old Brownstone mansion from the 1850s, Luel explained. Daniel Russell, the owner of Portland's Brownstone Quarries, owned the property.

Even today, the Swansons said, the history of the home resonates with its residents.

"A lot of our residents have a vast history in Portland," Luel said. "Their families, through the generations, come through Greystone and trust us to take care of their loved ones."

Even one of Luel's elementary school teachers is now living at Greystone.

"My third-grade teacher that taught me how to write cursive is now here," she said. "It's wonderful."

Luel also noted that Greystone was voted the No. 1 retirement home in the nation in 1993, and was featured in the *New York Times*.

"That was a very proud moment for us," she said about receiving the award.

Lucille said, "We are not a nursing home, we are not a convalescent home. We are licensed as a residential care home – that's a very broad term."

She described the home as a non-medical facility.

"It's like taking care of 58 grandparents," she said, which includes making sure they go to their doctors' appointments, for example.

But, Luel said, "We really go above and beyond what the state requires from us in terms of staffing and other amenities."

For example, she said, a nurse comes in every day.

The residents "come here and they thrive," Luel said. "We see them coming from apartments and homes where they may be isolated and feel depressed, and they come to Greystone and they really lift out of their depression, they get nourished correctly."

For example, Greystone provides a slew of services like home-cooked meals – prepared by the facility's cook of 38 years – housekeeping, transportation, security, maintenance, and plenty of recreational activities, such as scenic rides, strawberry picking, coffee and shopping trips, ice cream socials and bingo.

Luel also stressed that the families of the residents tend to stay very involved, helping their loved ones thrive.

The mother-daughter team added that they throw a lot of parties at Greystone, from picnics to Christmas and Thanksgiving, to birthdays – one resident recently celebrated her 100th – and random pizza parties.

The parties are always fun for those who attend, Lucille said. But even disregarding the



Pictured are Lucille Swanson, left, the owner of Greystone Retirement Home, and her daughter, Luel Swanson, the business administrator. Greystone will celebrate its 60th anniversary Oct. 19. The two are holding a picture of Lucille's mother, Lucy, who ran the business before her.

plethora of parties, plenty of wonderful moments took place within the walls of Greystone Retirement Home.

One of those wonderful moments came to mind for Luel – the time a couple, who had met at Greystone – got married on the grounds and continued living there together.

A pastor came in and wed the couple in the recreation room, which was decorated with flowers, Luel recalled.

"E-Harmony has nothing on us," Lucille laughed.

Lucille also discussed another highlight of her career at Greystone – when the residents participated in Portland's Memorial Day parade. She recalled one resident sitting in the back of a pickup truck in the parade and playing piano for the duration of the parade. She was joined in the truck by as many residents as could squeeze in.

Another special moment for the business, Lucille said, occurred when a former Greystone employee, who had worked there for 40 years, decided to retire and move in to Greystone. Lucille said it was a big "compliment."

Over the course of 60 years, a lot of wonderful moments took place at Greystone.

When Amato started the business in the 1950s, the place was called a "home for the aged," Lucille said. But over time they came to be known as a "residential care home."

The place has come a long way since the 1950s. One major renovation happened as recently as 2005, when Luel spearheaded the addition of eight new suites to the home.

The retirement home offers different types of rooms, too, including singles and doubles.

Luel said Greystone, in some ways, is like a five-star hotel.

One resident, Doug Baldwin, said, "It's not like a convalescent home whatsoever."

The 64-year-old has lived at Greystone Retirement Home for the past six years and said his favorite things about living there are the friends, the staff, the owners and, of course, the chef.

He said his friends and family are glad he's living there, and so is he.

"I'm so lucky to be here," he said. "I love the freedom – I can just sign out and sign in."

* * *

To celebrate the retirement's home 60 years, all are welcome to an open house Saturday, Oct. 19, from 2 to 4 p.m.

New, Renovated Businesses Come to Portland

by Elizabeth Bowling

At last week's Board of Selectmen meeting, First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield updated the board about new businesses and improved businesses in town. This week, Deanna Rhodes, the town's land use administrator, confirmed some of the details.

Chris Cody Golf Shop, which is currently on Main Street, will be relocating to 750 Portland/Cobalt Rd. The shop will be in a brand new building that is not open yet, but is shooting to open Nov. 1, Rhodes said.

"Chris Cody Golf is a highly successful business in our town," Bransfield said, adding that the new location will allow the business to grow.

St. Clements Castle, located at 1931 Portland/Cobalt Rd., is looking to develop a "smaller inn" in a different location than what was already approved so they'll need to get another approval from Planning and Zoning, Rhodes said.

The original plan, which was approved Sept. 6, 2012, called for the construction of an 80-room inn, Rhodes said. But because a new plan hasn't been brought forth yet, Rhodes did not know how many rooms the new plan includes.

Bransfield said the new plan would call for the construction of a "V-shaped" hotel that

would enable each room to overlook the Connecticut River.

The bottom floor would be a spa, she said. And the three floors above ground would be suites.

Additionally, Bransfield said there is "an interest in not just renting that space, but also seeing if there are investors that would be interested in buying a piece of the business, which would be maybe for five weeks or for a month, that you could utilize your room at some point in that time."

F40 Motorsports will also be adding a new building on Portland/Cobalt Road. The business already has two buildings and is building another in the rear, Rhodes affirmed.

Additionally, Store-U-Self will add a couple buildings to its campus on lower Main Street, according to Bransfield.

But, according to Rhodes, the business is still a few steps away before it can apply for construction permits through building and zoning.

Also waiting on paperwork is the Arrigoni Winery. Specifically, the winery is waiting for some approvals before it makes any changes. Those improvements include an addition to the portion of the winery that makes the wine.

The plans are still in front of the Planning and Zoning Commission.

Rhodes said the winery has no permits for doing weddings at this time and is, in fact, prohibited from doing weddings, but is seeking approval to host weddings and large functions and add a chapel. It's also seeking overflow parking in the grass areas to accommodate more people.

The Planning and Zoning Commission may make a decision Thursday, Oct. 17, Rhodes said.

Some new businesses are expected to open in Portland, as well.

"There is a new medical office building that is breaking ground as we speak," Bransfield said at last week's board meeting. "Walt Smith owns that land and he has an approved building plan for a medical office building in that location that has been vacant for many years."

According to Bransfield, the property was previously owned by the state Department of Transportation. Smith will own the building, located behind Anderson Farm Supplies, and Middlesex Hospital will be the tenant.

Bransfield also said a new gas station has

been approved and should be breaking ground soon at the corner of Payne Boulevard and Portland/Cobalt Road.

Rhodes affirmed that it was approved a few years ago and the company should be submitting their applications soon.

The sight for the new gas station, called Lot 2 of the Global-Portland Commercial Subdivision, is owned by Wayne Rand and was approved July 15, 2010, Rhodes said.

Hopefully a competing gas station will keep prices low for Portland residents. Cumberland Farms is expected to submit its permit applications in the next couple of weeks, Rhodes said. Only then can the total demolition begin.

Rhodes said that pending permit application and approval, the old Cumberland Farms will be torn down and a new store model will go up. It will include new landscaping, new gas tanks and a new building design, Rhodes affirmed.

Lastly, while there are still a lot of unknowns related to the project at this point, such as the project's size and when it would be built, a CVS Pharmacy may be coming to Main Street. It would be located within the Elmcrest property, Rhodes said.

Obituaries

Colchester

Robert Richard Mardin

Robert Richard Mardin, 68, of Colchester, widower of the late Patricia (Varnish) Mardin, passed away suddenly Friday, Oct. 4, at the Middlesex Medical Center in Marlborough. Born Oct. 9, 1944, in Bristol, he was a son of the late Marshall and Bernice (Bartlett) Mardin.

He served proudly with the U.S. Marine Corps during the Vietnam War.

While in the service, he and Patricia were married on June 26, 1965 at St. Andrew Church in Colchester. Together, they shared 45 years of marriage before she predeceased him on July 31, 2010.

Mr. Mardin had worked as a professional truck driver for Teamsters Local 493. Early on, he worked for the former Schuster's Express in Colchester and later for other outfits including Yellow Freight, Pilot and ABF.

Most importantly, he was a devoted husband, father and grandfather who will be greatly missed.

He leaves four children, Dierdre Mardin of Colchester, Dawn Delgaizo and husband, Christopher of Colchester, Michelle Nowak and husband, Stan of Mansfield and Michael Mardin and wife, Theresa of Yantic; six grandchildren, Kala, Ryan, Raleigh, Tyler, Sabrina and Jozlyn; a brother, William of Indiana; and numerous extended family members and friends.

In addition to his wife and parents, he was predeceased by three siblings, Suzanne, Donna and Marshall "Bud."

Donations in his memory may be made to the American Cancer Society, P.O. Box 22718, Oklahoma City, OK 73123-1718.

After his passing, Robert was able to give the gift of sight through donation to the Connecticut Eye Bank.

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

Andover

Harold E. Kinney

Harold E. Kinney (Hal), 72, of Andover, passed away Friday, Sept. 27, at Hartford Hospital, surrounded by his loving family. Born in Hartford, he was the son of the late Hazel Kinney and brother of the late Lillian Wright.

He served in the U.S. Army from 1959-1962. He was a member of the Manchester Philatelic Society. He owned and operated The Bookie Comic Book store in East Hartford from 1969 until retiring in 2010 due to illness. His friends, customers and family knew him as a kind, gentle man who was fair in his business dealings, loved his family and never spoke badly of anyone.

Hal is survived by his loving wife of 50 years, Rose, his beloved daughter Lisa J. and son-in-law Nick Maratta, his two adored granddaughters Amanda N. and Kayla X. Maratta of Bolton, and his godson Erik Maher of South Windsor.

Funeral services will be private at a later time.

Colchester

Aniela Koss

Aniela Koss, 94, wife of the late Joseph Koss, of Colchester, passed away Thursday, Oct. 3. She was born June 21, 1919, in Hartford, daughter of Dimitry and Tillie Teleghe Lackocka.

While she was staying at Harrington Court Health Care, she made many friends there and she loved the care given to her by the staff.

Surviving are her two beloved sons, Joseph M. and his wife Arlene Koss, Peter J. and Cyndee Koss; four grandchildren; and 12 great-grandchildren.

A memorial Mass will be held Saturday, Oct. 19, at 11 a.m., at St. Andrew's Catholic Church on Norwich Avenue, Colchester. Burial of remains will follow in St. Joseph Cemetery. There are no calling hours.

Belmont Sabrowski Funeral Home of Colchester are in care of arrangements.

Middle Haddam

John Whitmore

John Whitmore of Middle Haddam died peacefully Saturday, Sept. 21, at Cobalt Lodge, after a brief illness. He was born in Middletown in 1925 and was a lifelong resident of Middlesex County. John and his wife, Doris, lived in Haddam for over 50 years before moving to Middle Haddam.

John served in the U.S. Army during World War II, where he was stationed in Germany. After the war, he joined his father Chauncey, and grandfather George, at The George G. Whitmore Company, the family's antique furniture business in Middletown. John was later joined at the Whitmore Company by his daughter, Beryl Whitmore Thorpe, who worked with him for over 30 years. While John followed his father and grandfather as owner and president of the Whitmore Company, he was happiest in the back of the shop, handling the design and building elements of the business, as well as the restoration of important antiques.

John was a longtime member of the Haddam Historical Society, where he took an active role in the restoration and stewardship of the Thankful Arnold House, next door to his Walkley Hill Road home in Haddam. He was a director of the Old Burial Ground in Haddam and a director of the Field Park Association. John was well-loved for his quiet demeanor and dry sense of humor. He was a lifelong gardener, and had many pets (both dogs and cats) throughout his life. John loved food, whether local fruit and vegetables, imported cheese, pastries, or ice cream. He possessed a strong talent for knowing the first line of a quantity of obscure songs.

John is survived by his wife, Doris, of Haddam. He is also survived by his daughter, Beryl, and her husband, Henry Thorpe of Middle Haddam, his granddaughters Courtney Thorpe and Brooke Thorpe, of Brooklyn, N.Y., as well as Courtney's husband, Kacper Walicki, and Brooke's fiance, Daniel Filson.

A memorial service will be scheduled at a later date.

Anyone wishing to acknowledge John Whitmore's gifts to his community may send a contribution to the Middle Haddam Public Library, Knowles Road, Middle Haddam, CT 06456.

Colchester

Elaine S. Tessmann

Elaine S. Tessmann, 91, widow of Otto Tessmann, formerly of Newington, died Thursday, Oct. 3, at Harrington Court in Colchester. Born in New Orleans, La., she was the daughter of Edward H. and Georgine (Ackermann) Stoll.

Elaine graduated from Louisiana State University, Class of 1942, and worked in New Orleans during World War II. In 1947, she took a position at The Institute of Living in Hartford. She met Otto Tessmann at Christ Lutheran Church in Hartford. They married on July 2, 1948, in New Orleans and resided in West Hartford until their move to Newington in 1953. There she resided until 2008.

Elaine was the founding director of the Bethany Lutheran Church Nursery School where she taught for 17 years, retiring in 1977. She believed in serving the Lord and was an active member of Bethany Lutheran Church in West Hartford. She had taught Sunday school from the age of 12. She enjoyed cooking, sewing and art. She and Otto were members of the Newington Square Dance Club.

Elaine was a devoted wife, mother and grandmother. She leaves two daughters and their husbands, Elaine and Alvin Macke and Gayle and Peter Solari, all of Lebanon. She also leaves her sister, Norma Stoll of Colchester; her grandchildren, Carolyn Schwenzer, Eric Macke, Julie Dignazio, Curt Macke, Daniel Solari, Bret Macke, Jenna Motta, and Joye Solari; and thirteen great-grandchildren. She was predeceased by two brothers, Edward Stoll and Reverend Roy Stoll.

Funeral services were held Tuesday, Oct. 8, at Redeemer Lutheran Church, 321 Village Hill Road, Lebanon. Burial at the State Veterans' Cemetery, Middletown, was private. Calling hours were Monday, Oct. 7, at the Taylor & Modeen Funeral Home, 136 South Main St., West Hartford, and Tuesday morning before the service at Redeemer Lutheran Church.

Memorials may be made to The Lutheran Hour. For online condolences, visit taylorandmodeen.com.

Colchester

Claudette Lynch

Memorial Mass

A memorial Mass for Claudette Lynch of Colchester, who died Thursday, April 25, will be held Saturday, Oct. 26, at 9 a.m., at Saint Andrew Church, 128 Norwich Ave., Colchester.

Lynch, widow of the late James F. Lynch, was a daughter of the late David and Germaine (St. Laurent) Chamberlain. She owned and operated the Burnham Employment Agency in Hartford.