

RIVEREAST

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Welcome Back... East Hampton celebrated the return of three local heroes last Sunday, Oct. 20, with a traditional yellow ribbon homecoming ceremony. U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Alicia Valli, shown here removing her ribbon from the ceremonious tree, and two others – U.S. Army Master Sgt. Paul Valvo and U.S. Army Specialist Matthew Kelly – were cheered on by a crowd of over 100 people.

'An Extraordinary Advocate for People'

by Elizabeth Bowling

Former longtime state Rep. Gail Hamm died peacefully in her East Hampton home last Thursday, Oct. 24, at the age of 62, after a three-year struggle with breast cancer.

Hamm, an East Hampton resident since 1990, was remembered this week for her varied professional and personal accomplishments.

Over the course of her career, Hamm built an impressive resume – so impressive that she was named East Hampton's "Citizen of the Year" earlier this year by the Village Lions Club. The Norwalk Chapter of the Federation of Business and Professional Women also named Hamm the "Norwalk Woman of the Year" in 1986.

Hamm and her husband Alan Hurst moved into their home in East Hampton on May 1, 1990, Hurst said.

"We've enjoyed the fabric of the community since Day One," he said. "Gail took great pride in representing East Hampton and helping constituents with issues."

Hamm represented the 34th Assembly District, which includes East Hampton, for 14 years, opting last year to retire after seven terms in office. On the local level, Hamm was a member of the Democratic Town Committee and was elected to the East Hampton Board of Education in 1991 and served as chairwoman from 1995 until her election to state office in 1998.

Hurst said his wife took particular interest in the quality of Lake Pocotopaug and the Chatham Historical Society, though she did most of her work "very quietly."

"She was complicated. She was a very public individual but she was very private at the same time," Hurst said. "She was available to the public but did a lot behind the scenes."



Gail Hamm

He added, "She really relished her privacy."

At its meeting this week, the Board of Education held a moment of silence in Hamm's honor.

"Gail earned a reputation for her dedication to her constituents in her hometown of East Hampton, and in Middletown and Haddam, as well as her tireless work on behalf of improving the lives of all children throughout the state," Board of Education Chairman Mark Laraia said. "She was a friend and colleague, and will be missed and remembered fondly."

Sue Weintraub, the current chairwoman of

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Spanish to Return to Marlborough Elementary

by Melissa Roberto

It's been over a year since Marlborough Elementary School's Spanish program was controversially cut from the budget, but the Board of Education last week voted to bring it back, as part of a larger, more comprehensive foreign language program – one that's anticipated to start before the current school year is over.

The school's foreign language program has been the talk of the town since it was cut during the development of the 2012-13 budget. In the year and a half since the reduction, residents, parents and even teachers at the school have repeatedly requested the school board to bring a program back – and include both a foreign language and cultures component. In April, the school board authorized MES administration to conduct a feasibility study to research what it would take to bring a program back.

Superintendent of Schools David Sklarz reported his findings last Thursday and shared the school's history of a foreign language program. He said the school first implemented a Spanish program in 1988. In February 2012,

he said, the recession "forced tough economic decisions for school leaders and elected officials." Sklarz said surveys conducted at the time indicated parents placed class size on a higher priority than the Spanish program, which had featured a total of 60-minute lessons a week split up between two days. Sklarz furthered the board voted to cut the program from the 2012-13 fiscal year budget, with a promise to the community to bring it back when the economy was better.

"When the economic times are better, this will be revisited," Sklarz recalled the board saying back in 2012. "We will bring it back, it will be better than ever and it will be true to some research and best practices."

And last week Sklarz's research – which he described as "so compelling" – sparked the vote that led to the reinstatement. That research included a 2007 National Education Association research paper on the benefits of a foreign language program and a 2000 Brown University report of a foreign language in elementary

schools. Sklarz concluded benefits of a language program include the narrowing of achievement gaps, basic skills development, enhancement of cognitive development and higher scores on standardized tests, among others. Sklarz said these benefits "just jump off the board."

One of the benefits Sklarz furthered he "doesn't take lightly," is Brown University's conclusion that foreign language in elementary schools is "enjoyable."

"It's an enjoyable experience to learn another language," said Sklarz.

The superintendent then shared results of a survey that went out to the community earlier this year. The survey included 12 questions and a section for comments or suggestions. The survey used a "Likert Scale," where surveyors marked strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree or no opinion. 326 people responded to the survey. Sklarz explained the highest-ranking question, which resulted in 61.6 percent strongly agreeing, questioned whether respon-

dents "believe that a world language program is a necessary part of the Marlborough Elementary School curriculum."

Additionally, 52 percent of responses preferred the program to begin in grade one, and 76 percent preferred the language to be Spanish over others like French, Sklarz said.

Perhaps what seemed to be the most anticipated part of the meeting was a recommendation Sklarz presented to the board. The recommendation included the board accept the feasibility study and "to fully implement a Spanish World Language and Cultures Program of studies for all students in grades one through six beginning in the 2014-15 school year."

The recommendation also included – to the apparent surprise of board members – implementing a Spanish program in the spring, before the current school year ends. The lessons would be conducted only for sixth-graders "so when they go to RHAM they're not going to be further behind," Sklarz said.

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Gail Hamm cont. from Front Page

the Town Council, said she knew Hamm on a personal level.

“Gail Hamm was an extraordinary advocate for people,” Weintraub said this week. “She was such a wonderful individual, as well as a state representative for so many years.”

Weintraub recalled that Hamm helped people whenever she could. And if she couldn’t, she would offer another resource.

Weintraub remembered one time in particular, about a year ago, when Hamm had told a resident who was seeking help to contact Weintraub.

“That’s one of the most flattering compliments I’ve ever received,” Weintraub said.

In describing Hamm, Weintraub said, “She truly cared about every resident” regardless of political affiliation.

“We’ve lost a great citizen and a great individual. She was always there for the people,” Weintraub said, calling Hamm “very inspiring.”

Melissa Engel, a former chairwoman of the East Hampton Town Council, said she knew Hamm politically.

“She was a force to be reckoned with,” Engel said.

Engel recalled when she was first elected to the Town Council in 1999 she was also elected to be the chair, but she was hesitant to take the position. She said Hamm, who was the state representative at that time, encouraged her to take on the role.

Hamm’s role as state representative for the 34th District – which includes her hometown of East Hampton, as well as Middletown and Haddam – lasted from 1998 to 2013.

While serving as state representative, Hamm spearheaded legislation that eliminated sales tax on caskets – a legislation that Hamm took particular pride in, Hurst said.

Additionally, he said, “She took a great deal of pride in having codified *Roe v. Wade*” – which protected women’s reproductive rights in Connecticut should the U.S. Supreme Court overturn its 1973 decision.

Hamm also sponsored a bill that created a

statewide information telephone hotline for water quality issues. And in 2004, she co-sponsored legislation that ensured that high power electrical transmission lines around schools, childcare centers and youth camps be placed underground.

Additionally, Hamm served as legislative liaison for the Connecticut General Assembly’s Permanent Commission on the Status of Women (PCSW) from 1986 to 1990.

According to its mission statement, the PCSW serves to study and improve Connecticut women’s economic security, health and safety. It also serves to promote consideration of qualified women to leadership positions and to work toward the elimination of gender discrimination.

During her time with the PCSW, Hamm was responsible for the development, advocacy and implementation of a legislative agenda to improve the lives of women and families.

In that role, she spearheaded a 50-bill agenda to balance work and family, which included the nation’s first Family and Medical Leave Act.

Teresa Younger, executive director of PCSW, said in a press release last week, “Gail Hamm was a beloved, respected legislator... Gail clearly understood how important public policy is in laying the groundwork for social justice, equality and effective government.”

Younger furthered, “We at the PCSW are proud to have had the privilege of working with Gail for many years, and we subsequently worked with her on some significant legislation, including that which laid the foundation for the nation’s first Family Medical Leave Act. We know her legacy lives on in the form of legislation that touched so many issues for which she had boundless passion and energy.”

No matter what she faced, Hamm’s priority was always to help the people she served.

Hurst affirmed, “Constituent service was important to her.”

Current state Rep. Melissa Ziobron, who replaced Hamm in the state general assembly, reflected this week upon her time with Hamm.

“Once I was elected, Gail was one of the first people I called to just find out the inner workings of the districts,” Ziobron said about being elected last November. Ziobron said they spent two hours on the phone, for which she was very grateful.

“I have a lot of respect for people who serve as long as Gail served,” Ziobron added. “Regardless of our political affiliations, I had tremendous respect for Gail.”

Ziobron called Hamm “a real fighter” and a “role model for any individual who is battling an illness.”

Even Hamm’s personal life was inspiring. She reached one milestone just recently when she and her husband celebrated their 38th wedding anniversary Oct 18.

“We just celebrated the fact that we were still together,” Hurst said. “We knew it was the last one.”

Hurst recalled meeting Hamm in 1974 and getting engaged just six weeks later.

As a wedding gift, the two received a cat, Stormy, from Hurst’s best man, he recalled.

Hurst said that one thing he’ll always remember about Hamm is her cats. In fact, Stormy and Hamm’s two other beloved cats – who have passed and were cremated – will be interred with Hamm, Hurst said.

Hamm and her husband were active in the Rotary on the local, district and international levels. As part of the Rotary’s polio eradication initiative, they spent Thanksgiving of 2006 in Niger immunizing children.

Hamm was also a champion for youths in crisis. She helped pass legislation including an act that amended the definition of child to include 16 and 17 year olds; an act that required police to search for runaways; an act which prevents the detention of children age 13 to 16 for non-delinquent acts; and an act to prevent girls from being placed at the Connecticut Juvenile Training School. She also spearheaded the development of a state comprehensive plan to provide services for adolescent female juvenile offenders.

Hamm’s career also includes her time as an

attorney in private practice – since 1979 until she retired in 2011 due to health issues. She was a partner in the Law Offices of Friel & Hamm.

After moving to Connecticut with her husband in 1978, Hamm served as legislative aide to state Rep. John Mannix (R-Wilton). Her work included a white paper on welfare in Connecticut, which was published in *The New York Times* in November of 1980. She was also a founder and Board member of Women in Crisis in Norwalk.

In a press release from the governor’s office, Gov. Dannel P. Malloy and Lt. Gov. Nancy Wyman each reflected fondly on Hamm’s career.

“Gail Hamm was a passionate woman who loved the people of her district, most notably dedicating in her legislative career as a champion for the safety and well-being of children,” Malloy said. “She worked tirelessly with her colleagues at the State Capitol, and her presence will undoubtedly be missed. My thoughts and prayers are with her family and friends at this difficult time.”

Wyman said, “Gail was always extraordinarily thoughtful and knowledgeable and ready to fight hard for the issues she believed in. Even during her illness, her energy and commitment to her constituents never faltered, and I will always admire her for that.”

Hamm’s family will receive friends on Saturday, Nov. 2, from 3 p.m. until 6 p.m. at the Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton. A memorial service will be held Monday, Nov. 4, at 10:30 a.m. in Bethlehem Lutheran Church in East Hampton. Burial will be at the convenience of the family in Hillside Cemetery in Wilton.

The family requests that memorial donations be made to the Gail K. Hamm Leadership Development Scholarship or the Rotary Peace Fellow Program, both c/o East Hampton Rotary Foundation P.O. Box 197, Cobalt, CT 06414.

Spanish to Return cont. from Front Page

Within the recommendation were “action steps.” The steps included the recruit and hire of a veteran elementary Spanish teacher in the spring of 2014 for the purpose of developing “a comprehensive Spanish program,” at a cost of \$48,194. For the 2014-15 fiscal year, \$151,481 would be included in the budget to cover the cost of “a full-time teaching position and all necessary supplies and materials to support the curriculum.”

The \$48,194 to start up the program will be taken from excess funds in the salary account, Sklarz said. He added the impact of the full \$151,481 amount in the 2014-15 budget actually should be less than that amount, as, due to projected enrollment drops, a grade section currently funded this year won’t be needed next year.

Sklarz’s report furthers the \$151,481 total is subject to change based on class size and the school’s schedule.

The new foreign language program will feature, for grades one and two, two sessions of 25 minutes a week, and for grades three through six, three sessions of 25 minutes each per week. Also, whereas before students needed to travel to a particular classroom to take Spanish, this time around the program will be on a cart, with the teacher traveling from classroom to classroom to instruct students.

The inclusive recommendation was approved by a board vote of 6-1 and resulted in applause and appreciative remarks from the public. Members Ruth Kelly, Betty O’Brien, Louise Concodello, Judith Kaplan, Mimi LaPoint and

Shannon Bielaczyc voted in favor of it and Carole Shea voted against it. Member Bob Clarke was absent from the meeting.

Shea said her vote of opposition was due to the fact that she hadn’t anticipated a vote to be taken that night. Rather, Shea said she would have liked to wait until the report of the feasibility study on all-day kindergarten came to the board before coming to conclusions of both. The all-day kindergarten report is slated to be discussed at the board’s Nov. 21 meeting.

“They both have a substantial impact on the budget,” Shea said this week. “I do, too, feel it’s important. I wanted to see the results on both surveys before I made any conclusions or decisions on it.”

Shea furthered she comes with “no agenda” on either topic, but that she was interested in weighing the advantages and disadvantages of both for the school. However, Sklarz said he split up the reports in two separate meetings for that reason. He said he didn’t want to have to choose one over the other because “each has their own merit.”

After the vote was taken several board members and the public congratulated Sklarz on a “thorough” report.

“I love your recommendations,” said O’Brien, who is also the vice chairwoman of the board.

Both O’Brien and LaPoint said they were fans of the sixth-grade integration starting this year.

Concodello said she felt the costs associated with the plan are “not that bad.” She said the

next step is now to “go out and find the right person.”

Kelly, the board chairwoman, said she was proud the board stayed true to its promise and “especially” thanked the administration.

“All of us have taken flack. I want to thank each and every board member for sticking to the plan and now producing for the public what we promised. We promised when we had money we could come back and do this and I appreciate all of your time.”

Christi Moraga, a citizen who has voiced her support of a foreign language countless times, thanked Sklarz for “a tremendous amount of time.”

“Your presentation was fantastic,” Moraga furthered.

Rich Storrs, another familiar face in the crowd at school board meetings, expressed thanks.

“It’s a valuable, tremendously important step to do it all at once,” Storrs said of a language program. “Thank you tremendously to Dr. Sklarz, to the community, to Board of Education members for all of their support ongoing to looking at this issue and looking at the facts and making a fact based decision.”

Dave Porteous, from the crowd, also thanked Sklarz and the board for their “decisive commitment.” He also presented a petition on behalf of the Action Group of Marlborough, who gathered 333 signatures of people in the community who are in support of bringing a foreign language program back.

Sklarz also thanked Interim Principal Kathy Veronesi for assisting in the report.

Also on Thursday, Sklarz announced the future departure of Veronesi, who recently accepted a superintendent of schools position in Region 13 Durham/Middlefield. Veronesi sent a letter home with students on Oct. 17 to announce the news.

“I want you to know that my work in Marlborough with the children, teachers, staff, superintendent and Board of Education will continue as it exists,” she wrote in the letter. “I am committed to the endeavors we have undertaken this year and to the safe and happy culture that characterizes our school.”

Veronesi’s end date has not yet been decided but it’s anticipated to take place sometime in January. Sklarz said the district would hire an interim person to see out the rest of the year, and he said he’d like to move up the start of the permanent principal search from April to January.

Also on Thursday, Bielaczyc and Tyler were honored for their time seated on the board. It was Bielaczyc’s last meeting because she is not running for re-election, and Tyler recently moved out of town so she can no longer sit on the board.

The next Board of Education meeting is scheduled for Thursday, Nov. 21, 7 p.m. in the MES Library/Media Center.

Colchester Native Shines On, Off UConn Field

by Melissa Roberto

University of Connecticut baseball player David Mahoney was recently recognized for his success on and off the baseball field and those close to him back home in Colchester are proud.

Mahoney, 22, a Colchester native and a current pitcher on the UConn baseball team, has received two awards in the last year at the university acknowledging his success on the mound and in his academics. Mahoney will graduate from UConn in May with a bachelor's degree in geography as a junior.

Though graduation is around the corner for Mahoney after only three years, athletically, he's still considered a junior, UConn baseball coach Jim Penders explained. This means if he continues to be enrolled at the school he'll be allowed to continue playing baseball for at least another year.

And it seems his accomplishments give him good reason to stick around. Penders awarded the Mrs. Mary Dropo Unsung Hero Award to Mahoney in September at the UConn baseball alumni game. The award goes to a player each year who resembles great athletic skills and academics, UConn baseball sports information director Bobby Mullen said.

In the 2013 season, Mahoney set a record for the most appearances of a UConn baseball player in one season – 34 – beating out a history that dates over 100 years, Penders said. Additionally, in 2013, Mahoney threw 5 1/3 scoreless innings in the Big East tournament. His earned run average was also a 2.36 – an average Mullen described as “very good.” Additionally, Mahoney's been on the Big East all-academic team for the last two years.

In 2012, he was also awarded the Dee Rowe Award, which is typically given to an outstanding student athlete on the baseball team each year.

Mahoney said he's currently interested in applying to graduate programs at the university to work towards a master's degree in international studies, and of course, continue playing ball.

A hopeful Penders said it'd be nice if Mahoney could stick around for a couple more seasons “to get a couple championships” under his belt. This week, Penders highlighted just

what kind of athlete and person Mahoney is.

“He's the guy that when we hand him the ball out of the bullpen as a head coach you walk back to the dugout with a smile because you know something is going to happen,” said Penders. “He breeds confidence.”

Penders furthered Mahoney has “certainly proved” he can play Division 1 baseball and stated Mahoney is deserving of playing on a professional level. He also described the UConn junior as “also a really good student.”

“He's an extremely mature kid,” he said. “I should say a man. Often times we don't get to coach men, even in college.”

But it of course took some experience before Mahoney could excel in Division 1 baseball, and he said that experience began when he was “very little – by the time I started walking” in his hometown of Colchester. It may have started even sooner than that, though; indeed, athleticism seems to run in his family.

His grandfather, Dave Shea, has been coaching sports in Colchester for over 40 years. Over the years he's coached boys and girls basketball and baseball at Bacon Academy. Currently, Shea coaches baseball and girls' basketball at the high school. Shea coached Mahoney when he attended Bacon but according to the pair that was never evident on the field or in practice.

“He treated me the same as anyone else,” said Mahoney. “I think that's important.”

Shea, who's also coached other grandchildren at the high school, felt similarly.

“Whenever I'm coaching I treat them just like any other player,” said Shea. “When practice is over I become grandpa again.”

Shea's son and Mahoney's uncle, John Shea, is a former UConn pitcher as well. He continued to play professionally for the Toronto Blue Jays, Boston Red Sox and Baltimore Orioles following UConn.

“The Sheas and Mahoneys families are super athletic,” Penders said. “Mahoney's got a nice heritage to him. He's done nothing in my opinion but improve both family legacies.”

For Mahoney, playing at UConn has granted him with opportunities he says he's thankful for. He admitted he's seen himself “grow up a lot physically” in the UConn weight room, and he's enjoyed traveling to places around the



David Mahoney is shown here pumped up during a Big East tournament game against Louisville on May 22. Photo taken by UConn Athletics/ Stephen Slade.

country with the team to play. This year he said he's looking forward to playing in Nashville and Memphis, Tenn.

Other than pitching well, Mahoney said his responsibilities include being “a leader” for his teammates.

“Now I'm one of the older guys so I think of myself as more of a leader and setting an example for the younger kids,” he said.

Back home, Grandpa Shea and his mom Mary Ellen are smiling.

“Whenever one of our student athletes has an opportunity to play at a college level it makes us very proud,” Shea said, as a former coach of his grandson. “To represent a state university and make a contribution to their baseball success is very special.”

Mary Ellen said she was thankful Mahoney has been able to be a part of UConn's baseball program.

“I'm absolutely thrilled that David has been able to represent his state at the University of Connecticut,” the mom said. “We found his coach, Jim Penders, to be an exceptional coach and person. I'm very happy David has been associated with the baseball program there.”

While his recent award has made him proud, Mahoney already has set a new bar for the 2014 season.

“My main goal is to get super regional,” he said of the team in playoffs. “We made it to regional last year. I think going one step further than that would be my goal.”

The 22-year-old added he feels “blessed to have the type of talent that can carry me into college.”

Like his uncle John, Mahoney, too, wants to play professionally after college.

“It runs in the family I guess,” he said. “You never know. I'm definitely hoping to.”

Colchester Voters Head to Polls Next Week

by Melissa Roberto

It's a big year for elections in Colchester, with turnover potentially coming in the top office of first selectman, as well as changes possibly afoot on the boards of selectmen, finance, education and assessment appeals, and in the position of town treasurer.

A total of 17 seats are available, and 26 citizens of Colchester are in the running.

Possibly one of the most anticipated races is the challenge for the first selectman's seat, which has a three-way party split. Republican incumbent Gregg Schuster is seeking re-election for a third straight term against current Democrat selectman Jim Ford – running for the seat for the first time – and Colchester Independent Party candidate and former first selectwoman Linda Hodge. The first selectman candidates were profiled in last week's *Rivereast*.

And whoever wins that race may be joined by as many as four all-new faces on the Board of Selectmen. Seeking re-election are Republican Stan Soby, who has been on the Board of Selectmen since 2006, and Democrat Rosemary Coyle, who is seeking her fourth term, having joined the board in 2007. Republican Denise Mizla, Democrat Mike Caplet and CIP members Tearice Peters and Evan A. Evans are all seeking selectmen seats for the first time.

Current selectman Greg Cordova, who has

served on the board since 2005, has opted not to seek re-election. Instead, Cordova is the Republican nominee for town treasurer, and will square off against Democrat incumbent Gregg LePage, who has served as town treasurer since 2009.

A pair of familiar Board of Finance members – Republican Rob Esteve, who is also the vice chairman, of the board, and Democrat Thomas B. Kane – will automatically be seated on the Board of Finance, because they are the only two candidates in the running to serve full terms of six years. However, a race will occur for the four other finance board contenders. CIP candidate James McNair III, a former school board member, will face Democrat Kurt A. Frantzen, current Conservation Commission member, at the polls to fill one seat for a four-year term. Current members Republican Bill Curran, who was appointed to the board this past July, and Democrat John Ringo, who has been on the finance board for a total of 14 years, will face off for one seat for a two-year term.

Unlike a majority of the boards up for election, the race for Colchester's Board of Education is an uncontested one. Four candidates are going to appear on the ballot, and all four will be elected. Of the four candidates, the only newcomer is CIP member Michael Voiland. Voiland isn't necessarily new to the school district as he coached wrestling at Bacon Academy for

over 15 years. Continuing in their school board roles are Republicans Ron Goldstein, the current board chair, and Mitch Koziol, as well as Democrat Don Kennedy, the current vice chair. Current board member John Reeve is not seeking re-election.

The last board that may see some change is the Board of Assessment Appeals. Five citizens are up in the running for three open seats. Of the five members, three incumbents are seeking re-election. Those incumbents are Republican nominees David Anderson, the chairman, and Jeff Brainard, and Democrat John Malsbenden. Democratic candidate Denise M. Turner and CIP candidate Torri Buchwald are newcomers seeking to serve on the board.

In addition to the races, the 2013 municipal elections are unique due to the formation of the Colchester Independent Party. Though the party isn't currently an established party, it's been formed with that goal and next week's votes that will determine if boards/commissions will have CIP seats in future elections. According to the secretary of state's office, each CIP candidate in Colchester will need to receive 1 percent of votes in order for the board or commission he/she is running for to have a CIP slot in the future.

In addition to being the party's candidate for first selectman, Linda Hodge also spearheaded

the CIP. This week she said she feels all the candidates make up an “exciting group who are knowledgeable, skilled and dedicated.”

Hodge furthered, “They represent a diverse group of constituencies within Colchester and we've got a combination and what's very exciting is we have a combination of Democrats and Republicans committed to working together.”

For Democratic Town Committee Chairwoman Dorothy Mrowka, this year's Democratic candidates make a “phenomenal team.”

“Everyone has worked very hard to get their message out,” Mrowka added.

Republican Town Committee Chairman Brenden Healy was also confident about the Republican slate.

“We are very excited about the experienced team of candidates that will be on the ballot in November,” he said. “We are confident they will work very hard for all of the citizens of Colchester and provide a fresh set of ideas for our town.”

Election Day is Nov. 5. Polling locations in Colchester are separated by district. District 1 can vote at Town Hall, 127 Norwich Ave. Districts 2 and 4 can vote at Abundant Life of the Assemblies of God Church, 85 Skinner Rd., and District 3 can vote at Bacon Academy, 611 Norwich Ave.

Colchester Candidates Field Questions at Forum

by Melissa Roberto

On Tuesday afternoon – exactly one week before Election Day – some of Colchester’s candidates for political office were put in the hot seat, as questions were pitched their way at a “Meet the Candidates” forum held at Colchester Senior Center.

Twelve Colchester citizens running for elected positions attended the event. The candidates included: all three citizens running for the single seat of first selectman, Republican incumbent Gregg Schuster, Democratic selectman Jim Ford and Colchester Independent Party member and former first selectwoman Linda Hodge; Board of Selectmen candidates Evan A. Evans and Tearice Peters, both of the CIP, and Republican incumbent Stan Soby; Board of Finance candidates Thomas Kane, a Democratic incumbent, and James McNair III, a CIP candidate; Board of Education candidates Ron Goldstein, a Republican incumbent, and Michael Voiland, a CIP first-time candidate; and two Board of Assessment Appeals candidates, Democratic candidate Denise Turner and CIP candidate Torri Buchwald.

Almost all of the questions were fielded toward the first selectman candidates. A majority of the questions were submitted by the audience members beforehand, and some were taken from the crowd during the final leg of the event. Candidates were each given two minutes for introductory remarks and two minutes to answer each question.

Moderator Mary Tomasi (also the secretary of the Board of Education) acted as the event’s moderator. The first question targeted toward the first selectman candidates questioned how they’d deal with the difficulty of communicating with town citizens.

For Hodge, the answer was looking at a variety of ways of getting the message out. She admitted “no one way works for everybody,” so she plans to use social media websites in addition to monthly meetings in her office on Saturdays, staying late in Town Hall on Thursday nights, making flyers and submitting information to newspapers and newsletters, as well as attending “every community event.” The CIP founder furthered “communication is the number one priority.”

Schuster, running for his third term as first selectman, looked back at what strides he’s made to communicate with citizens over the last four years. He mentioned the award the budget received for transparency two years in a row, the revamping of the town’s website and the weekly email giving updates on town departments, as well as his use of Facebook and Twitter. And, he added, another communication method he uses is simply “popping up around town.” He also reminded attendees that citizens

are the “eyes and ears” of the town. He furthered elected officials are “very approachable and we want to hear from you.”

Ford, a current selectman running for first selectman, said his 40-plus years in project management equips him with public outreach experience. For Ford, “talking is the important thing and you need to do it all the time” as an official. He then extended an offer to the seniors in attendance that, if elected, he’d sit down with them “when you want me here.” Additionally, Ford said through his campaign he’s learned the importance of social media. He also stressed that being approachable is important, and added “being honest” about what officials can achieve is also a communicative tool.

Hodge and Schuster were then put on the spot in questions that singled the two out. Hodge was asked about a recent statement she made declaring a senior center could be built in town for \$250,000 – a statement Hodge seemed to suggest has been misconstrued. She said that, five years ago, the Friends of the Senior Center researched how much it would cost to build a new senior center on a parcel of the town’s land. She said with the use of grants, the research showed Colchester would have to pay \$250,000. Hodge furthered, “at no time did I say, ‘This point in time a senior center could be built for \$250,000.’”

Schuster was then asked why, as one person put it, he chose the “last possible minute to come out against the building project.” Schuster recalled he was “shocked” by the \$68 million initial price tag, and said that, when it was lowered to \$57 million, he started “doing some thinking.” He said he questioned alternatives, and even brought some up to the selectmen in meetings. He also recalled two visits to the senior center where he heard seniors say “no, we don’t want this.”

“Whenever I get new information, whenever I hear that this is not the right thing to do for Colchester I’ll make a decision that’s in the best interest of the town,” Schuster said, “and in that case I thought that project was too expensive and was not right for the seniors.”

However, while Hodge and Schuster were singled out, Tomasi joked Ford wasn’t getting away easily. A question pitched to Ford asked what changes he’d like to see in town government. For starters, he said he’d like to see “a responsive Town Hall that is basically governed by the premise of the empowerment of the staff to make decisions.” He furthered that, while Schuster mentioned the budget award, he was interested in creating simpler pieces of information to get the information out. Lastly, Ford said his experience “managing people and managing projects” would be brought to the

selectman’s office to “understand what you need and how to bring it to you.”

Business development in Colchester was also highlighted. The three selectman candidates were asked what their thoughts are on bringing a “big box type store” to town and how they feel about bringing in businesses that compete with existing small businesses.

For Ford, “understanding what we’d like to see in 10, 15, 20 years” is the first place to start. He said this can be done by undertaking a “market analysis.” If elected, he furthered, he would seek funding from the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) to do that. Additionally, Ford said it’s important to have a “balance throughout the town,” rather than being focused on one big box-type or retail development.

Schuster reminded attendees space on Parum Road has already been approved for a big box store but one has not gone into it. He added he’s in favor of it being filled because it would “add to the tax base and also add services and products to the town.” However, he also said he doesn’t “ever want to see something that’s going to ruin our rural character.”

In terms of competition, Schuster said, “We have to be very careful.” He said competition in businesses is the “American way” and that it’s not up to the government to choose what businesses they want. He explained if businesses “meet the zoning requirements the businesses are allowed in.”

Hodge said she’d approach the arrival of businesses by figuring out what citizens’ vision of Colchester is. She added 90 percent of a town’s taxes are “paid for by small businesses.” She furthered small businesses are “our life blood,” so she said making them happy first is the answer to attracting larger ones.

A couple questions from the crowd were open for any candidates to respond to. One gentleman seated asked why William J. Johnston Middle School had been neglected for so long and what candidates’ thoughts were on how to fix it.

Goldstein explained parts of the building are 50 years old, while others were renovated 20 years ago. Overall, he said, WJMS can be either renovated to new, or feature just new construction, or a combination of both. He said the challenges the district is facing is keeping up with schools that have a “very high level of technology integration.” He said building a building that the district is “proud of” is important though his answer was cut off due to the time constraint.

Voiland, the other Board of Education candidate present, said he hasn’t ever sat on the

school board so he couldn’t speak to why WJMS is in its current condition. However, he pitched a solution that he says is similar to the way he maintains his home.

“Buildings can be maintained if the proper money is set aside,” said Voiland. “It’s just that you need to do that.”

One woman in the crowd communicated a serious concern of the property value on her house dipping \$50,000 in two years, while her taxes have gone up \$1,000. “What are you guys going to do to stop the out-of-control spending?” she asked. “I am tired of the out-of-control spending in this town. It is ridiculous what this town spends and I can guarantee the citizens of Colchester are tired of it too!”

Board of Selectman candidate Evan A. Evans said that’s a reason why he’s running. His approach to building the budget would be “going from the bottom up instead of what we can cut from the top.”

Board of Finance contender James McNair said, in current officials’ defense, part of the reason the taxes have gone up are that “the days of the state giving us money are gone.” He furthered revenue has gone down, and said his answer to all this is to “live within your means.” He told the audience he’d like to see a change from officials “selling budgets” to “educate you guys and let you decide how we’re spending your money.”

Ford said his idea to stop hefty spending is to develop a “zero-based budget – where each department head started at zero until they can justify every penny.” Schuster, however, said the candidates before him talked about a process and said he wanted to give “the truth.”

“I don’t see any waste in that budget,” he said. “When someone’s out there saying I can’t afford taxes, I agree with you.”

Schuster furthered the answer to the question would come from a knowledge of knowing “what you’re willing to do without.”

“I don’t like buying new vehicles but I thought it was pretty stupid when we were replacing 20-year-old vehicles one piece at a time,” he explained. “It’s not economical. We were wasting money so we put in place a plan to make smarter, better, financial decisions.”

Schuster furthered he feels conversations about spending “are tough ones to have” but he’s willing to be involved in those conversations.

For Hodge, the “one key area” is to get “everyone” involved. Rather than surveys, Hodge said “good, hard, solid data collection” is the answer in addition to accepting the vision of what Colchester wants.

Election Day is Nov. 5.

East Hampton Political Parties to Face Off Tuesday

by Elizabeth Bowling

Municipal elections are less than one week away, and East Hampton’s slew of candidates are ready to take to the voting booths Tuesday, Nov. 5.

Voting will take place at East Hampton High School, 15 North Maple St., from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m.

This year’s election will offer voters with a lot of options. Just in the Town Council race, voters will see 15 names on the ballot – five per political party.

The 15 Town Council candidates were profiled in last week’s issue of the *Rivereast*. They are: Democrats Barbara Moore, George Pfaffenbach, Tom O’Brien, Philip Visintainer and Kevin Reich; Republicans Ted Hintz Jr., Patience Anderson, Jarod Bushey, Mark Philhower and Ray Zatorski; and Chatham Party candidates Sue Weintraub, Kyle Dostaler, Derek Johnson, Glenn Suprono and Angela Sarahina.

Only a handful of those listed above are incumbents; they are: Moore, Pfaffenbach, Hintz, Weintraub, Dostaler, Johnson and Suprono.

In the Oct. 18 issue of the *Rivereast*, the

Board of Education candidates were profiled. The race will feature another 14 candidates: Democrats Jeffrey Carlson, Steven Kelley, Karen Terry, Roy Leonardi and Chris Goff; Republicans Josh Piteo, Emily Fahle, Karen Lee, Maria Peplau and Deb Devon; and Chatham Party candidates Joelyn Leon, Liz Whitty, Peter Levy and Kelly McLaughlin.

The Board of Finance, profiled in the Oct. 11 issue, will feature 11 more candidates: Democrats Alan Hurst, Jack Solomon, Dean Markham and Mark Vickery; Republicans Don Coolican, Marc Lambert, Lori Wilcox and Sal Nucifora; and Chatham Party candidates Scott Sanicki, Patricia Gauthier and Paul Hoffman.

The slate also includes six Zoning Board of Appeals candidates for the term beginning 2013: Democrat Charles Nicholas; Republicans Dorene Nablo, Margaret Jacobson, Darin Hume and Melinda Powell; and Chatham Party member Lois McCutcheon.

The three Zoning Board of Appeals candidates for the term beginning 2014 are Democrat Brian Spack, Republican Don Martin, and Chatham Party member Carolyn Beamer.

Lastly, the six candidates for the Board of Assessment Appeals are Democrats Linda May and Lynn Spadorcia; Republicans Gil Danaher and Linda Ursin; and Chatham Party candidates Barbara Suprono and John Hines.

Moore, a contender for Town Council and the chairwoman of the Democratic Town Committee, said this week, “Campaigning has been going very well. We talked to lots of people.”

She added, “People are certainly interested in the election this year. They’re listening to what we have to say and taking it seriously.”

Moore said her party’s goal in the week leading up to elections was to “be visible wherever we can.”

Additional information on East Hampton’s Democratic Town Committee can be found at ehctdems.org.

Michael Rose, the Republican Town Committee chairman, said he’s pleased with the Republicans’ approach to campaigning this year.

He said, “I’m proud of the fact that we’ve had a positive campaign that’s been based more

on a vision for the future and the things that bind us rather than those matters that divide us.”

Their campaigning so far has been focused more on meeting with people and less on paid advertisements, and that’s how it’ll remain up until Election Day, he said.

“From our perspective, our retail campaigning has been going very well and we will spend the last week of the election period focused on door-to-door and phone calls,” Rose said.

Dostaler, a candidate for Town Council and the Chatham Party chairman, said the Chatham Party’s focus is on the local community.

He said, “As a third party, we only exist at the local level. Our only real interest continues to be East Hampton.”

Dostaler encourages East Hampton residents to cast their votes this Election Day.

“Voter turnout will decide this election,” Dostaler said. “With a high voter turnout, the outcome will be clear. People need to come out and vote on Nov. 5.”

More information on the Chatham Party can be found at chathamparty.org.

Portland ZBA Votes in Favor of the Town

by Elizabeth Bowling

Portland's Zoning Board of Appeals voted unanimously last Thursday, Oct. 24, to sustain the orders of the town's zoning enforcement officer in regards to the unpermitted paving of a local driveway.

Zoning Enforcement Officer Bob Spencer issued an order of abatement July 8 and followed it up the next day with an order to cease and desist any and all work related to driveway paving on Portland residents John and Christina Kelly's driveway, located at 1 Rose Hill Rd.

After reviewing evidence presented by the town's attorney, Kari Olson, and the Kellys' attorney, George Law, the board voted in favor of the town.

Before the attorneys took the floor at last Thursday's meeting, board chairman Ben Srb disclosed that he is professionally familiar with a number of people involved in this matter, but that his familiarity would not affect his voting "in any way, shape or form."

Board members Richard Basso and Ken Kearns made similar disclosures.

"It's a small town," Srb said.

But one of the Kellys' neighbors, Robert Satagaj of 111 Collins Hill Rd., expressed concern regarding Law acting as both the chairman of the town's ethics commission and the Kellys' attorney.

Satagaj said, "The fox is running the henhouse."

Melissa Gerrier-Satagaj, also of 111 Collins Hill Rd., said she was "uncomfortable" with Law acting as both the Kellys' attorney and the ethics commission chairman.

Regardless, Law represented the Kellys in their appeal of the zoning enforcement officer's orders.

Law said that the board needed to decide "whether or not the actions of the Kellys, by paving their driveway, was in violation of their zoning permit."

According to Spencer, the town's former zoning enforcement officer, Deanna Rhodes, approved the Kellys' zoning permit in October

2006.

Referring to Spencer's orders to abate and cease and desist, Law said, "When you issue a cease-and-desist order you've got to have some basis for issuing it."

But, he said, Spencer did not have a basis until after the order was issued.

Spencer said he issued the orders based on what was on file, including the plot plan – which had the stamp and signature of Rhodes, and specified that the Kellys' driveway would be gravel – as well as the engineer's report from November 2006, which did not have Rhodes' stamp on it, but "specifically states that the driveway is to remain in its natural condition," he said.

Olson said, "The orders were proper based on the information in your files."

Law said the two maps on file were an approved plot plan – which refers to the driveway as an "existing gravel driveway" – and a map from the land surveyor, not the engineer, that was not approved – that also states that the driveway must remain gravel.

However Rhodes, who is now the town's planning and land use administrator, pointed out at last week's meeting that the approved plan, which states, "existing gravel drive" also states, "proposed gravel drive."

"When I'm looking at a plan, I'm always looking to see if it says, 'Proposed paved driveway' – it's one of the different things we're looking at," Rhodes said.

But the approved plan did not state "proposed paved driveway," thus it was intended to remain gravel.

Olson said, "The current existing conditions of the property were never presented as a plan for approval – mainly, the driveway being paved and the culvert being installed under it."

She said to the board, "If you're not going to hold property owners in this town to the development plans they submit to your staff, and which are approved by representations made thereon, then why even have a requirement that

they submit a plan at all?"

To address the issue of whether the paving of Kelly's driveway produced any additional water flow, Law called upon an outside engineering company.

Olson said the discussion of water flow "has no bearing on this appeal."

Rather, she said, "The only question in this appeal is whether the zoning enforcement officer's orders should be affirmed by this board based on the fact that they determined that what occurred up on the sight was a zoning violation."

Srb agreed, "This is about a cease and desist and that'll be how we base this."

But he allowed Law's witnesses – representatives from Harry E. Cole and Son, the company representing the Kellys – to address the board regarding the driveway's surface and its effect on water runoff.

The company representatives – Stephen Giudice, a land surveyor, and Jim Braim, an engineer – said that the change in the driveway's surface from gravel to paved does not affect run-off impact on neighboring properties.

Giudice and Braim said the change in the driveway's surface from gravel to paved does not affect run-off impact on neighboring properties.

"In our opinion professionally, it's our belief that the change in surface type of this driveway is not increasing run-off in this drainage area," Giudice said.

But Sharon Hoy, a neighbor of the Kellys, disagreed despite the calculations.

Hoy, of 33 Rose Hill Rd., said, "The reality of the situation is we're getting more water."

She added that the catch basin at the end of the Kellys' property "goes right into" her property.

Gerrier-Satagaj agreed that the reality was different than what the engineers had calculated for water runoff.

She said, "I can't give you calculations, but I can show you."

She proceeded to show the board a slideshow and videos of her property following a recent heavy rain.

Another neighbor, Bill Larson, of 171 Barton St., added, "We have never seen water come as fast or as forceful as on the Aug. 28 storm, even though the gravel driveway had been there for several years previously."

Law said, however, the impact of the storm would have been just as great regardless of the paving of the driveway.

Speaking as a licensed real estate agent, Hoy said, "This type of a situation will devalue my property and impact the marketability of my property."

Law said, "This is not an issue about being a good neighbor... It's an issue about whether or not there has been a violation of a zoning permit."

Gerrier-Satagaj compared Law's reasoning – that the original plot plan didn't explicitly state that the driveway must remain gravel forever – to breaking one of the Ten Commandments.

"It's like saying, 'Thou shall not steal... today. But if you wait till the coast is clear it's alright,'" she said.

After the public hearing portion of the meeting, the board discussed the evidence and how they planned to vote. Board member Ken Kearns said he believed the original plot plan required the driveway to remain gravel.

"It would appear to me that the original plot plan had called for the gravel driveway [to] stay that way until we could find a way to move forward where nobody suffers negatively from a paved driveway."

Board member Jack Sterry said simply, "I'll agree with that."

Board member Richard Basso added that, for him, "it's a matter of public safety."

* * *

The next regularly scheduled Zoning Board of Appeals meeting is Thursday, Nov. 21, at 7 p.m. at the Portland Library.

Portland Candidates Ready for Elections Tuesday

by Elizabeth Bowling

With municipal elections just days away, Portland's candidates and voters should be just about ready to cast their votes.

Voting will take place Tuesday, Nov. 5, from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. at the Portland Senior Center, 7 Waverly Ave.

The race for first selectperson, which was profiled in last week's *Rivereast*, will feature Democrat Susan Bransfield, who is running for re-election against Independent Lambros Lambrinides.

The race for Board of Selectmen, which was also profiled in last week's issue, will feature seven candidates running for six seats. All four incumbent Democratic board members are seeking re-election. They are: Brian Flood, Mark Finkelstein, Kathleen Richards and Fred Knous. The two incumbent Republicans are also seeking re-election: Carl Chudzik and Ryan Curley. They will be joined on the ballot by newcomer Robert Taylor.

The Board of Education race, which was featured in the Oct. 18 issue of the *Rivereast*, isn't much of a race at all, as five candidates are running for five open seats.

Two seasoned Democratic candidates and one rookie are seeking terms on the seven-member, Democrat-controlled Board of Education. They are incumbents Andrea Alfano and Ben Srb, joined by Christopher Darby. The Republicans are incumbents Betsy Smith

and Michael Pelton.

Additionally, three candidates are running for the Board of Assessment Appeals - Democrats John H. Dillon and David O'Brien and Republican Peter Castelli.

And rounding off the slates for both parties are three candidates for the Zoning Board of Appeals term starting 2013 – Democrats Ben Srb and Richard Basso and Republican Kurt Peterson.

Kathleen Richards, a Board of Selectmen candidate and the chairwoman of the Democratic Town Committee, said Wednesday, "It's been a quiet campaign this year."

She added that campaigning has probably been quiet because many residents know they can reach Bransfield any time.

"I think people realize her office is always open if they have any questions," Richards said.

She said that because there aren't a lot of candidates running – Democrats or Republicans – the competition is minimal.

Republican Town Committee Chairwoman Maria Judge was optimistic about this year's election.

"This election season Portland is very lucky," Judge said. "All our candidates are eager to face the challenges and get the job done."

Four Die in Portland Car Crash

by Elizabeth Bowling

A single-car crash that occurred in Portland early Saturday morning, Oct. 26, left four dead and a fifth in critical condition, police said.

According to a press release from the Portland Police Department, the preliminary police investigation revealed that a Honda Civic traveling southbound struck a concrete bridge abutment at the intersection of Rose Hill and Cox roads. The police and fire departments responded to the scene at approximately 2:45 a.m.

The press release, dated Tuesday, Oct. 29, stated that three people were pronounced dead at the scene: Pedro Duprey, 24, of Springfield, Mass.; Ramon Ruiz, 30, of Hartford; and Ivette Amaro, 42, of Springfield, Mass.

According to Portland Police Sgt. Scott Cunningham, Duprey was driving and Ruiz, a friend, was in the front passenger seat. Amaro, Duprey's mother, was in the right rear seat.

According to the state medical examiner's office, Ruiz and Amaro died of "blunt impact injuries" and Duprey died of "blunt impact injuries of head, trunk and extremities."

A fourth person – passenger Andrea Caraballo, 20, of Springfield, Mass. – was transported to Middlesex Hospital where she was pronounced dead, the press release said. She was Duprey's sister and was sitting in the rear center seat, Cunningham affirmed. Her death, too, was caused by "blunt impact injuries," the state medical examiner's office said.

Another passenger, Juniarys Caraballo, 18, of Springfield, Mass., was ejected from the car and flown by Lifestar to Hartford Hospital, where she remains in critical condition, Cunningham said Wednesday. She is also Duprey's sister.

The accident is still under investigation by the Portland Police Department Accident Reconstruction Team.

Marlborough Police News

10/25: State Police said Sylwia Maslowska, 23, of 196 South St., Hartford, was charged with reckless driving, DUI and possession of a controlled substance. A subsequent investigation revealed Maslowska's passenger, Angel L. Rivera, 33, of 64 Tolland St., East Hartford, was charged with illegal sale of a controlled substance and possession of a controlled substance.

10/27: State Police said Lisa Martin, 42, of 27 Meyer Rd., Colchester, was traveling west on Route 66 in the area of the Route 2 eastbound exit 13 off-ramp when Brefo Akwasi, 19, of 76 Reed Dr., Wethersfield, was exiting the Route 2 exit 13 off-ramp and made a left

turn from a right turn-only lane into the travel path of Martin. Police said Martin was transported to Marlborough Clinic for evaluation of non-evident possible hand injuries.

10/27: State Police said Michael Anderson, 50, of 481 East St., Hebron, was charged with second-degree breach of peace and third-degree assault.

10/28: State Police said Alexander Waites, 21, of 14 Corey Ln., Niantic, was charged with reckless driving, illegal possession and possession of an illegal substance with the intent to sell.

Election Day is Next Tuesday in Hebron

by Geeta Schrayter

Election Day is almost here, bringing with it the opportunity for Hebron voters to show their support for various candidates. But what Tuesday won't bring is much surprise, as the majority of candidates are running opposed.

Even so, the chairs of both the Democratic and Republican town committee said they felt their slate of candidates was well-equipped to run the town.

Democratic Town Committee Chairman Bill Rudis said the committee had "very, very intelligent candidates who are up to the task of working in the various boards and commissions."

"We feel confident, certainly, in each one of those candidates who are running for election," he said.

Republican Town Committee Chairwoman Catherine Marx had similar remarks. She said she was proud of the candidates that had stepped forward to run, and as a citizen and chairwoman of the committee she was grateful for their dedication.

"We have a unique combination of lawyers, laborers, small business owners and homemakers to truly represent our wonderful town" she said, and encouraged people to head out and vote to show their support and appreciation for the candidates.

For the Board of Selectmen, that means Republican Dan Larsen and Democrat Mark Stuart.

Larsen will be starting his second term as a selectman, and said he considers it his responsibility to stay active in town and be a part of the community. He said he plans to use his experiences along with common sense and logic in the decision-making process and expects a big focus moving forward to be "the never ending effects on our budget by the state" and the number of unfunded mandates that are passed down.

Stuart has served on the Board of Finance in addition to two prior terms as a selectman. Some of the issues he has said the town faces include the reliance on property taxes for funding in conjunction with decreasing state funds and educational cost sharing (ECS) dollars, which, if adjusted for inflation, he said have decreased.

Moving forward, Stuart said he'd like to see the town's investment in the Capital Improvement Plan program increase. He added he expected there would be a continued focus on economic development in town and he was optimistic in opportunities such as the Village

Green District.

On the Board of Finance, this year's elections will bring the return of Democrat Malcolm Leichter, who will be heading into his third term.

Leichter said his experience working in municipal finance over the years along with the eight he's already spent on the finance board has allowed him to become familiar with both sides of the budget process. He said he wanted to continue on the board to help keep the town affordable for residents – something he felt he'd be able to do. And, moving forward, the board should continue prioritizing town requests and placing them on a timeline so there's a "planned, systematic schedule."

Along with Leichter, newcomer Republicans Terrence Piggott and Henry Sawicki will be joining the board.

Piggott said he wanted to join the board because he loves Hebron and wants to see that town needs are taken care of. However, he added he was aware many residents were worried about taxes and said he'd work with the board to try and provide for the town while keeping them in check.

Meanwhile, Sawicki, who currently sits on the Zoning Board of Appeals, said there needed to be more fiscal responsibility at the schools. Sawicki said he felt too much was being spent on the schools in light of declining enrollment while not enough is being spent on the town. The town, he stated, "needs to spend a little bit more on other things other than the school."

After the elections, the Hebron Board of Education will be comprised of three new members: Democrats Ramon Bieri, Carol Connolly and Erica Bromley.

Bieri currently serves as secretary for the Hebron Democratic Town Committee and said he was interested in serving because he considers education important for a strong society. One of the biggest issues he said the schools face is the budget. He stated it was important that there's a strong relationship between the community and the district and an understanding about what it takes to maintain a quality school.

For Bromley, joining the board was about strengthening the school system and improving communication. She said she wanted the community to "fully understand and support" the school system.

Bromley said it was also important for schools to be held accountable by showing how they're helping students succeed through more

than just test scores. Bromley explained she was a supporter of looking at the "whole child" and feels the educational, social and emotional aspects of child development should all be addressed equally.

In her online biography, candidate Connolly is described as "committed to serving the Hebron community." She said she believes in the 'three Ts' – trust, teamwork and transparency, and pledges to promote a world-class education for students that includes the promotion of early childhood education, to work with administrators to ensure school safety and to support teachers and paraprofessionals and invest in new technology through grant funding.

Over at RHAM, four Hebron candidates are vying for three available seats, in one of just two contested races. Republican incumbent Kevin Williams is looking to retain the seat he filled last October after a resignation.

Williams said his initial year on the board has been a learning experience and he only recently felt he's "started to gain traction in terms of what [he] can impact." His main area of focus is communication, and he said he wants there to be a greater "two-way communication process."

Williams added during his time on the board he felt he'd been able to demonstrate a willingness to listen and consider the opinions of a variety of people. He said he doesn't claim to have all the answers, and the more input there is, the more ideas and ways to solve an issue there will be.

Republicans newcomers Val Dalton and Rich Jacobson and Democrat Joe O'Connor are also looking for a seat on the board. All three candidates have expressed an interest in focusing on school maintenance, particularly in the area of the athletic fields.

The fields became a topic of discussion over the summer after parents expressed concern over their condition and called them unsafe for students. When the RHAM Field Improvement Committee, which formed to address the issue, attempted to form a volunteer clean-up day, some - including O'Connor - said the board didn't respond with solutions fast enough and made it difficult for the clean-up day to happen. The board however, has said the delays were due to union issues.

The group eventually contacted state officials about the issue and state senators Steve Cassano and Cathy Osten and state Rep. Pam Sawyer toured the fields in July and helped make a

clean-up day happen in August.

But O'Connor said the board should have been able to help the committee and provide results without the involvement of state legislators. He said he felt the current board lacked communication and respect toward one another and needed a change in leadership and direction.

Dalton, who is president of TriCounty Baseball and past president of the Hebron Baseball League, said she has a lot of experience working with the board, superintendent and maintenance department and is very interested in the fields and wants them taken better care of.

Jacobson felt similarly. He was also involved in the clean-up day over the summer, and said one of the biggest issues at the school was maintenance "or a lack thereof."

But all three candidates said there were other areas of importance as well. They agreed the business manager position needs to be filled as soon as possible so there's financial transparency and accountability.

In addition, Dalton said it was important students graduate with the tools they'll need to succeed in the current economy and felt there needs to be a greater connection between constituents in town and the school.

Jacobson agreed improvements need to be made in the communication between the board and taxpayers and said finances and changes in technology and education were also issues.

For O'Connor, in addition to maintenance his focus would also be on changes in education, specifically the Common Core curriculum and teacher evaluations.

Along with RHAM, the other contested race is with the Planning and Zoning Commission, where four candidates – Republicans Devon Garner and Natalie Wood and Democrats Judith Podell and Rich Marzi – are vying for three seats.

Also running for – and guaranteed – seats Tuesday are Republican Eric Brancard for Planning and Zoning Commission Alternate, Democrats Ted Bromley and Judith Podell and Republican Phil LoBianco for the Board of Assessment Appeals, Democrat Anthony Novak and Republicans Jardo Opocensky and Michael McCormack for Zoning Board of Appeals, and Republican Jane Golino for Zoning Board of Appeals Alternate.

Elections are next Tuesday, Nov. 5. Voting takes place from 6 a.m.-8 p.m. at Hebron Elementary School, 85 Church St.

Tierney Gets Thumbs-Up from Hebron Selectmen

by Geeta Schrayter

Hebron Town Manager Andrew Tierney completed his first year in the position Oct. 4, and the selectmen agree he's done a good job. A review of his performance took place during executive session Oct. 17 and the results were positive.

Board of Selectmen Chairman Jeff Watt said the board felt Tierney did "a very good job executing the jobs set up for him."

"We felt he was very dedicated to working with staff, boards and commissions and committed to really helping out Hebron," Watt stated. "Overall, he did a great job. We're very happy with what he did especially for his first year."

In a letter on the review, which was submitted to Tierney this week, a synopsis of the evaluation was provided which shared the different ways the selectmen were pleased with his performance. According to the letter, Tierney met or exceeded expectations in all aspects of the evaluation and attained the goals he was given.

The selectmen wrote he improved the budget process, got charter revision underway, made "very good strides" on the economic development front and had done well meeting with local business owners on the regular.

In addition, he was commended for his work finding and securing grant opportunities and for his communication skills.

"You have worked well with boards and commissions, superintendents and the public,"

wrote the selectmen. "You have been successful in attaining confidence from your staff and have created a good working relationship with them and a better overall atmosphere in the workplace."

In addition to receiving high marks from the selectmen, Tierney also received a positive review from his department heads. In general, the work environment in town was said to be positive under Tierney and people were said to be satisfied with his performance.

Positive attributes possessed by Tierney included exhibiting genuine concern for employees as well as empathy, praise, patience, open-mindedness and fairness. Furthermore, Tierney was said to encourage creativity, recognize achievements and the importance of employee morale.

On the financial front, he was said to show fiscal restraint and the ability to maximize the use of resources.

"I was really happy," Tierney said of his review. "The review was both from the Board of Selectmen and all my department heads that I interact with, so it even exceeded my expectations."

Tierney said his first year had been a busy one, between the two storms he'd dealt with and transitioning the town over to a new regional dispatch service. Tierney called the switch from Colchester Emergency Communications (KX) to Tolland County Mutual Aid Fire

Service Inc. (TN) a bittersweet one since the town had a good relationship with KX.

"But unfortunately, the financial benefit [of switching] couldn't be avoided," he said, reiterating it was a "difficult transition."

In addition, Tierney said the economy impacted his first year as well.

"When the economy is good, everybody's happy – things are a lot easier in my position," he explained. "So it's always a struggle [when the economy isn't good] to keep people happy and taxes down."

* * *

Now that Tierney has successfully navigated his first year as town manager, the selectmen provided him with a new list of goals to work toward during year two.

During the last budget season, the town budget passed on its third referendum, after the first two were defeated by voters. For the 2014-15 budget year, the goal is to put together a budget that will pass on the first try. Tierney said he was going to work hard to make that happen and said he wanted to present a budget that supports what's needed to keep the town in good shape while being fiscally responsible - something he admitted can be a "hard blend."

"We have to have a responsible budget that the voters will agree to and pass on the first go around," he stated.

In addition, Tierney was given the goals to

work on cohesiveness with the Board of Education, develop and implement a Debt Management Policy, hire a new finance director with increased input and involvement from the Board of Finance, and to continue working on economic development.

To that regard, Tierney said he was actively seeking grants and trying to get investors to take a look at what's available in Hebron. He added he hoped the new CVS pharmacy in town would be further incentive for builders to look at Hebron and move in.

Other goals included working on the policies and organizational structure at the fire department, hiring a new fire chief and taking a bigger leadership role when working with the selectmen.

Tierney said he appreciated the review and had worked hard. He added credit for his high marks should be given not just to his own work, but to his staff, and even his wife.

"The biggest person I should give credit to is my wife for putting up with all the time I spend in Hebron," he said. "I can honestly say I'm in this town more than the town I live in [East Hampton]."

As for his staff, Tierney said, "I have a wonderful staff. That's the reason I got such a good review. I want to continue that working relationship I've established with them and improve upon that to assist the public even more."

Police Union Head Expresses Doubts Over Dispatch Move

by Geeta Schrayter

On Monday, Oct. 28, dispatch services at Troop K in Colchester – which covers the *Rivereast* towns of Andover, Colchester, Hebron and Marlborough – transferred to Troop C in Tolland, as part of a statewide consolidation Connecticut State Police Col. Danny Stebbins has said would improve efficiency and place more troopers on the road.

And while police officials feel the switch will go largely unnoticed by the public, the head of the state police union continues to have his doubts.

In a press release sent last week to officials in the 14 Troop K towns, Troop K commanding officer Lt. Eric Murray explained the consolidation was only a transfer of communication functions, and the Colchester barracks would remain operational.

Troop K “will continue to be a fully-staffed, fully-functioning state police troop, providing 24-hour police coverage to the citizens of our area,” he wrote.

Murray went on to say there were no plans to close Troop K, and the barracks would continue to be staffed by the same assigned troopers, detectives, resident troopers and sergeants as it had been. He explained Troop K personnel will continue to report to the barracks and be responsible for police services in the area.

Anyone who lives in the towns covered by Troop K can use the same number to contact State Police that they always have – 860-537-7500 – but the calls will be answered by dispatchers at Troop C, many of whom the release said would be the same as those that worked out of Troop K.

“There are no ‘new state police phone numbers’ for citizens of Troop K towns to learn,” said Murray.

He added the transfer was “likely to be unnoticed by the general public.”

However, State Police Union President Andrew Matthews said this week that wasn’t true. Matthews was present at the meeting with Stebbins last year, where he expressed numerous concerns the union had regarding the consolidation.

On Tuesday, Matthews said union leadership continued to be disappointed with Stebbins’ decision to move forward with the consolidation and their concerns remain for the safety of the public and union members.

Matthews said he felt the consolidation was moving forward without proper staffing levels. He said as a result of consolidation that has already occurred in the western part of the state, there have been instances of troopers leaving their coverage area for long periods of time to take arrested individuals to various prisons.

Murray explained in his press release individuals arrested by Troop K personnel would be brought to Colchester; however, “if they’re not released in a reasonable amount of time, [they] could be transferred to Troop C or to a state correctional facility.”

Matthews also expressed concern over the ability for all of the troopers to leave the barracks – which was touted as part of the consolidation’s benefit.

The release from Murray states at least one trooper is expected to be at the barracks at all times performing administrative work, but there may be instances where everyone is out on patrol. In response to this, an emergency phone has been installed outside the barracks that connects to Troop C. If a citizen comes to the barracks and needs assistance, they can use the phone and be connected to Troop C dispatchers who will either contact any troopers at the barracks or alert troopers on patrol to return to offer assistance.

“It is expected that when there is not a state trooper inside Troop K, one will arrive there within minutes of a citizen who is at Troop K using the emergency phone to ask for assistance,” the release read.

But to Matthews, that alone meant the idea the consolidation “is likely to be unnoticed by the general public” was false.

“Ask the public and if the doors are locked [at the barracks], that’s a visible changes” he said.

For the consolidation to work, Matthews said more troopers would need to be staffed so all of the barracks would remain open 24/7 and each area would have proper coverage. Although the other benefit to the consolidation was said to be freeing up troopers who, prior to Monday, would have been assigned as a desk officer and unable to leave their post, Matthews didn’t wholly agree.

He felt allowing the desk trooper to do other work was a benefit, but potentially having an empty barracks due to that was not. Then, requiring troopers to transport prisoners at times could pose problematic if there was ever a single issue that tied up many of the other troopers. This, he said, could possibly leave few to no troopers to respond to any other issues that might occur simultaneously as well as an empty barracks.

For Matthews, the answer would be to have two civilian dispatchers at each troop so they can be open 24/7 and properly staff each area – something he said hasn’t actually happened for the last three or four decades.

“I can never release how few troopers cover

Troop K, but if I did people would be appalled,” he said, later adding, “They keep claiming we can provide the same service, but we’re not doing more with less anymore we’re doing more with nothing.”

However, in spite of Matthews’ concerns, for now at least, local town leaders didn’t have much apprehension about the move.

Colchester First Selectman Gregg Schuster said this week he’s had conversations with Murray and saw a presentation on the switch, and if the consolidation works as proposed “it should be a benefit for everyone.”

“We would have an extra trooper on patrol each shift so instead of having to stay in the dispatch center they could be out on the road,” he said. In response to Matthews’ concerns, Schuster said he wasn’t sure he understood the logic.

“What you’re doing is putting an extra trooper on the roads” he stated, adding if a situation were to occur where troopers were tied up transporting prisoners outside the coverage area as Matthews alluded to, “then [coverage] would be the same as it is today. So it’s not going to be lower than it is today. It would be greater or the same.”

Schuster mentioned the call box that is now outside the barracks, and added Colchester Police were also available “so there are plenty [of officers] to address any need.”

He said while he’d love to have troopers in the barracks at all times, making the change to have them actively patrolling instead “makes a lot of sense,” especially “in the absence of the state deciding to increase the number of troopers.”

“This seems like the operationally sound thing to do” Schuster stated.

Marlborough First Selectwoman Cathi Gaudinski had a similar view. She said she felt confident in the consolidation, and that state police will “be able to meet the dispatch needs for the town.”

She added she believed the town would have adequate coverage between the resident state trooper and those on patrol.

“It’s been stated that they’ve made a commitment with us [for the resident trooper] so I will work with that and I encourage the union and the management of the state police to work through issues that they see coming forward,” Gaudinski said.

Gaudinski said it was explained some of the consolidation issues seen in the western side of the state had been used as a lesson when planning the present consolidation.

“So they’re taking some of those lessons

learned and adapting for this consolidation also,” she stated, adding she planned to keep in touch with the command staff.

“If I hear of any issues, I will follow up with the lieutenant at the troop,” she said.

Like Gaudinski, Andover First Selectman Bob Burbank said if there were any coverage issues, he’d “make a lot of noise” about it. But at this point, it didn’t look like that would be the case.

“It’s hard for me to make an evaluation because I’m not on the inside but that doesn’t affect Andover too much because our resident trooper [Rob O’Connor] wouldn’t be involved in that,” Burbank said, explaining the resident trooper’s primary concern is Andover.

“Whether it would affect any secondary activities as far as getting troopers here I really don’t know,” he added. “I haven’t seen any effect as of yet and if I did I certainly would make some noise about it because we do rely quite heavily on the resident state trooper and his backup.”

But as far as the dispatch consolidation, Burbank said he didn’t expect the change to affect the town.

“Considering how quickly communication moves around I don’t think it’s going to affect overall service,” he said.

In Hebron, Town Manager Andrew Tierney said he also didn’t expect any issues – but added only time could really tell.

“I don’t anticipate any lack of service due to [the consolidation] but that will remain to be seen,” he said. “The barracks will continue to be manned by troopers, they just will be dispatched out of Tolland, so I don’t think we’re going to see any interruption in service.”

Tierney also felt the town would remain properly covered in part due to the resident trooper. However, he said if it turned out there was a lack of coverage, Tierney said it would be “not acceptable,” and he would need to sit down and renegotiate with the state police.

“I’ve always had a good working relationship with the state police and I want to maintain that through this process” he said, reiterating the impact of the consolidation would “remain to be seen.”

But waiting until something happens to show the towns aren’t properly covered is exactly what Matthews and the union were looking to avoid – but expect to occur.

“When something happens, state union leadership will be out in front with documents and testimony we’ve provided, because at some point, our concern is someone will get hurt,” Matthews said.

East Hampton School Board Covers A Lot of Ground

by Elizabeth Bowling

Monday night’s Board of Education meeting covered a lot of ground – from discussing the budget, to praising good work within the school system, to viewing a mini-art show; board members had an eventful meeting.

Regarding the Board of Education’s current budget, board member Carol Lane said it’s “on track to get to the end of the year in positive territory.”

Regarding budgeting goals and priorities for the future, Superintendent of Schools Diane Dugas said, “We want to think about advancing the district and long-range budget processes.”

Board member Ken Barber suggested reorganizing the presentation of the budget. For example, he said there could be categories broken down into different academic programs so that the breakdown of spending is easier to visualize and understand.

Board of Education vice chairwoman Joanne Barmasse suggested breaking it down even further. For example, she said it’d be good to know how much it costs to maintain the school buildings.

The budget goals will be refined and voted on at future meetings.

Dugas also took a few minutes Monday night to thank Kevin Reich – the part-time director of operations who retired yesterday, Oct. 31 – for his 40 years of service and dedication to the East Hampton school system.

Reich taught in East Hampton for 10 years.

After that, he worked in the town’s superintendent’s office for 30 years. In the course of those 30 years, he served as assistant superintendent, acting superintendent, director of administrative services and curriculum, and Board of Education business manager.

Dugas, on behalf of the Board of Education, presented Reich with a Golden Apple Award, which was created specially for him and will be awarded annually from here on out.

The Golden Apple will be awarded to a “professional educator who demonstrates extraordinary professional leadership, dedication and compassionate contributions to the East Hampton school community,” Dugas said.

She furthered, “These are the characteristics that honor the over 40 years of professional leadership and the lasting legacy that Kevin Reich leaves with each person he’s come into contact with.”

Reich earned a standing ovation from the audience of about 35 residents, as well as the board members.

“The board has been very good to me and I try to do my best to serve the community I love,” Reich said. “I just feel somewhat guilty because I feel I took more away than I leave behind.”

However, Reich did hint that he’d like to continue serving his community in some other way; he’s currently running for East Hampton Town Council.

Following the board’s presentation of the

Golden Apple, Memorial Elementary School art teacher Carolanne Pinto gave the board a presentation on interdisciplinary connections through the visual arts.

With the help of six of her young students, Pinto explained to the board how she incorporates Common Core State Standards into her curriculum and how she overlaps art and academics – like language arts and the science of light and shadows, she said.

Pinto said she and other teachers are taking advantage of the “opportunity for art rooms and classrooms to come together.”

The second- and third-graders showed off their artwork to the board, as well as to their proud families in the audience.

* * *

Also at Monday’s meeting, board member Scott Minnick updated the board on the full-day kindergarten feasibility committee. He said the school board’s subcommittee had already met and its next step is to find research and discuss data regarding full-day kindergarten.

Board member Bill Marshall also had an update; he addressed a question that came up at the last school board meeting regarding what happens to unused materials throughout the high school renovation process.

“All recyclable materials are, in fact, recycled,” Marshall explained. “Salvageable materials go to the contractor; they do not go back to the town. However, the town benefits by the

fact that the contractors, in making their bids, calculate into that how much money they can make back by re-selling materials.”

In sum, he said, “In the end, the town benefits.”

Continuing in the spirit of updates, Dugas addressed a student request from the last Board of Education meeting for a compost bin at East Hampton High School. Dugas affirmed Monday that the Environmental Club does not need school board approval to go forward with its plans.

However, she did suggest that the club put together an action plan and proposal and present it to Principal John Fidler to ensure that there are no budgeting implications.

Dugas also took some time Tuesday to praise the East Hampton schools for a successful first late opening. She said the professional development that took place the morning of Oct. 23 was “great” and “productive.”

She also noted *Connecticut Magazine* recently came out with a ranking of towns in the Nutmeg State, and East Hampton was ranked sixth in education for towns with a median home sale between \$175,000 and \$225,000.

“We’re thrilled with *Connecticut Magazine*’s recent listing of East Hampton,” she said.

* * *

The next regularly scheduled East Hampton Board of Education meeting is Tuesday, Nov. 12, at 6:30 p.m.

Handmade Boat Highlights Items at AHM Auction

by Geeta Schrayter

When summer fades into fall, there are a few things to be expected: the change of leaves from vibrant green to bright hues of orange, red and yellow; days that get light later and dark earlier; cooler temps and warmer clothes; and sights that will soon turn to the fast approaching holiday season.

But before the focus is completely on Thanksgiving pies and Christmas presents – or another holiday of choice – there’s another event area residents have to look forward to: the fifth annual AHM Youth and Family Services Fall Foliage Concert and Auction, coming Nov. 9.

And well before the facets of fall started to come around, a team of four were working diligently to prepare a new and totally unique auction item for the upcoming event: a handmade wooden canoe.

AHM Executive Director Joel Rosenberg explained this week he and AHM board member Brendan Shea were having a casual conversation over the summer when the discussion turned to their hobbies and interests, which include boat building. Last summer, Rosenberg and his family participated in Mystic Seaports’ Family Boat Building Program and crafted a wooden lake sailboat. Meanwhile, Shea has built a number of boats from scratch, one of which was recently featured in the magazine *Wooden Boat*.

“We just started joking about building a boat for AHM to feature in the next Fall Foliage Concert and Auction,” Rosenberg explained this week. “What started as a very light-hearted conversation grew into something where we said ‘you know what? This is something we can really do.’”

So, a team consisting of Rosenberg, Shea, the AHM board’s immediate past president Peter Yorio and Eddie Pace – whose wife Erin is also on the AHM board – put in over 200 hours throughout the summer and early autumn months to create a gleaming, 15-foot boat.

The design of the all-wood canoe is called “The Moccasin,” and the boat was constructed from Okoume mahogany, Sepele mahogany and poplar. The bottom of the hull was covered with fiberglass cloth for durability and strength and the entire vessel has been epoxy coated, painted and varnished. The boat, which is registered as ‘Hull 104’ with B&B Yacht Designs, weighs around 45 pounds and can hold two adults, or

one adult and two children, and comes with two paddles – which means it will be ready to hit the water upon finding its owner. In addition, the winning bidder will receive a full set of plans and construction photos.

Speaking on the building process, Shea said this week it’s “always amazing to see a stack of wood take shape and form into a boat.”

“It’s hard to vision how something can come from just a stack of material,” he said, adding the boat was “nice and unusual and custom; there’s no other boat like it. There may be some similar, but it’s one of a kind.”

Rosenberg said building the boat has been “a great project.” He said both the Pace and Shea children helped with the construction as well and “it’s just been a very nice community project all for a great cause.”

“This was not a chore” he said, “I can speak for [the others], I know because we all talked about this. This was truly a labor of love: doing something for a cause we all care deeply about.”

And now, Rosenberg said the hope is that some generous bidders will come forward who will look at the canoe and see not only a quality boat but what its sale is supporting. But as far as an actual value, both Rosenberg and Shea said they couldn’t give it a price.

“We’re calling it priceless,” Rosenberg said. “We’ve done some research. It’s almost impossible to find anyone that’s selling theirs. They’re family heirlooms once they’re built. We have not been able to identify anything close to this [but] we hope people bid generously.”

“To me,” Shea added, “it’s a valuable boat. It’s beautiful. It’s not meant for display it’s meant to be used. It should be quite usable on lakes and ponds and even larger rivers. Although,” he laughed, “I wouldn’t use it on white water.”

An opening bid of \$500 has already been received on the boat, which will be available to view at AHM starting Monday. Those interested in taking a look should call 860-228-9488.

In addition to the opportunity for one lucky bidder to walk away with a brand new canoe, there will be plenty of other live and silent auction items for guests to go home with.

Auctioneer RJ Weston will sell 10 live auction items, including the boat. The other items include a vacation getaway, a University of Connecticut men’s basketball skybox at the XL Center, a signed UConn basketball from the first



The featured item during the live auction at next week’s AHM Fall Foliage Concert and Auction is a 15-foot wooden canoe created by, clockwise from bottom left, AHM board member Brendan Shea, Eddie Pace, AHM Executive Director Joel Rosenberg and immediate past board president Peter Yorio.

women’s championship season, UConn men and women’s basketball tickets, a house concert with local band Dino and the No Names, a retirement plan for Connecticut Teachers, a signed Don Taylor limited edition framed nature print and a wine of the month package.

Meanwhile, the silent auction includes close to 30 different items including gift certificates, entertainment packages, gift baskets, paintings and a golf lamp.

“It’s going to be quite a night,” Rosenberg said.

Doors open for the Nov. 9 event at 6 p.m. The concert will start at 7, with the live auction occurring at intermission. Entertainment for the evening includes Dino and the No Names as the opening act, followed by New York-based singer and songwriter Heather Masse as the feature artist. Masse has performed at hundreds of venues across the country including NPR’s World Café, the Somerville Theater and Boston’s Symphony Hall. She has also appeared on Garrison Keillor’s *A Prairie Home Companion* and has performed with the con-

temporary bluegrass band The Wayfaring Strangers. She will perform at the concert along with pianist Jed Wilson.

“I hope [the event] sells out, which I think it might,” Shea said. “It generates a lot of interest in AHM and the things we can do in the community to help out. So it’s not only a fundraiser but raises an awareness of the programs offered.”

All proceeds from the concert and auction will go directly to supporting AHM programs and services – and Rosenberg said the goal for next Saturday’s event is to raise between \$9-10,000.

“That would be a very successful event for us, and a lot of it depends upon how we do with the silent and live auction” he stated.

Which means attaining that goal rests in part on the canoe they’ve created and the bidders’ desire to take to the water in a brand new boat while helping keep AHM afloat.

Tickets are \$30 and must be purchased in advance. For more information or to purchase tickets call 860-228-9488.

Votes to be Cast Next Week in Marlborough

by Melissa Roberto

While Town Hall positions – including that of First Selectwoman Cathi Gaudinski – will remain untouched, next Tuesday’s elections could certainly change the makeup of several key boards and commissions in town.

A total of 28 citizens are seeking to fill seats on the Board of Finance, both the local and RHAM boards of education, the Board of Assessment Appeals, Planning Commission, Zoning Commission as well as the Zoning Board of Appeals. Depending on the amount of candidates and the number of open seats, some boards will feature a race while others will automatically be seated.

A race will occur between four Board of Finance candidates seeking to fill two four-year terms. The contenders include two incumbents, Republicans Susan Leser and Cliff Denniss, against newcomers on the Democratic ticket, David Farrington and Torin Lee-Lewis. Denniss has served on the finance board for six years and is currently the vice chairman. Leser has served on the board since 2004 as a regular member and an alternate. She is currently a teacher in Tolland. According to the Marlborough Democrat website, Farrington wants to promote “fiscal and social responsibility,” and Lee-Lewis says she’d balance “fiscal discipline” and the town’s assets. There are also two candidates who will automatically be seated for the two alternate seats, Republican nominees Scott Fleehler, already seated as an alternate, and Midge Denno.

Four of five contenders will be seated on the local Board of Education, which oversees Marlborough Elementary School. The contenders include two incumbents – Republican Carole Shea and Democrat Mimi LaPoint – and three fresh faces: Republican Susan Rapelye, who is fairly new to the town, having moved here last August, and Democratic nominees Wes Skorski and Theresa Brysgel, both of which have attended a majority of meetings over the last year voicing support of a foreign language program at the school.

The Board of Education candidates were

profiled in the Oct. 18 *Rivereast*. On the Marlborough Republicans’ website, Shea said she’d like to continue working with the board and administration to “provide a high-quality education for all students in Marlborough.” On the Democrats’ website, LaPoint said she’s interested in working with the board to “refocus on students.”

Respective websites for the newcomers also state their goals. Rapelye, mother of four, said she wants to “make a difference” and believes today’s children are “our future.” Brysgel said she wants to enhance the board’s “community engagement” and assure students “have the education and resources to succeed.” For Skorski, he’d like to “use leading programs around the country as models for our students” while also bringing transparency.

Two of the three candidates for Board of Assessment Appeals are currently seated on the board. The three candidates are in a race for two open slots. Current Republican incumbents David Morganson and Riva Clark are seeking re-election against Democratic newcomer to the board, Matthew Wilson. At a Marlborough Business Association (MBA) “Meet the Candidates” forum held last month, Wilson said he’s lived in town a little over 11 years and is running because Marlborough has been “very good” to his family and he’s looking to give back.

There is no race for the Planning Commission; two candidates, Republicans Brendon Montstream and Wendy Nichols, are seeking two of the three open seats on the commission. At the October MBA forum, Montstream provoked laughter by stating the planning commission is probably the “most boring” commission in town, since the public doesn’t attend the meetings. Nonetheless, he said he was thankful the commission is also the “least political.” Both Nichols and Montstream are seeking re-election.

Additionally, Republican candidate Mark A. Stankiewicz is seeking one of two available seats as a planning commission alternate. At

the forum, Stankiewicz said this will be his first stab in Marlborough politics. He said he believes “growth will make a positive impact” in the town.

Four candidates, three Republicans and one Democrat, are in the running for three seats on the Zoning Commission. Of the three Republicans, Mark Merritt and Sandy Sudduth are newcomers. Sudduth, on the Republican website, states she’s running because she’d “like to see the country charm maintained in all new building projects.” Sudduth is a former RHAM Board of Education member and is a planning commission alternate. Republican Susan R. McFarland is seeking re-election. McFarland is currently the vice chairwoman of the commission and would like to continue to “exercise my vote on the commission with the best interests of the town’s citizens in mind.”

Democrat Joseph La Bella, a former selectman and finance board member, is seeking a seat on the commission for the first time. At the MBA forum, La Bella stated he’d make sure “everyone is heard” like he had in his previous years volunteering on town boards.

One candidate, Republican David Fisher, will automatically be seated as an alternate as he is the only candidate for two open positions. Fisher currently serves on the board as an alternate.

The three candidates for the Zoning Board of Appeals will also assume roles on the board come November. Incumbents Chris Lawson, a Republican candidate, and John Grasso, a Democrat, will continue their time on the board. Newcomer Eric Kelly, a Republican, is also on the ticket and will be elected to serve on the board. Republican Joseph Weber will automatically assume an alternate position on the board as he is the only candidate. Weber has lived in town for 34 years and at the October MBA event, stated he is “willing to use responsible judgment for the town.”

Lastly, the RHAM Board of Education candidates, Republican incumbent Judy Benson-Clarke and Democratic incumbent Manny

Catarino are seeking to extend their seats on the board another four years. The two are the only candidates seeking two open Marlborough seats. The board oversees the RHAM middle school and high school which welcome students from Marlborough and its neighboring towns Hebron and Andover.

This week the chairpersons of the Democratic and Republican town committees praised the candidates who make up the two slates. The Democrats’ chairwoman, Lauren Cragg, said she’s pleased with her committee’s “diverse slate of candidates, their campaigning efforts and willingness to connect with prospective voters.”

“We have had tremendous support from state-elected officials and State Democratic Central,” Cragg furthered. “Our door-to-door canvassing feedback reflects that Marlborough is ready for new faces, new talents and new voices for representing this community.”

Republican Town Committee Chairman Ken Hjulstrom said he feels Marlborough taxpayers “appreciate candidates who avoid playing political games and who interact with other board members in a respectful and professional manner.” With that said, Hjulstrom said the GOP candidates “will focus on doing what is best for everyone.”

“Doing so requires officials to make tough decisions and it also requires them to leave politics at the door,” Hjulstrom expanded. “I have always felt that there is no room or personal agendas at the board table. Those elected to serve their community have an obligation to carry out their duties in a respectful and thoughtful manner. I am extremely proud of our Republican slate of candidates and their dedication to our community.”

For more information on both slates of candidates, readers should log on to MarlboroughDems.com and marlgop.com

Election Day is Nov. 5. Voting will take place from 6 a.m.-8 p.m. in the community room at Marlborough Elementary School, 25 School Dr.

Obituaries

East Hampton

Gail K. Hamm

Gail K. Hamm died peacefully at home in East Hampton Thursday, Oct. 24, after a three-year struggle with cancer. Gail is survived by Alan Hurst, her husband of 38 years.

Gail served in the Connecticut General Assembly as State Representative for the 34th District (East Hampton, Middletown and, before redistricting, Haddam) from 1998 to 2013.

Born in Hillsdale, Mich., on Aug. 19, 1951, to the late Denver Hamm Jr. and the late Norma Jeanne (Thayer) Hamm, Gail earned a B.A. from Western Michigan University and her J.D. from Valparaiso University (IN).

Throughout Gail's life, she possessed a commitment to community involvement and advocacy on behalf of women, children and working people. Tokenua "Renee" White, one of her home health aides, said "You meet some people who just light your fire and inspire you to do more. I was lucky to meet Gail. She's one of those people. The changes she worked for were beneficial to so many, including me."

Immediately after college, Gail served as an advance person on a Michigan gubernatorial campaign and later, while in law school, participated in Project Justice, which involved a federal courts clinic, federal litigation, poverty law, and prisoner and civil rights. She subsequently served as law clerk to Juvenile Court Judge Raymond Kickbush in Indiana where she worked on issues relating to child abuse and neglect.

Upon moving to Connecticut, Gail served as legislative aide to Connecticut state Rep. John Mannix (R-Wilton). Her work included a white paper on welfare in Connecticut, which was published in the *New York Times* in November 1980. During that time she was also a founder and board member of Women in Crisis in Norwalk.

From 1986 to 1990, Gail served as legislative liaison for the Connecticut General Assembly's Permanent Commission on the Status of Women where she was responsible for the development, advocacy and implementation of a legislative agenda to improve the lives of women and families. While there, she spearheaded a 50-bill agenda to balance work and family, which included the nation's first Family and Medical Leave Act. This model legislation served as the prototype for the landmark federal Family and Medical Leave Act.

A member of the Democratic Town Committee, Gail was elected to the East Hampton Board of Education in 1991, and starting in 1995 served as chair. She maintained that position until she was sworn into the General Assembly in 1999.

While serving as state representative, Gail steered legislation that ordered the repeal of the sales tax on caskets and sponsored a bill which created a statewide information telephone hotline for water quality issues. In 2004, she co-sponsored legislation that ensured that high-power electrical transmission lines around schools, childcare centers and youth camps be placed underground.

Gail was a champion for youth in crisis. Included in legislation that she helped pass was an act that amended the definition of child to include 16 and 17 year olds; an act that required police to search for runaways; an act which prevents the detention of children age 13 to 16 for non-delinquent acts; and an act to prevent girls from being placed at the Connecticut Juvenile Training School. She also spearheaded the development of a state comprehensive plan to provide services for adolescent female juvenile offenders.

When asked recently which legislation she was most proud of, she named the codification of Roe v. Wade, thereby protecting women's reproductive rights in Connecticut should the U.S. Supreme Court overturn its 1973 decision.

Gail, with her husband, was actively engaged in the Rotary, on the local, district and international level. As part of the Rotary's polio eradication initiative, Gail and Alan spent Thanksgiving of 2006 in Niger, immunizing children. Their Thanksgiving dinner consisted of granola bars.

Early in her career, Gail was named Norwalk Woman of the Year in 1986 by the Norwalk Chapter of the Federation of Business and Professional Women. In 2013 she was named Citizen of the Year by the East Hampton Village Lions Club and was honored at the Lions Clubs International Humanitarian Awards Program for Eastern Connecticut.

In addition to her legislative work and her community volunteering, Gail was an attorney in private practice since 1979. She was a partner in the Law Offices of Friel & Hamm until she retired due to health issues.

Besides her husband, she is also survived by her sister, Julianne Hamm of Limerick, Pa.; her brother Marc Hamm of Hillsdale, Mich.; her sister Kim Hinson, also of Hillsdale; and her sister-in-law Lee Lyons of Litchfield. She also is survived by her nieces, Megan Hinson and Heather Johnson, and her nephew Joshua Hinson.

Gail's family would like to express their sincere appreciation to Anthony Razel, who provided daily help, friendship and spiritual support to Gail as she faced her health crisis and the caring staff at St. Francis Hospital and Medical Center.

The family will receive friends on Saturday, Nov. 2, from 3-6 p.m., at the Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton. A memorial service will be held Monday, Nov. 4, at 10:30 a.m., in Bethlehem Lutheran Church in East Hampton. Burial will be at the convenience of the family in Hillside Cemetery in Wilton.

The family requests that memorial donations be made to the Gail K. Hamm Leadership Development Scholarship c/o East Hampton Rotary Foundation P.O. Box 197, Cobalt, CT 06414 or to the Rotary Peace Fellow Program c/o Rotary Foundation P.O. Box 197 Cobalt, CT 06414.

To leave online condolences, visit spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

East Hampton

Robert W. Pekari

Robert W. Pekari, 76, of Middletown and formerly East Hampton, passed away Friday, Oct. 18. He was born Dec. 21, 1936, to the late Ernest and Matilda Pekari of Meriden.

Bob graduated high school in 1954 from Meriden High. He played trumpet in the band throughout high school, graduating as a master sergeant. He would continue his passion for music by serving in the United States Army as first trumpeter in the First Army Band, stationed in Japan. Bob enjoyed music, cooking, golfing and enjoyed watching the Yankees.

He is survived by his son Russell of Clayton, N.C.; his daughter, Sheila Mongiat and her husband Steve; two grandsons, Corey and Andrew Mongiat, all of Waterboro, Maine. He also leaves his brother, the Rev. William Pekari of Madison, Wisc.; and his former wife, Phyllis Pekari of East Hampton.

At Bob's request, there were no calling hours. D'Angelo Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements.

Colchester

Kathryn Tabor Grippo

Kathryn Tabor Grippo, 68, of Groton and formerly of Tupper Lake, N.Y., and New London, passed away after a long and courageous battle with illness Saturday, Oct. 26, at Apple Rehab Center in Colchester. She was born in New London on Feb. 24, 1945, the daughter of the late William and Florelle G. (Tabor) Grippo.

Kathryn graduated from New London High School and went on to school to become an occupational therapist assistant. She worked as a VISTA volunteer for a time and then worked for several years in Canada and New Zealand. Kathryn lived and worked for most of her adult life in Tupper Lake, N.Y., where she cared for the mentally handicapped. She retired to Groton several years ago.

Kathryn will be sadly missed by her brother, William M. Grippo and his daughter, Alethia Grippo, both of Fitchburg, Mass. She also leaves many extended family members and friends.

A memorial service will be planned at a later date. The Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home of Colchester has been entrusted with arrangements.

To share online condolences and messages, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

Colchester

Beverly G. Vanadestine

Beverly G. Vanadestine, 72, died at home in Colchester Sunday, Oct. 27. She was born in Hartland, Maine, on Nov. 15, 1940, a daughter of the late Richard and Jennie (Stafford) Vanadestine.

Beverly was a veteran, having served with the U.S. Army for three years after graduating High School. Following her military service, she went to work for the Hartford Insurance. Beverly worked for many executives over her 38 years of service. She retired several years ago.

Beverly will be sadly missed but never forgotten by her family and friends. Survivors include five siblings and their families, Edith O. Bell and Virginia P. Burton, both of Hartland, Maine, Barbara A. Vanadestine of Plainfield, Donna F. Peterson of Ripley, Maine, and Linda L. Bell of Colchester, with whom she made her home. She also leaves many nieces, nephews, friends and neighbors.

Beverly will be missed dearly by Tim's Bistro morning coffee group and her pets, Peanut and Sweet Pea.

She was predeceased by five siblings, Archie, Carroll and Harold Vanderstine, Mary Knowles and Jacqueline Estes.

A graveside memorial service was held Thursday, Oct. 31, at 2 p.m., at the Pine Grove Cemetery, Route 152, Hartland, ME. Donations in her memory may be made to the American Cancer Society, 825 Brook St., Rocky Hill, CT 06067.

The Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home of Colchester has been entrusted with arrangements. To share online condolences and messages, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

Portland

Katherine M. Horton

Katherine M. Horton, 48, of Portland, passed away Sunday, Oct. 27, at Middlesex Hospital. She is the daughter of Phyllis Bordonaro of Portland and the late Richard E. King.

Born Jan. 5, 1965, in Middletown, she was a lifelong Portland resident and a devout advocate for cystic fibrosis.

She was predeceased by her daughter, Nicole Horton.

Besides her mother, she leaves Roberto Serrano, grandmother, Mary Bordonaro, along with her sisters, Laura King-Emmons of Wethersfield, Donna Kowalski of Newtown and Patricia Smith of Middletown, numerous nieces and nephews and a great nephew. Katherine leaves godparents Santo Bordonaro and Josephine Ackerman. She was a godmother to Stephanie Cahill and Richard M Smith Jr.

Funeral services will be held Monday, Nov. 4, at 11 a.m., at Portland Memorial Funeral Home, 231 Main St., Portland. Burial will be in Trinity Cemetery, Portland. Relatives and friends may call Monday, Nov. 4, from 10 a.m. until the service.

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

Andover

Andrew F. Gasper Jr.

It is with heavy hearts that we announce Andrew (Drew) F. Gasper Jr. (67) of Andover entered into eternal rest Saturday, Oct. 26, at Hartford Hospital, surrounded by his loving family. Drew had recently suffered a traumatic brain injury as a result of a fall.

Drew was born Sept. 7, 1946, and spent most of his life in Andover. He is survived by his wife Patricia (Skoog); his son, Andrew E of Andover; his daughter, Heather M Steffens of Golden, Colorado, her husband, Todd, and their children, Ashlyn and Taylor; his mother, Jean; his brother, Robert and his wife, Peggy; his sisters, Marilyn Sylvester and her husband, Thomas; and Joanna Griswold. He also leaves his step-daughter, Tracy Stavnitski and her children, Dianna, Holley and Hanna; a step-son, Alvin Skoog and his wife, Susan and their children, Jason and Ryan; great step-grandchildren Dominick, Skyler and Brooklyn; and many loving nieces, nephews and friends.

Drew was predeceased by his father, Andrew Gasper Sr.; his step-father, Brian Mingala; and his first wife, Lillian (Kandrak) Gasper.

Drew graduated from RHAM High School and the University of Bridgeport. He began his career as a design engineer at AVCO Lycoming, then in 1977 he joined Hamilton Standard, where he held various management positions. In 2003, he took on the position of vice president of MajescoMastek (formerly Entegram) until 2006. His last career move was in 2007, where he chose to join Systech International in Rhode Island as the program manager.

Drew served active duty in the Connecticut National Guard in 1969 and was in the Reserves for six years. He also served in public office as selectman for the Town of Andover for one term (four years) beginning in 1999.

After his retirement in 2011, Drew liked to say he was now "the director of chopping wood." He loved to spend time outdoors, and was always working on multiple projects around his beloved home. One of his favorite hobbies was auto racing. He formed Gasper Racing LLC in 2001 and built race cars with his son, Andrew. They spent many weekends racing at Stafford Motor Speedway and Thompson Speedway.

He had fond memories of summers spent fishing off of his 27' Silvertown boat with family and friends. Hunting and fishing with his Uncle Stanley were also very special times to Drew. He really enjoyed traveling and had a great passion for new places and also history.

Drew loved to be with his family and friends, and behind that beard he always had a friendly smile. He was never too busy to say hello, help someone in need, or show interest in what they were doing. To quote a good friend, "Drew was just an all-around great guy." One of his greatest joys was spending time with his grandchildren, step-grandchildren and step-great grandchildren, who will miss him dearly.

The family would like to extend special thanks to the LifeStar team, the Hartford Hospital Neurological Trauma Team for the wonderful care they gave to Drew, along with the support and kindness shown to our family over the past few weeks.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions can be made to the Connecticut Chapter of the American Parkinson Disease Association, P.O. Box 718, Old Mystic, CT 06372; Hartford Hospital Neurological Trauma Team by visiting harthosp.org; or Andover Congregational Church, PO Box 55, Andover, CT 06232.

Family and friends may call today, Nov. 1, from 4:30-7:30 p.m., at the Watkins Funeral Home, 142 East Center St., Manchester. A memorial service will be held at Andover Congregational Church, 359 Route 6, Andover, CT at 11 a.m. on Saturday, Nov. 2.

To leave online condolences, visit holmes-watkinsfuneralhomes.com.

Cobalt

Stephanie Bystrek

Stephanie (Cyrulik) Bystrek, 101, widow of Anthony Bystrek of Middletown and Cobalt, entered into God's care Monday, Oct. 28. Born in Middletown on March 10, 1912, she was the daughter of Pauline (Bish) Cyrulik and Walter Cyrulik.

Stephanie was a member of St. Mary's Church in Middletown and a member of the Ladies Guild and Rosary Society. She cooked the most delicious meals. However, her greatest talent was baking those chiffon cakes, and mile-high lemon meringue pies and cheesecakes.

She is survived by her three sons, John Bystrek and his wife Carole of Cobalt, Anthony Bystrek and his wife Laura, and Robert Bystrek, all of Portland; her five grandchildren, Brian, Bonnie, Mary Ann, Bobby and Matthew, three great-grandchildren, Mackenzie, Cooper and Macie Bystrek. Her sisters, Mary Tomczak and Veronica Kolenda, both of Middletown; and her brothers, John Cyrulik of Middletown, Edward Cyrulik of Portland, and Stanley Cyrulik of Waterford.

She was predeceased by her sister Helen Malinowski, and brothers, Francis and Adolph Cyrulik.

The family appreciated the wonderful care from the nurses, aides and other staff at Cobalt Health Care during her four-year stay.

Funeral services were held Thursday, Oct. 31, at 9:45 a.m., from Biega Funeral Home, 3 Silver St., Middletown. Burial was in Calvary Cemetery. Friends called at Biega Funeral Home Wednesday, Oct. 30.

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

East Hampton

Doris Victoria Stevens

Doris Victoria Stevens, 83, of Middletown and formerly of East Hampton and East Haddam, died Tuesday, Oct. 22, at Middlesex Health Care in Middletown.

Born Aug. 27, 1930, in Middletown, she was the daughter of the late Nils and Elna (Gronholm) Gustafson. She had worked for many years as a CNA at both Cobalt Lodge and Chestelm Nursing Homes.

She is survived by her son, Paul Stevens of Higganum, two daughters, Sandra Bennett of West Virginia and Doreen Loos of Montana; a brother, Carl Gustafson of East Hampton; six grandchildren; and nine great-grandchildren.

She was predeceased by her parents; a son, Eric Stevens; a daughter, Kimberly Mayer; a sister, Ebon Wylie; two brothers, John and Nils Gustafson; and a granddaughter.

A graveside service will be held Saturday, Nov. 2, at 10 a.m. in Skinnerville Cemetery in East Hampton.

The Spencer Funeral Home has care of arrangements. To leave online condolences, visit spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

Portland

Kathleen Murphy

Kathleen Murphy passed away Tuesday, Oct. 29, in Portland, concluding a lengthy debilitating illness. She was born in Middletown and was the daughter of the late John J. and Mary (Butler) Murphy.

A lifelong Middletown resident, she was employed for many years at Wesleyan University and had been a lifelong parishioner of Saint John Church. Kathleen was affectionately known as "KK" by her nieces and nephews, whom she adored and was an avid Red Sox fan. A large portion of Kathleen's life was spent as a family caregiver. She tirelessly assisted her brothers and sisters in their time of need. All will remember her for her beautiful smile and kind gentle manner.

Kathleen is survived by one brother, William Murphy of Middletown; and numerous nieces and nephews. She was predeceased by three sisters, Margaret Wisneski, Elizabeth Murphy, and Lucille Varhue; and three brothers, John, Francis and James Murphy.

Kathleen's family is extremely grateful to the staff at Portland Care and Rehab Center, who cared for her during her illness.

Funeral services were held Thursday, Oct. 31, from the Doolittle Funeral Home, 14 Old Church St., Middletown, followed by a Mass of Christian Burial at 10 a.m. at St. John Church, 19 St. John Square, Middletown. Interment followed in St. John Cemetery, Middletown.

In lieu of flowers, friends may make donations in Kathleen's memory to St. John Church and may send messages of condolence to the family at doolittlefuneralservice.com.

Colchester

Mary T. Evangelista

Mary T. Ferando Evangelista passed away Wednesday morning, Oct. 30, at Harrington Court in Colchester. She was 89.

Mary, a lifetime resident of Norwich, was the proud daughter of first-generation Italian immigrants Conti Paride and Maria (Guisseppe) Paride. She spent her childhood growing up on the east side of the city with her two brothers and sister. Mary worked at the Trinacria Specialty Manufacturing Company on East Main Street in Norwich.

She met the love of her life, James Ferando, and together they made a beautiful home for their son and two daughters. After 25 years of marriage, James passed on after a courageous battle with heart disease. Mary later befriended and married Eugene Evangelisti, who provided her with a lasting kindness and companionship.

Mary had a knack for following her curiosities and developing her talents with interesting activities. With a natural artistic flair, she found peace in her day by sewing, crocheting, or painting for herself or a loved one. She was an avid bowler, but also adored the natural environment; she always took it upon herself to spend time outdoors and appreciate the living world.

As a woman proud of her Italian heritage and family history, Mary enjoyed perusing through old picture albums and reminiscing on joyful memories. She was later inspired to turn this appreciation into something tangible and authored her first and only book entitled, "My Memoirs."

A devout Catholic, Mary always found ways to use her faith to help others. She was active with the 050 club at Saints Peter and Paul Church, a longtime member of St. Mary's Church, and a member of Sacred Heart Church in Taftville for the last 28 years. She was also involved with the Norwich Senior Center. Her family and community meant the world to her and she loved them all so very deeply. Her gentle humor, loving heart and curious spirit will always be missed.

Mary is survived by her son, James J. Ferando, Jr.; daughters, Cheryl A. Malinowsky and Cathy M. Morten and Robert Morton; sister, Rose Kozerefski; grandchildren, Jamie Leland, Faith Ferando, Heather Boutin, Lindsey Bashelor, Joel Morton; seven great-grandchildren; one great-grandchild; and several nieces and nephews.

Mary is predeceased by her first husband, James Ferando; brothers, John Paride and William Paride; second husband, Eugene Evangelisti; and grandson, Christopher Malinowski.

A calling hour will be held at the Woyasz & Son Funeral Home, located on Central Avenue in Norwich, today, Nov. 1, from 9:30-10:30 a.m. A funeral Mass will be celebrated at Sacred Heart Church in Taftville at 11 a.m. Burial will follow at St. Joseph Cemetery in Norwich.

In lieu of flowers, please contribute a donation in Mary's name to VITAS Hospice Services, 628 Hebron Ave., Glastonbury, CT 06033.

East Hampton

Robert W. McGrath

Robert W. McGrath, 84, of Orange, beloved husband of the late Nancy Raffile McGrath, passed away Friday, Oct. 25, at his home, surrounded by his family. He was born in New Haven May 13, 1929, son of the late Joseph and Anna Moran McGrath.

He graduated from Cheshire Academy in 1947 where he was President of his senior class and attended Pennsylvania Military College in Chester, Pa. He worked as an engineer for over 40 years for Southern New England Telephone until he retired. He spent his retirement years residing in Boynton Beach, Fla., until returning home to Orange in his later years.

He was an avid New York Yankees and New York Giants fan, and was a member of the Knights of Columbus and West Haven Elks. He especially enjoyed his summer home at Lake Pocotopaug in East Hampton and was very proud of his Irish heritage.

He is survived by five children and their spouses, Michael (Marla) McGrath of West Haven, Robin (Richard) Massari and Margaret "Meg" (Philip) Ianniello of Orange, Cynthia (Louis) Leyerzapf of West Haven and Marci (Paul) Pitney of Milford; cherished Boompi to his grandchildren, Leigh Ann (Rob) Hauer, Robert (Kyle) McGrath, Jillian (Craig) Capone, Jaimee (Erik) Soto, Amy, Ryan and Kyle Leyerzapf, and Emily and Max Pitney; his precious great-grandchildren, Olivia and Marley Hauer, Mattea Capone, and Jeremiah and Ethan McGrath; and his dear and special pet cat, Duffly.

He was predeceased by his brother, Joseph U. McGrath.

The family would like to thank his exceptional caregivers, Maya and Mouhamed, Vitas Home Hospice Care and Dr. Leo Cooney of the Adler Center at Yale.

His funeral was from Keenan Funeral Home, 238 Elm St., West Haven, on Tuesday, Oct. 29, followed by a Mass of Christian Burial at St. John Vianney Catholic Church in West Haven. Burial followed in Orange Center Cemetery, Orange. Family and friends called Monday, Oct. 28, at the funeral home.

Memorial donations in his memory may be made to the Alzheimer's Association, Connecticut Chapter, 2075 Silas Deane Highway, Suite 100, Kensington, CT 06067, or to the Connecticut Humane Society, 701 Russell Rd., Newington, CT 06111.

Those wishing to send condolences online may do so at keenanfuneralhome.com.

Hebron

John Orrin Georgiades

John Orrin Georgiades, "John-John," 16, beloved son, grandson, nephew, cousin, big brother and special friend, who we called our little soldier, lost his valiant battle with neuroblastoma Thursday, Oct. 24, at Connecticut Children's Medical Center, with his mother by his side.

He was born in Hartford Nov. 16, 1996, son of Charlene Caruso and Lea Georgiades and brother to Sophia. John was raised in Marlborough and Hebron, prior to moving to Windsor last year. He attended RHAM High School. John had a love and passion for anything with wheels and a motor, which includes dirt bikes, ATVs, and bicycles, as well as rally and exotic cars, especially Ferraris. In addition, he enjoyed any type of X-treme sports and gaming on his Xbox.

Along with his mother and father, John will be fondly remembered by his loving family; a sister, Sophia Georgiades; maternal grandparents, John and Ann Caruso (Nana and Papa) of Wethersfield; paternal grandfather, Constantinos Georgiades; paternal grandmother, Diana Lucek and her husband Emil, of Tolland; aunts and uncles, Michele and Ron Eleveld of Windsor, Patricia and Emidio Pizzoferrato of Wethersfield, Johnna and Adam Cohan of Berlin, Patrick and Patricia Caruso of Liberty Township, Ohio, Krystine and Rick Rohner of Coventry; Mark and Jennifer Georgiades of Marlborough, cousins, Nicole, Michael, Allison, Analiese, Haley, David, Austin, Abigail; special friends, Stephen Estes, who was like a father to John, Keith, Tyler, Micaela, Mike, Elijah, and Casey; as well as many other loving family members and friends; and not to be forgotten, John's four-legged friend Dinky.

John's family wishes to extend a special thank you and their most heartfelt appreciation to the special nurses and PCAs at CCMC.

Friends and relatives paid their respects to John and his family Sunday, Oct. 27, at the Farley-Sullivan Funeral Home, 34 Beaver Rd., Wethersfield. A Mass of Christian Burial, celebrating John's life, was held Monday, Oct. 28, at Church of the Incarnation, 544 Prospect St., Wethersfield. Burial followed at Cedar Hill Cemetery, 453 Fairfield Ave., Hartford.

Memorial donations may be made in John's name to the Make-A-Wish Foundation, of Connecticut, 126 Monroe Tpke., Trumbull, CT 06611.

To extend online expressions of sympathy or for further information, visit farleysullivan.com.

Silver Alert Issued for Missing East Hampton Teen

by Elizabeth Bowling

A Silver Alert was issued Wednesday for a missing 19-year-old East Hampton resident.

According to a press release from the East Hampton Police Department, Ashley Newell, of Chestnut Hill Road, was last seen at 5 p.m. Wednesday night near her home.

East Hampton Police said they are considering Newell to be an endangered person at this time.

The press release describes Newell is a 5-foot, 110-pound white female with cognitive challenges. She ran away into a “rural area of fields and dense woods,” it stated.

Newell was last seen wearing a dark sweatshirt and dark pants. Another distinguishing adornment is her flower-shaped nose ring in her right nostril.

Portland Police, Connecticut State Police and East Hampton Fire departments are assisting in the search, the press release said.

As of press time Thursday morning, the search was ongoing, police said.

Anyone with information on Newell’s lo-



Ashley Newell

cation is asked to call East Hampton Police at 860-267-9544.

East Hampton Man Arrested for Threatening Teens

by Elizabeth Bowling

An East Hampton man was arrested after allegedly threatening local teenagers on school grounds after school hours, officials said.

According to a press release from the East Hampton Police Department, William Landry, 60, of Bevin Boulevard, was arrested and charged with second-degree threatening and disorderly conduct last Monday, Oct. 21.

Landry approached two teens on school grounds – at the outdoor recreation area of Center School – at 4:35 p.m., the press release stated.

The press release reported that Landry threatened to return “with a baseball bat and that he

said something about guns.”

East Hampton Police located Landry, interviewed him and determined he was the man who threatened the local teens, the press release furthered.

The press release, sent on behalf of Sgt. Timothy Dowty, stated, “Landry did not return to the school grounds.”

It also stated, “There were no injuries resulting from this incident.”

Landry was scheduled to appear at Middletown Superior Court Tuesday, Oct. 29, at 9:30 a.m.

Man Charged in Connection with Fatal June Crash in East Hampton

by Elizabeth Bowling

A Mansfield man has turned himself in on charges stemming from a fatal car crash that occurred in June, East Hampton Police said.

According to a press release from the East Hampton Police Department, Thomas Novack, 23, of 150 Thornbush Rd., Mansfield, was arrested Oct. 12 and charged with second-degree manslaughter, failure to drive right and driving under the influence.

Police Chief Sean Cox said Tuesday he could not disclose what Novack’s blood alcohol content was at the time of the crash.

The accident, which occurred on Route 66 in East Hampton over the summer, took the life of Paula Lemire, 63, of Colchester.

Lemire was traveling westbound in a Jeep Grand Cherokee when she collided head-on with Novack, who was driving a Dodge pickup truck, at around 5:23 p.m.

Novack appeared at Middletown Superior Court last Tuesday, Oct. 22. He was released on a promise to appear in court again on Wednesday, Nov. 27, at 10 a.m.

Colchester Police News

10/21: State Police said Jose Ortiz, 36, of 11 Sylvester St., Windham, was charged with third-degree criminal mischief.

10/22: State Police said Troop K was notified of a phone scam involving a caller stating over the phone that he/she is a Drug Enforcement Administration agent and will be coming to your house with an arrest warrant/search warrant for your house. Police said a resident of Loomis Road received this call. Anybody who receives these types of calls should call Troop K immediately at 860-537-7500 to report the incident.

10/22: Colchester Police said Jason J. Thuotte, 39, of 19 Snake Meadow Hill, Moosup, was charged with risk of injury to a child, interfering with an officer, second-degree breach of peace and violation of a protective order.

10/23: State Police said Alyssa Ballaro, 22, of 6235 Wilshe Pines Circle, Naples, Fla., was charged with DUI and failure to drive right.

10/23: Colchester Police said a resident of Farm Gate Drive reported that someone used his debit card at Macy’s in Waterbury without his permission. The case is still under investigation, police said.

10/23: Colchester Police are investigating a reported larceny that occurred on Stollman Road on 10/21. Police said the victim reported that cash had been taken from his business. The case remains under investigation.

10/24: State Police said Michael Veilleux, 50, of 60 Beaumont Highway, Lebanon, was charged with sixth-degree larceny.

10/24: Colchester Police said Scott A. Hanka, 21, of 225 Mulberry Rd., Mansfield, turned himself in on an arrest warrant for two counts of first-degree failure to appear.

10/24: State Police said Christopher E. Smith, 30, of 72 Elliot Rd., turned himself into Troop K on an arrest warrant for violation of probation.

10/27: State Police said Steven Konopka, 60, of 17 Ames Rd., Amston, was charged with DUI, failure to drive right and failure to move for an emergency vehicle.

10/27: State Police said Robert McGoff, 54, of 367 Norwich Ave., was charged with first-degree failure to appear.

10/29: State Police said Joshua Giddings, 25, of 604 Town St., Moodus, was charged with three counts of second-degree failure to appear.

From the Editor’s Desk

Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

As I write this, I have no idea what the final outcome of the World Series will be. You, dear reader, know, of course, who won. The series was either decided Wednesday night or Thursday night, after I pen this little column, but long before the *Rivereast* brightens the inside of your mailboxes.

But while I don’t know who won – I really hope it was the Red Sox (no, I haven’t abandoned my Mets; I still remain true to the orange and blue. I just, to paraphrase Diane Chambers, hate the Cardinals with the white-hot intensity of a thousand suns) – I feel confident in saying this: it’s been one heck of a series.

A couple weeks ago, you may recall I wrote about how the league championship series in both leagues were producing some great games, especially if you love good pitching. And I’m glad that “great game” trend continued into the World Series. With the exception of Game One, none of these have been blowouts – and two featured the most bizarre endings to a World Series game I, or anyone, had ever seen.

Let’s start with the more controversial of the two, the ending of Saturday’s game – a.k.a., the Obstruction Call Heard ‘Round the World. Like I said, no one hates the Cardinals more than me (a hatred that, by the way, dates back to 2006, when I witnessed firsthand, at Shea Stadium, as the Cards won the National League pennant), but the umpires got the call right. I watched the play over and over again – as it was replayed ad nauseum – and it was obstruction. The runner, Allen Craig, tripped over third baseman Will Middlebrooks, who was lying right in the basepath, having just dove for the ball. Did Middlebrooks mean to do that? No way. But the rulebook says it doesn’t matter if there was intent. He was in Craig’s way, and that was that. And I truly believe, by the way, Craig would’ve scored had he not tripped, due to catcher Jason Saltalamacchia’s errant throw.

After the game, I went onto Facebook and Twitter, where it seemed just as many people felt the call was right as felt it was wrong (the latter, I should note, were almost exclusively Red Sox die-hards). I even saw a couple comments where people opined it was a terrible way for a game like that to end. Well, yes; you never want to see a World Series

game end like that. You want it to end in some dramatic, storybook-style fashion – not on an obstruction call. A World Series game had never ended on a call like that.

But that doesn’t mean you let the call go unmade. The right call is the right call; it doesn’t matter if it’s the second inning of a May 3 game, or the ninth inning of a World Series game. The umpires got it right.

The end of Sunday’s game was much less controversial, but in some ways just as jaw-dropping. The Cardinals, down by two, with two outs and Carlos Beltran at the plate, inserted rookie Kolten Wong as a pinchrunner. Wong, whose run essentially meant nothing, was caught a little too far off first base, and relief pitcher Koji Uehara successfully picked him off.

Just as no postseason game had ever ended on an obstruction call, no postseason game had ever ended on a pickoff.

The entire world, it seemed, scratched their head and wondered just what the heck Wong was doing. “This cannot happen,” Fox analyst Tim McCarver said. The tying run was at the plate in the form of Carlos Beltran, no stranger to October heroics, who had been having a tremendous postseason thus far. You need to give Beltran every chance in the world to do what he does best – either hit an RBI double or notch a game-tying homer. No need to even think about having a lead at first.

Wong was visibly quite upset at what happened and, to his credit, reportedly answered every single question fired at him in what must’ve been a very gloomy St. Louis locker room after the game. Wong was supposedly near tears, but he didn’t high-tail it out of there, which a lot of people – who’ve been around the game a longer than Wong has – probably would’ve done. The whole thing was enough to almost make you feel bad for Wong.

But then you remember he’s a Cardinal, so, no. No you don’t.

Like I said, no matter how things wound up playing out Wednesday and Thursday night, the 2013 World Series is sure to go down as one of the more memorable ones. And if you love baseball, you’ve gotta love that.

See you next week – and don’t forget to vote Tuesday!

East Hampton Police News

10/18: Shylan L. Young, 26, of 116 Young St., was arrested after East Hampton Police witnessed him traveling 70 m.p.h. in a 45 m.p.h. zone and then lose control of his vehicle, which came to rest in a ditch full of rocks. Young was charged with DUI, traveling too fast for conditions and driving with a suspended license, police said.

10/20: Ryan M. DiPace, 23, of 4 Minnetonka Trail, was arrested for disorderly conduct and second-degree harassment, police said.

Hebron Police News

10/22: State Police said Lisa Taute, 50, of 30 Scarboro Rd., was charged with DUI and use of handheld mobile device.