



RIVEREAST

News Bulletin

Serving Amston, Andover, Cobalt, Colchester, East Hampton, Hebron, Marlborough, Middle Haddam and Portland

Volume 38, Number 23

Published by The Glastonbury Citizen

September 20, 2013



Tie a Yellow Ribbon... The East Hampton Yellow Ribbon Committee honored three soldiers who were recently deployed to Afghanistan in a ribbon tying ceremony last Thursday, Sept. 12. Pictured above is Corrado Nane, father of US Army 1st Lt. Sebastiano Nane, tying a yellow ribbon to the tree on behalf of his son. Looking on are other members of Nane's family. A related story and more photos appear on page 24.

WJJMS Project Off to Referendum

by Melissa Roberto

A standing-room-only crowd in Colchester Wednesday voted to send the proposed William J. Johnston Middle School (WJJMS)/Community/Senior Center ahead to referendum.

The referendum on the \$57.26 million project will be held Tuesday, Oct. 1. Voting will take place from 6 a.m.-8 p.m. at Town Hall, 127 Norwich Ave.

The building project has been gestating since 2007. Studies were first conducted to assess the needs of the middle school, the senior center that stands on Norwich Avenue, as well as the needs of the Youth Center, also on Norwich Avenue. As a result of the studies, in 2011 the Board of Selectmen formed a Building Committee and charged it with developing a project that combines a middle school, senior center and community center at the current location of WJJMS.

The project includes a proposed middle school facility that features 110,000 square feet of both school renovation and new construction. At the existing middle school, the project calls for renovations to house the sixth grade in its western wing. The existing school's gymnasium and library/media center would also be reused. The 1954 eighth-grade wing is proposed for demolition.

The plans also call for a three-story addition to house the seventh and eighth grades. The first floor would consist of administrative offices, faculty and conference rooms as well as a new kitchen and cafeteria. Support services would

be adjacent to the administration area.

The new senior center is proposed at the existing school space, in the cafeteria wing, taking advantage of the existing kitchen. The senior center's offerings would include a café, lounge, counseling space, library, health room, game room, fitness room and offices.

The third piece of the project is the community center, which would house the Youth and Social Services Department in the existing school space. Social services would include a food bank distribution area and storage. The plan includes a separate entrance directly adjacent to a dedicated parking area. The space for youth services includes a galley kitchen, game room, group counseling areas, technology room, lounge and library. The existing gymnasium and locker rooms would also be available for use by service groups.

Additionally, the community center would include what the Building Committee coined "shared spaces." The shared spaces are additional rooms that various groups in town could utilize such as veterans, Boy and Girl Scouts, visual and performing arts, tutoring/mentoring, PTO, sports groups and other similar uses.

The total price tag on the project would be \$57 million for all three components. Renovations and additions to the middle school come to \$42.4 million; the senior center comes to \$5.7 million; and the community center comes to \$8.9 million.

See WJJMS Project Page 2

Chatham Party Faces Potential Election Ineligibility

by Elizabeth Bowling

As of Thursday morning, East Hampton's independent party, the Chatham Party, may not be able to run candidates in the upcoming municipal election Nov. 5 due to incomplete paperwork.

East Hampton Town Clerk Sandy Wieleba affirmed, "They didn't have the proper signatures on their forms."

According to Wieleba, the paperwork for state statute 9-452 – which applies to all minor parties nominating candidates for any elective office and was due Sept. 4 – has changed.

The statute's changes were actually implemented in July 2011 and require that each candidate for a minor party sign the paperwork.

The statute states, "A list of nominees in printed or typewritten form that includes each candidate's name as authorized by each candidate to appear on the ballot, the signature of each candidate, the full street address of each candidate and the title and district of the office for which each candidate is nominated shall be certified by the presiding officer of the committee."

"They met the requirements of getting the forms to us," Wieleba said regarding the Chatham Party, but regarding the signatures

required of the candidates, she said, "They had none."

However, according to Sue Weintraub, chairwoman of the Town Council and a Chatham Party member, the secretary of state's office did not inform town clerks or minor parties of the change.

She added that the Chatham Party's registration forms were stamped on Aug. 26 – which was nine days before the deadline.

Wieleba said that the secretary of state's office claimed to have sent a nine-page memo to all town clerks back in July 2011 but she – along with "several other town clerks" – doesn't recall receiving the memo.

Weintraub said that, despite the implementation of the changes in July 2011, mistakes in paperwork went unnoticed in the last election.

She said, "It was negligent of the secretary of state's office for not telling our town clerks or the minority parties."

Kyle Dostaler, chairman of the Chatham Party, said Wednesday, "Our filings were the same as the Democrats and Republicans. But obviously we had one more thing to do that they were not required to do."

He added, "It's just fascinating to me that

we have requirements that the major parties do not. It's discriminatory."

Weintraub agreed.

"This is so aimed and targeted at minority parties throughout the state," she said.

She added that 13 Connecticut towns experienced difficulties as a result of the statute change.

Av Harris, the director of communications for the secretary of state's office, affirmed that this issue is not unique to East Hampton.

"I'm dealing with this in a number of towns," he said.

Weintraub said that if the secretary of state does not allow the 13 affected minor parties to run, that would be "not only anti-democratic, it's anti-American."

But until further notice from the secretary of state's office, the Chatham Party candidates cannot run for office, Wieleba said.

"They cannot appear on the ballot as of now," she said, and that includes the incumbents that are running for re-election this year.

Each incumbent Chatham Party member on the seven-person, Chatham Party-controlled Town Council planned to run for re-election, including chairwoman Sue Weintraub, and

council members Kyle Dostaler, Derek Johnson and Glenn Suprono. And hoping to join the incumbents for a spot on the Town Council was Angela Sarahina,

On the school board side, four Chatham Party members – Joelyn Leon, Liz Whitty, Peter Levy and Kelly McLaughlin – planned to run for seats. Three others – Paul Hoffman, Pat Gauthier and Scott Sanicki – planned to be candidates for the Board of Finance. Also endorsed at the Chatham Party's Aug. 21 caucus were Lois McCutcheon and Carolyn Beamer for the Zoning Board of Appeals.

The only Chatham Party candidates who can run in the Nov. 5 election, as of press time, are Barbara Suprono and John Hines for the Board of Assessment Appeals, because "they're petitioning candidates," Wieleba said.

Wieleba said Thursday she is waiting to hear from the secretary of state's office because there is a chance that office may take a more "relaxed" stance on the incomplete paperwork. As of press time Thursday, however, the secretary of state's office had not announced any decision on the matter.

One Chatham Party candidate for Town

Chatham Party Page 2

WJJMS Project cont. from Front Page

However, the overall cost to Colchester was communicated to be \$38.9 million after \$18.1 million in projected state reimbursement for school construction.

The total cost does not take into account additional grants that could be applied for if the project moves forward, building committee members have stated in recent meetings. The bond resolution that will be voted on at referendum cannot exceed \$57.26 million; contingency costs are included in the plan.

Additionally, town officials confirmed this week that the resolution cannot be changed. The vote on Oct. 1 will either approve or disapprove the three-part project as presented.

Similar to a public hearing held last week, citizens in the audience conveyed both support and disapproval of the multi-pronged project – though Wednesday night’s turnout produced a standing-room only crowd.

Resident Jim Kelly was the first to speak. He asked First Selectman Gregg Schuster to explain his “change of heart” from his initial support of the project to his recent opposition. Schuster said his opposition mostly has to do with its \$57 million price tag.

“I’ve always been in favor of proceeding – of moving this [project] along – but ultimately the entire cost of 57 million dollars I believe was too much for the scope of the project,” Schuster said, adding maybe “in retrospect” it would have made sense to look at other options.

Jeff Koonankeil voiced opposition by stating his fears of the state not being able to front the \$18 million reimbursement, as well as the middle school students’ safety.

However, Winifred Standish spoke of what she believed were benefits of the project’s scope. Standish said she had sat on the senior center study committee for 18 months before the project was ultimately defined. She added alternatives were looked at.

“Starting from the ground up, looking at an old building for sale and buy it or go into an existing building such as the school,” she said, listing off alternatives. “I thought about it as a win-win. The seniors are not connected to the school. It’s different parking areas for the kids and seniors.”

James McNair questioned what would be “Plan B” if the project fails at referendum, to

which town meeting moderator John Malsbenden replied, “back to square one” – a sentiment echoed by Schuster.

“There’s no definitive answer for that,” said Schuster. “We’d still have needs, whether it be at the senior center or whether it be at the middle school...so the Board of Selectmen would have a discussion on the path forward.”

One resident stressed to the audience if the project is voted down, the hiring of architects and designers would have to begin again.

Another resident, Charlene Picard, supported moving the project forward to referendum – so that the whole town could weigh in on it.

“This is our project,” she said. “This is our Colchester citizens’ project – the whole town, not the people we have here tonight. I say let the town decide what’s best for Colchester.”

Officials who have supported the project in recent months and were part of the votes that helped the project reach the town seemed pleased with Wednesday’s vote.

“I’m grateful for the vote tonight,” Board of Education Chairman Ron Goldstein said. “And I’m encouraged with the turnout. I think this is a project that should be voted on by everybody.”

Board of Finance Chairman Rob Tarlov commented on all that went into the project up to the current point.

“We’ve had task forces and we’ve had study groups and that’s why we’re here at this point moving it forward to referendum,” said Tarlov. “A lot of people put in an awful lot of hours doing the research – doing the studies – to come up with what we all believe was the most economical and best solution for the community.”

Building Committee Chairman Tom Tyler who’s seen the project come full circle after sitting on the committee for two years alongside other members and the architects said he was “very glad” the project is off to referendum.

“That’s truly the opportunity for the citizens to come out and voice their either approval or disapproval of the project.”

Tyler added building committee members will be present at 57 Fest relaying information about the project to the public. The 57 Fest is scheduled for Saturday, Sept. 28, from 4-8:30 p.m., at the Colchester Recreation Complex, 215 Old Hebron Rd.

Chatham Party cont. from Front Page

Council, Glenn Suprono, was optimistic in a phone call Wednesday.

“I feel that this will be resolved, and we can move forward,” he said, calling the problem “a legal thing.”

In another bout of optimism, Suprono said, “I think it’ll work out, it’ll get fixed.” He added, “I hope for East Hampton’s sake it gets fixed.”

Weintraub displayed confidence, too. “Oh we’re running,” she said with assurance. “We’re not going away. We’re here for the long term. We will run. We are running. Every setback makes us stronger.”

Now the Chatham Party is just waiting for a response from the secretary of state regarding Dostaler’s request that the Chatham Party candidate’s names still appear on the ballots Nov. 5, Weintraub said.

Wieleba said Dostaler’s request was based on the Chatham Party’s belief that they complied with the state statute. She said she submitted Dostaler’s request to the secretary of state’s office Wednesday.

But Barbara Moore, chairwoman of East Hampton’s Democratic Town Committee, said Wednesday, “As far as what I know at this point, I think it’s a black and white issue. If the forms aren’t filled out correctly and on time then they can’t be on the ballot.”

Moore said that if the Chatham Party candidates cannot run as Chatham Party members, they also could not run as Democrats.

“We’ve already got our slate filled up,” she said.

And if the secretary of state’s office does stand firm, Dostaler said it’s “a possibility” that Chatham Party candidates may run as write-in candidates.

Editor’s Note: *As the Rivereast was going to press Thursday, the secretary of state’s office called. The office said the matter was actually Wieleba’s decision to make; however, Wieleba said she needed to speak with the staff attorney for the state’s elections enforcement commission to verify this is indeed the case.*

Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

No matter which side you take in the pro-life/pro-choice debate, I think you can agree this story is just incredibly sad and horrendous.

John Andrew Welden, 28, pled guilty in a Florida courtroom last Monday to killing his unborn baby by tricking his pregnant girlfriend to take an abortion pill.

His girlfriend, Rennie Lee, 26, was six weeks’ pregnant when, in late March, Welden called her and said bloodwork from her recent trip to the doctor – specifically, Welden’s father, a local obstetrician – had come back and revealed she had a blood infection, and needed to take the antibiotic Amoxicillin to clear it up, according to ABC News.

But Welden’s statement was a lie. He wanted no part of this baby, and had pleaded with Lee to terminate it. She wouldn’t; she was thrilled in February when she learned she was pregnant, and had every intention of keeping the child. She had even chosen a name.

So, Welden cowardly forged his father’s signature on a prescription for Cytotec, a pill that causes contractions. He showed up at Lee’s house on Good Friday, March 29, and passed off the pills as Amoxicillin, with the instructions that she take three a day. Lee had no reason to doubt his word; she considered Welden the love of her life.

Just two days later, on Easter Sunday, Lee went to an area hospital, complaining of severe cramps and excessive vaginal bleeding. Doctors told Lee her unborn child no longer had a heartbeat.

In May, Welden was arrested and charged with first-degree murder, under Florida’s Unborn Victims of Violence Act. He could’ve faced life in prison. However, on Sept. 9 he accepted a plea deal on the decidedly lesser charge of tampering with a consumer product and conspiracy to commit mail fraud. The plea agreement calls for him to serve all of 13 years and six months in prison.

My grandfather used to have an expression for those who committed particularly heinous crimes: he’d suggest putting them “under the jail.” And yeah, that seems like a good spot for Weldon. Like I said, tricking a jubilant pregnant woman into killing her unborn baby is just awful – and that’s something I’d imagine those on either side of the abortion aisle can agree on.

* * *

In lighter news, I got a chuckle out of a story I read this week about three Staten Island men who posed as cops in order to cut ahead in a line of people waiting to buy *Grand Theft Auto V* early Tuesday morning.

* * *

See you next week.

According to the *Staten Island Advance*, Frank Santanastaso, 19, Matthew Kirsheh, 20, and Kirolos Abdel Sayed, 19, rode up to a lengthy line outside a GameStop at Staten Island Mall around midnight Tuesday. Santanastaso, the son of a policeman, had his father’s NYPD shield tattooed on his arm, Kirsheh was carrying a fake NYPD shield in his wallet, and Abdel Sayed – who is an auxiliary NYPD officer – had his auxiliary badge and ID.

Oh, and the three drove to the GameStop in a car that had been purchased at a police auction – which, the newspaper said, court documents referred to as “an exact replica of an unmarked police vehicle.”

After dropping off a couple of other friends in the back of the line, the newspaper reported, the three pulled around to the front. At first, they were simply mistaken for police; a mall guard offered them coffee, and a GameStop manager thanked them for providing additional security. The three young men “sort of rode the rude,” an unnamed law enforcement source told the *Advance*. “They didn’t correct the record. They sort of went along with it.”

And that’s when they decided to get a little greedy.

One of the three flashed a badge to get inside the mall, and Abdel Sayed asked a GameStop manager if he could buy the game. The manager then asked the man who he was, the source said, to which he replied, “I’m with the NYPD.” After spotting the auxiliary badge underneath his shirt, the manager agreed to the deal.

So these lucky guys had a copy of the hotly-anticipated video game before anyone else, and they posed as cops to get it. They’d have gotten away with all of it too, if they hadn’t been careless drivers.

After obtaining the video game, the three piled back into their car and then pulled a U-turn – right in front of a real police officer in an unmarked car, the *Advance* reported. The car followed them for a bit, then pulled them over and arrested the three, charging them each with second-degree criminal impersonation, a misdemeanor that carries up to one year in jail.

Being locked up for a year would probably give each of them plenty of time to complete all of the missions in *Grand Theft Auto V* – but I’m guessing the game wouldn’t be going to prison with them.

New Sergeant Comes to Colchester

by Melissa Roberto

There's a new sheriff in town.

Or to be exact, a new resident trooper supervisor as the town welcomed Sgt. Joseph Mercer earlier this month.

Mercer assumed the role – and sergeant's office within the Colchester Police Department at Town Hall – officially on Sept. 6. He underwent the interview process back in April, when former Sgt. Marc Petruzzi left Colchester and moved on to the State Police headquarters in Middletown. In May, Mercer was told he landed the job but was unable to assume the position until the department conducted its transfers, he said. Sgt. James Keeney was put on temporary duty for the position during the summer months.

Employed by the Connecticut State Police for nearly 20 years, Mercer brings with him both patrolling and administrative policing experience.

As Colchester's resident trooper supervisor, Mercer is responsible for overseeing all of the police functions for the town. He is also in charge of supervising the department's police officers.

Mercer began his career in 1994 at Troop H in Hartford as a state trooper and then journeyed through "a lot of the central and eastern part of the state," including Troop E in Montville, Troop C in Tolland, Troop F in Westbrook and Troop K in Colchester. Mercer concluded he's served in "seven or eight" different assignments during the 19 and a half years he's been employed by the Connecticut State Police. For the last year and a half, Mercer was assigned to the internal affairs department in Meriden.

"That was more of an administrative role," Mercer said of his last position, where he was responsible for investigating civilian and departmental complaints against employees, he said.

Of the several capacities he's served under the state police, Mercer's new position is not entirely new to him. Mercer previously held the resident trooper supervisor position for Old Lyme and Bolton. He spent eight years with Troop K in Colchester, and spent three of those years supervising resident troopers of eight towns in the state.

"I have some experience doing it," Mercer put humbly.

And because of Troop K's location, Mercer said he's quite familiar with Colchester as well. He summed up Colchester as a "nice, relatively quiet" community.

"But we do have our problems," he furthered. "We're working hard to solve those or at least keep a lid on them."

Mercer also communicated his familiarity with Colchester Police officers, who he's worked with in the past during his time spent at Troop K.

"There's somewhat of an overlap," he said of the local and state police departments across the state. "It's the way the system is set up."

Mercer coined the town's police officers "excellent."

"They are very professional and they conduct great investigations," he said.

Though his new title in Colchester is consistent with his past experience, Mercer said there are new endeavors that come along with the job that he's "excited" about.

"This position entails a lot more community-policing aspects of the job," he explained. "You have a much better relationship [with] the town you serve. I can be more active in groups as in senior groups, youth groups and business groups."

Mercer added the title allows him to have a "more hands-on" approach to serving the needs of Colchester citizens instead of just working out of the state police barracks.

Mercer said his positions as a former resident trooper supervisor in other towns, as well as his experiences as a trooper across Connecticut has equipped him with several skills such as bureau criminal investigations, knowledge of trooper programs and various patrol assignments. He is also currently an active member of the Special Weapons and Tactics Team (SWAT).

Just two weeks into his new job, Mercer said he's enjoyed meeting town officials.

"It's a good experience getting to meet all the different people who take on an active role in town government and town leadership."



Resident Trooper Supervisor Sgt. Joseph Mercer stands outside of his new office at Town Hall. Mercer is responsible for overseeing the Colchester Police Department. He assumed the role on Sept. 6.

While his slate of policing experience should come in handy in Colchester, the seasoned sergeant admitted the new job still welcomes him with challenges.

"I'm settling in," he said Monday. "This is kind of getting me back into patrol and administrative [duties] so it's a nice challenge. It gives me something to look forward to every day.

There's always something new to do."

Mercer works the day shift, usually from 7 a.m.-3 p.m. Monday through Friday. The Colchester Police Department can be reached at 860-537-7270. The Connecticut State Police Troop K barracks can be reached at 860-537-7500. In case of an emergency, Mercer reminds citizens to call 911.

Marlborough Selectmen Approve New Ordinance, Policy

by Melissa Roberto

The Board of Selectmen Tuesday approved both a new ordinance and policy that each provide an opportunity for citizens to get active in town.

The first approval was of an ordinance that allows an architectural design review board to be formed. Town Planner Peter Hughes initially presented the ordinance to the selectmen back in July. The board would be responsible for providing guidance in regards to the design of buildings, structures, landscaping and site layout for commercial, industrial, institutional and multi-family residential developments in town.

Additionally, the board would serve as an "advisory body," the ordinance states, to the Planning and Zoning commissions as well as the Zoning Board of Appeals. The board would also be responsible for promoting development projects that "are in harmony with Marlborough's architectural heritage and which preserve and improve the appearance, beauty and character of the community," the ordinance states.

The document furthers the board would consist of five regular members and two alternates appointed by the selectmen. In July, Hughes informed the selectmen the architectural design review board would be the "first party" an applicant would see instead of a regulatory commission in order to understand what the town allows in terms of development.

On Tuesday, a public hearing was held to give citizens a chance to weigh in on the ordinance and the establishment of the board. A handful of citizens attended – all who currently serve on the Planning Commission – and the two who spoke were in support of it.

"I think it would be a very useful tool for the zoning commission and planning commission," Planning Commission Chairman Denis Soucy said. "We're going to have some larger projects coming in in the next couple of years and I think it would be important for us to have some input on how those buildings are designed and how they're situated on a lot."

Soucy stressed the importance of staffing the board with individuals who have an understanding of architecture and building engineering, which the selectmen later agreed with in the selectmen meeting that followed that night.

Vice Chairman of the Planning Commission John Larensen also spoke in support of the new board. He said guidance board members would provide would save future developers "time and money" instead of hiring an engineer beforehand to develop a site plan that doesn't meet Marlborough's regulations.

Selectman Dick Shea pointed out the board isn't "terribly demanding." The ordinance states the board "shall meet at least twice a year." First Selectwoman Cathi Gaudinski explained the board would not regularly meet like other

boards and commissions; its meetings would depend upon applications the town receives.

Also on Tuesday, the selectmen approved a policy that's been tweaked for the last few months in its meetings, the Capital and Non-Recurring Expenditure Plan Policy.

The policy allows for the formation of a Capital and Non-Recurring Committee (CNR Committee) who would be responsible for following the Capital and Non-Recurring Expenditure Plan (CNR Plan).

The policy states capital improvements are "equipment or major projects undertaken by the town that are generally not recurring." The committee would be responsible for evaluating and prioritizing capital needs of various departments. The policy was created only for capital improvements of \$25,000 or more.

Additionally, the new policy states the CNR Plan is a "long-term planning and policy document that includes capital projects for the upcoming fiscal year plus the ensuing four fiscal years." It furthers the committee would be responsible in determining the capital needs of the town by considering the costs, economic benefits and funding for the projects.

The policy states the CNR Committee would have a total of nine voting members and would consist of seven regular members and two citizens at large and one alternate member. The

document states the seven regular members would be made up of one member each from the Board of Selectmen, Board of Education, Marlborough Volunteer Fire Department, Parks and Recreation Commission, Planning Commission, Public Works Department and Richmond Memorial Library, chosen by the respective group.

Members will be appointed by the Board of Selectmen, the policy furthers.

The selectmen continued to make minor adjustments to the wording of the policy Tuesday night before its approval. The three selectmen agreed the document was a "work in progress" and can be refined as it moves forward. However, now that it's been approved – a long time coming for the selectmen – board members agreed they'd like to see the policy in practice by the beginning of this year's upcoming budget season, which usually begins in December.

With both the ordinance and policy approved, the next task is finding Marlborough citizens interested in volunteering for the respective board and committee.

The next Board of Selectmen meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, Oct. 1, at 8 p.m. at Town Hall. The time was changed due to a 30th-anniversary party for AHM Youth and Family Services in Hebron, which the selectmen are planning to attend.



The East Hampton community came together last Thursday as ribbons were tied to the Yellow Ribbon tree in the Village Center in honor of three soldiers who were recently deployed to Afghanistan. At left, members of U.S. Army PFC Joshua Reid's family – including at center his parents, Edward Reid and Jennifer Pherson – stand proudly at the tree. At right are the families of US Army PFC Ryan Bousquet and US Army 1st Lt. Sebastiano Nane, minutes before tying their yellow ribbons to the tree on behalf of the soldiers.



Yellow Ribbon Ceremony Sends Off Three East Hampton Soldiers

by Elizabeth Bowling

Despite questionable weather all afternoon, East Hampton's yellow ribbon-tying ceremony went on as scheduled last Thursday evening in the Village Center.

Residents and town and state officials – including the lieutenant governor, Nancy Wyman – gathered around the traditional “yellow ribbon” tree to wave American flags and send off three local soldiers who were recently deployed to Afghanistan.

The ceremony was part of the town's Yellow Ribbon program, where each yellow ribbon tied around a tree in the Village Center recognizes a soldier who was deployed to war. When a soldier is deployed, the soldier's family ties on a yellow ribbon that is decorated with the name of their loved one. When a soldier returns home, the family and the soldier ceremoniously cut down the ribbon.

The soldiers who were honored last week had already been deployed by the time of the ceremony. Ann McLaughlin, chairman of the Yellow Ribbon committee, explained that the committee holds the ceremony post-departure because oftentimes the soldiers' orders change.

McLaughlin started the program in honor of her grandson, US Army Sgt. Arron McLaughlin. Her other grandson, US Army specialist Kurt Schluntz, is in Afghanistan now.

To comfort the families of the three soldiers honored last week, she said, “You're not alone. I have a grandson over there now. It's kind of tough, I know.”

Wyman showed her support for the soldiers – who she called “heroes” – and their families by speaking at the ceremony. She noted the sac-

rifices made by the three young men who include US Army PFC Joshua Reid, US Army 1st Lt. Sebastiano Nane, and US Army PFC Ryan Bousquet.

“Your loved ones chose to go,” she said to their families, but “I could not imagine how your hearts were breaking when you sent them off.” In an optimistic sentiment, Wyman said, “We can't wait to cut the ribbons off the tree.”

Her thoughts were echoed by Town Manager Mike Maniscalco, who said, “I don't exactly like having to see people tie ribbons on the tree. I'd much rather see them come off.”

McLaughlin responded that the next ceremony would be a celebratory one – a homecoming.

Maniscalco then reminded the families of the soldiers that in addition to their immediate and extended families, the East Hampton community is their “even bigger family.”

Attesting to the town's sense of camaraderie, East Hampton Chief of Police Sean Cox called Belltown a “unique community” where “you really see neighbor helping neighbor.”

“They're loved not only by you, but by all of us,” Wyman added, thanking the families for “sharing your loved ones with us.”

All three of the local loved ones are graduates of East Hampton High School.

Reid, 26, furthered his EHHS education at Manchester Community College, where he earned his associate's degree before working at Automotive Technologies, Inc. in Middletown.

After that, he completed both his basic and advanced training at Ft. Benning, Ga., like his fellow-honored soldiers. Also like the other two

honorees, Reid was stationed in Vilsek, Germany. He is now serving in Afghanistan as a Cavalry Scout.

Reid's parents, stepfather, grandparents, sisters, brother, cousins, aunt and uncle tied his yellow ribbon to the tree in honor of his deployment to Afghanistan back in July.

Reid's mother, Jennifer Pherson, said the ceremony made the situation “more real, not that it wasn't.”

She noted, however, “He chose to go,” and added, “We're proud of him.”

Reid's father, Edward Reid, furthered, “We support him 110 percent... He's always had an interest in the military.”

The proud parents said they're grateful that they get to communicate with their son via Facebook and Skype.

Nane's parents – Corrado Nane and Terry Latimer – said they're also appreciative of their online communication with their son.

But Latimer said that despite emailing with her son, “It's hard.”

Nane, 25, studied economics at the University of Connecticut, where he participated in the ROTC program. Upon graduation, he received his basic officers training in Ft. Sill, Okla., where he was a Commandants List Graduate. He also received his airborne training in Ft. Benning, Ga., and was commissioned as a second lieutenant.

Prior to his nine-month deployment to Afghanistan last month, Nane served as a Platoon Leader in Rose Barracks, Vilseck, Germany in April 2011.

Nane's parents, godparents and in-laws were all in attendance last Thursday to represent their

loved one in tying his yellow ribbon to the tree.

Latimer commended the Yellow Ribbon Committee for a “wonderful job.”

Committee members said they believe Nane may be Belltown's first Eagle Scout to have a ribbon on the tree. As an Eagle Scout, Nane helped design the helicopter in front of the local VFW building.

Also honored last Thursday, was Bousquet, 23, who, like his fellow honorees, went to boot camp in Ft. Benning, Ga. He had been stationed in Vilseck, Germany, since October and was deployed to Afghanistan in August.

Bousquet's parents and sister represented him at the ceremony.

Bousquet's father, Douglas Bousquet, said about his son, “I know he'll make a great soldier. He's very dedicated.”

He added that the ceremony “was great” but said, “it's tough for us as parents. It's heartbreaking.”

Bousquet's mother, Vicki Tyler, added, “You worry more now [about] where he is and what he's doing.”

According to state Rep. Melissa Ziobron, that's because “it's more than just the soldiers going away.” She furthered that it's “heartbreaking” to send a family member away.

According to McLaughlin, each family was presented with a blue star banner, information on the blue star organization and a pin. Each mother was presented with a soldier's creed and information about the Ladies Auxiliary.

Additionally, each family received a “patriotic cheer basket” on behalf of the Ladies Auxiliary from the VFW Post 5095, McLaughlin said.

Portland Selectmen Get Update on Recreational Park

by Elizabeth Bowling

The Board of Selectmen Wednesday got an update on the upcoming redevelopments to the recreational park on Route 17.

Parks and Recreation Director Sean Dwyer said the master plan of the project was created in 2005. He said because the land is “actually really steep,” the project would be more complex than simply placing a soccer field in the area.

Brian McCarthy, of the Route 17 Recreational Park Committee, presented the board with the committee's “conceptual design.”

Regarding what the committee hopes to do with the space, McCarthy said, “It's not just fields. We really want it to be a resource for the community, a place for the whole town that everyone in town can get something out of.”

As of now, the plan involves two soccer fields, two little league-sized baseball/softball fields, a basketball court, open space picnic areas, a walking trail, a splash pad and opportunities for parking, according to McCarthy.

First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield noted, “There's a lot of passive as well as active use on this land.”

McCarthy also said that if the plan moves forward, a bathroom would need to be installed within the complex.

He added that test results from the past year showed that some of the soil in the area showed concentration of “fairly low levels of some residual pesticides.” He added that “a couple are above residential direct contact standards” – which means, “You wouldn't want to have your kid rolling in it all day everyday,” he said, but it's something that “can be managed on site.”

“The contaminants that we found are really confined to a fairly thin layer in the root zone and a surface layer,” he said.

He added that part of the process would require removing soil from some areas and filling in others.

“Knowing where those areas are, we'll be able to manage that soil in construction so that we'll be able to place it under areas that are being used for parking or well underneath active surfaces,” he said.

But before the committee takes any further steps, townspeople have an opportunity to provide feedback via a survey on the town website,

portlandct.org. Moving forward from there, the committee would seek approval from the state Department of Energy and Environmental Protection.

Board member Mark Finkelstein said, “It seems like a very nice plan.”

The selectmen Wednesday also unanimously approved the implementation of two programs.

The board decided to proceed with an upgrade to the town telephone system, as well as the implementation of an energy program called C-PACE.

Bransfield said C-PACE, which is “a program for businesses to utilize through the tax collectors office,” would give local businesses an opportunity to do energy saving projects.

Also at Wednesday's meeting, the board heard from the president of CT Cellar Savers, Mike Tierney.

Tierney explained that “CT Cellar Savers is a non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation of antique fire apparatuses” and has about 35 state members.

As defined in the organization's charter, the members are required to create and maintain a museum that educates people on the history of firefighting equipment and fire safety, he said.

For the last 10 years, CT Cellar Savers' museum was located at 634 Main St. – the old volunteer fire department building – thanks to a lease from the town of Portland, Tierney explained.

Because CT Cellar Savers is involved in a “multi-year lease agreement” with the town, the lease renewal must be voted upon at a town meeting, Bransfield explained.

The town meeting at which Portland's registered voters can vote on the approval of a five-year lease renewal will be held Wednesday, Oct. 2, at 7:15 p.m., at Portland Library, right before the start of the regular Board of Selectmen meeting at 7:30.

Board member Frederick Knous expressed his support of the lease renewal, as well as his support of the organization in general by telling Tierney to “keep up the good work. You guys do a nice job.”

New East Hampton Assistant Supt. ‘Very Excited’ to Begin

by Elizabeth Bowling

East Hampton’s new assistant superintendent of schools has officially held the role for one month and, he said, he’s truly enjoyed his transition into the community.

Tim Van Tasle, 39, said, “It’s been a wonderful experience getting into the work here.”

The Ellington resident and Somers native has years of experience working in the school system despite being brand new to Belltown.

After coming from two “much larger school districts” – West Hartford and Enfield – Van Tasle said he’s excited to work in a close-knit community like that of East Hampton.

“There were a lot of things that attracted me to this community,” he said. “The fact that it had a wonderful reputation for its educational programming, the relationships with everybody within the district – teachers, administrators, central services, the Board of Education – all of it together made it a very appealing district to come to.”

Prior to coming to East Hampton, though, Van Tasle was a fifth-grade teacher in West Hartford for nine years and had five years of principalship experience in Enfield.

It was there that he served as principal at Eli Whitney Elementary School for three years and John F. Kennedy Middle School for two years before taking on his new role in East Hampton – one he hopes to hold “long-term.”

He said, “I don’t see an end to my position here.”

Van Tasle, whose salary in East Hampton is \$139,900, said his favorite aspect of the job thus far is “the people here.”

“People appreciate education in East Hampton and, being an educator, that means an aw-

ful lot to me,” he said.

He added that the transition has been “wonderful,” and he’s enjoyed getting to know everybody and building relationships with his colleagues.

“It’s going to take time for everybody to really understand what my role is here,” he said, “but I think it’s a wonderful opportunity. I do believe it’s going to be a tremendous benefit to the school district.”

In the past month, Van Tasle has been familiarizing himself with the district.

“My function here as assistant superintendent is two-fold,” he said. “One is serving as human resources and the second piece is the curriculum and instruction. Both of those roles have kept me very busy.”

Van Tasle added, “The curriculum and instruction portion is based on teaching and learning, and human resources is geared more toward personnel and personnel services.”

He said a lot of his focus in the first month has been on the Common Core state standards, as well as the new teacher evaluation system.

Van Tasle plans to invest a lot of time into the new curriculum, calling it “a multi-year process of curriculum development.” He also anticipates working closely on the new teacher evaluations throughout his time here in an attempt to make his staff feel comfortable with the new system.

In a concluding remark, the father of two and husband of one said, “This is an opportunity that I’m very grateful for.”

And Superintendent of Schools Diane Dugas is happy to have him.

“He’s a wealth of information and a sheer delight to work with,” she said.



Tim Van Tasle started as East Hampton’s new assistant superintendent of schools on Aug. 19. His responsibilities include human resources, as well as curriculum and instruction.

Portland School Board Looks to Increase Athletic Director Salary

by Elizabeth Bowling

The Board of Education learned at its Tuesday night meeting that the town’s high school and middle school principals are scrambling to keep their athletic director on board this year.

Effective Oct. 1, athletic directors throughout the state will face a change in their job description and as of now, Portland’s current athletic director plans to resign that same day.

According to Portland Middle School Principal Scott Giegerich, Portland’s athletic director, Rick Borg, has tendered his resignation, effective Oct. 1.

“The athletic director position is a hot issue throughout the state right now,” said Portland High School Principal Andrea Lavery, referring to the changes that will take effect Oct. 1.

Borg took on the role of athletic director a year and a half ago, according to Lavery.

Presently, Borg makes \$7,200 a year. Giegerich and Lavery suggested to the board Tuesday that it increases the athletic director’s salary to \$21,000 and change his title to athletic program facilitator.

“It’s way too much responsibility to be compensated at \$7,200,” Giegerich said.

According to Giegerich, as of Oct. 1, state “athletic directors” must evaluate the coaches, but Borg does not have the administrative certification to do that, so his title would have to change to “athletic program facilitator.” As of Oct. 1, a person with this title cannot evaluate coaches, Giegerich said. An athletic program

facilitator can, however, collaborate with the administration on coach evaluations.

Lavery and Giegerich recalled working with several athletic directors in the past eight years that they have served as principals in Portland’s secondary schools. Before Borg took over, the previous athletic directors doubled as teachers.

Those previous directors that doubled as teachers not only had the regular duties of athletic director, they also taught classes each day, Lavery said.

But now “the job cannot be done by a teacher during the school day,” Giegerich said, thus making it impossible for a teacher to take the job of athletic director.

Superintendent of Schools Sally Doyen agreed, “The work has to be done during the school day, which is contradictory, obviously, to [a teacher’s] schedule.”

But Doyen explained that “this is a fairly complicated process,” because the athletic director position is a stipend position in a teachers’ union contract.

The new salary would account for 30-hour work weeks for 36 weeks per year, Giegerich said. At \$20 per hour, the athletic program facilitator would earn \$21,600 annually.

“If this is approved, [Borg] will stay,” Giegerich said.

Doyen pointed out that the union would need to approve any changes to the contract.

“The union owns that job,” she said, “so we

have to go through all of the appropriate steps to ensure that we’re not stepping on that agreement in any way.”

She said the union has not yet signed off on the agreement, but that process is “in the works.”

She added that if the union and the board approve the change for this year, it would be re-evaluated at the end of the year.

Financially, Doyen said there is a surplus of \$67,000 this year in the board’s certified salary account – and \$14,000 of that surplus would be used to offset the increase in Borg’s salary.

Regardless of whether Borg goes forward with his resignation, Board of Education Chairman Chris Phelps said, “We’d still be in the same boat,” because it’d be difficult to find someone to fill the position for \$7,200.

According to Lavery, the compensation for athletic directors among the 13 schools in the shoreline conference ranges from \$5,000 to \$45,000.

Lavery said she and Giegerich would support the board in “making an adjustment to the athletic director’s compensation” because “we don’t want to lose him,” she said.

“I’ve been an administrator for 20 years and this is the best athletic director I’ve ever worked with,” she said, noting his good reputation among athletes, coaches, parents, and throughout the entire shoreline conference.

“We haven’t had major issues since he took

over that he hasn’t been able to figure out how to resolve,” she added.

* * *

Also at Tuesday’s meeting, Doyen informed the board that Portland’s dues for Middletown Adult Education increased this year by \$1,675.

“It is the first increase that we’ve had in 10 years so it’s hard to complain,” Doyen said, commending Middletown Adult Education for keeping costs close over the years.

She added, “We have a lot of people who participate in the various programs of adult education.”

One popular program, for example, is the Credit Diploma Program, which offers adults an opportunity to earn a high school diploma, Doyen said.

Regarding a new program that will hopefully also become popular, Doyen said a breakfast program at Gildersleeve School is scheduled to begin Oct. 1. It will be a pilot breakfast program, and if it goes well, other schools in town may also adopt the program, she added.

Phelps strongly supported the implementation of the breakfast program.

He said, “That should be a great program going forward.”

* * *

The next regularly scheduled Portland Board of Education meeting is Tuesday, Oct. 1, at 7 p.m. at the Portland High School media center.

Hebron Marketing Consultant Talks Town Business Climate

by Geeta Schrayter

A marketing consultant last week presented the Board of Selectmen with the results of a recent study designed to help improve the business climate in town.

At a special selectmen meeting last Thursday, Sept. 12, Peter Fairweather of Fairweather Consulting presented the results of the market study, which began in February. The study was meant to identify opportunities for existing business expansion in the center of town, as well as opportunities to attract new business to the area.

Over a period of six months, the current market in Hebron and a number of surrounding towns was analyzed, and a benchmark analysis was conducted to see how Hebron stacked up compared to the other communities. Afterward, the overall business market was examined, opportunities for Hebron were identified along with the town's strengths and weaknesses, and different recommendations were made.

The eight towns analyzed in addition to Hebron were: Canton, Colchester, Glastonbury, Granby, Mansfield, Marlborough, Simsbury and Somers. Fairweather said some of the communities were similar to Hebron, while others could be considered "aspirational," he said, and there was "fairly extensive discussion" on them all.

A range of data was examined in each, such as the total population and a population breakdown, but Fairweather said "one of the most telling things is when we start to look at retail in Hebron compared to all the towns."

In a chart depicting sales and demand in thousands of dollars per household, the average Hebron household was listed as spending \$46,710 a year on everything from clothing, food and liquor to cars and car parts, furniture, appliances, building materials, lawn care, sporting good and jewelry, compared to an average of \$51,020 in all the benchmark communities.

"That's about the same," said Fairweather. "But in sales – there's a big gap there."

The average household only spent \$9,360 of that \$46,710 in Hebron, Fairweather said, compared to other communities' households which spend an average of \$30,970 annually in their

hometowns.

"So the question is, 'What's driving the difference?'" Fairweather said.

And Fairweather pointed to the daytime population in town as a reason: at 65.1 percent of the total population, it's the lowest in all the examined communities. Sales are taking place outside town.

"There's talk about getting feet on the street; people are saying there needs to be more activity [in town]," he furthered. "That's been confirmed by the study."

Expanding business, Fairweather said, would be a great way to ensure Hebron residents stuck around town to spend their money. He stressed the need for "infill" businesses – businesses constructed in between existing ones, or in overflow parking lots – and the need to bring niche businesses to town. Only then, he said, should the town focus on bigger projects.

"Rather than try to hit home runs, get some singles and doubles; that's the way you start to build that retail sector," he said. "But at the same time, be prepared for bigger projects."

In order to create a competitive advantage in the town, several industries were mentioned during the presentation to target. These included professional and technical services, administrative support services, health care, and accommodation and food services. Fairweather said those were some of the "major" areas, and added they could lead to others, such as retail business.

"Attracting those kinds [of businesses] will make it easier to attract retail," he said.

Fairweather also advocated housing.

"It absolutely does make sense to look at mixed-use housing" he said, explaining it would make the town look more attractive in the long-term and mixed-use housing in the center would be affordable and "creates feet on the street."

* * *

The study wasn't all recommendations; Fairweather also identified Hebron's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. As far as strengths, he said the town had a high quality of life, an attractively-built environment,

strong demographics, a strong base of existing businesses and a diversity of sites from "infill" to the Hebron Village Green.

"It's important to have a full portfolio of different opportunities" for potential businesses, he said.

But weaknesses included the aforementioned low daytime population, limited residential presence near the center, no distinct identity in the marketplace and no clear advantages to draw business owners to the area.

In addition, there are threats in the form of the weak economy, and competition from neighboring towns such as Glastonbury.

However, some of the opportunities listed in the presentation included current anchors in town like Ted's IGA and trails that could translate into tourism opportunities; home-based businesses; and the school district, which is full of faculty and students who could all be customers in town.

Moving forward, Fairweather said the idea is to focus on creating an image and an advantage for the town and then promote it.

As far as a strategic approach, Fairweather said the town should promote existing retail with cross promotions, festivals and by targeting specific demographics like teachers, students, tourists or commuters.

"Every activity is a promotion," he said, noting Hebron already held a number of events like the annual Maple Festival, the Farmer's Market and the new "Shop and Walk Hebron," which takes place this Saturday.

"The importance of these is really to bring people to the Main Street area," he said. "A lot of that is already taking place here but the point is to bring more, [and] the important thing to do is to make sure there's the maximum bang for every buck spent on these activities."

Fairweather also said the town needed to create and define its competitive advantage for businesses. He mentioned the promotion of infill opportunities, such as those along Main Street, as a possible advantage.

"Infill could help create more of a critical mass," he said, adding it "could build substan-

tial retail office space there that would be keeping with the scale of the community."

* * *

In addition, Fairweather said tax incentives could also be used as an advantage. He said the town has a high mill rate (the current rate is 34.70), average spending, with taxes levied per capita in 2010 at 107.8 percent of the state average, and a grand list that's only 2.7 percent commercial/industrial – the lowest of the benchmark towns.

"So the mill rate is high not necessarily because spending is high, but the grand list value is relatively low on a per-person basis relative to the average in Connecticut," he said. "Ironically, that's why tax incentives will matter."

Fairweather said since the mill rate is high, "one of the ways to attract businesses is to give them a break in terms of the mill rate."

"It may seem counterintuitive to do a tax incentive to build a tax base but it creates a competitive advantage," he furthered, which would help build the commercial base "that will strengthen the non-residential tax base."

Fairweather added it was also important to "relentlessly market" and promote the town, and suggested mailing lists and emails, an annual realtor's roundtable that extended beyond Hebron, continuing the business expos that are regularly held, creating "Hebron ambassadors" to help sell the town as a place to do business and finally, to "be focused [and] be patient."

"We've identified what the opportunities are," Fairweather said, "but I can tell you this isn't going to happen tomorrow."

Judy Podell, who was present in the audience during the presentation and is vice chair of the Planning and Zoning Commission, said she had heard the market study presentation several times, and continued to find it encouraging.

"I think we're on the edge of something," she said.

Now that the study is done, the next steps are to finalize a plan for the town, and deliver marketing materials. For more information, visit hebronmarketstudy.com.

Hebron Selectmen Explore Ways to Improve Recycling

by Geeta Schrayter

Last Thursday, members of the Citizens Green Committee were present at the Board of Selectmen meeting to discuss recycling in town.

Committee member Mike Harder said at present, the town's rate is "pretty bad."

"There's no way to put a pretty face on it," he said. "We're below the state average and, if anything, it's gotten worse in recent years."

Harder went on to say practices in the schools and at the parks were bad as well; he called the school recycling "haphazard at best."

"We've got to do a lot better," he said.

A report was presented to the selectmen about a year and a half ago that included steps to help improve recycling in the town, and Harder urged the selectmen to "dust off the report and take another look at those issues," while also listening to committee member Gil Salk's presentation.

"Help us help you and help the town move ahead and do a much better job," he concluded.

After Harder, Salk told the board the committee was proposing an ordinance that came out of an "a-ha" moment at the last Maple Festival. Salk said he would notice a trash bin in one area and a recycling bin in another, and people would travel to one or the other – not both – causing him to wonder, "Why aren't they together?"

With that in mind, Salk said the Green Committee was requesting the selectmen, along with the town, pass an ordinance stating a recycling bin would be placed immediately adjacent to every trash barrel in town – the same would be required at any event or project the town issues a permit.

Selectman Mark Stuart sparked discussion on the topic by asking if any state statutes covered this area and who would be responsible for dealing with the recycling after a particular

event.

"Who polices where it goes at the end?" he asked.

Harder explained if someone were to take the recycling and place it with the trash, they would be violating the law. He said while there was no law specifically saying every trash barrel must be accompanied by a recycling barrel, there were a lot of other laws, including one that prohibits anyone from taking recyclables that have been separated out and dumping them in with the trash. He added there was also a law requiring businesses to recycle, but he was unsure about the requirements for residents.

"For a large part, [putting a recycling bin near each trash bin is] making a moral choice easier," Salk said.

"I think it's a great idea," said selectwoman Gayle Mulligan. "I try to recycle as much as I can. If I'm walking around with a water bottle and see a garbage bin but no recycling – I'm tossing it in the garbage. If they're right next to one another I'll make the effort to look [where I put the bottle]."

Selectman Brian O'Connell said he'd like the town to "lead by example."

"You're right it's an 'a-ha' moment," he told Salk. "The town can start the process by putting the recycling bins together with the trash. I don't know if we need an ordinance at this point but I think it's something we should be doing."

Tierney suggested that, before the selectmen attempt to pass a new ordinance, he sit down with the Citizens Green Committee to look at an ordinance that was already in place regarding the commercial trash haulers in town and waste that goes through the transfer station.

"We need to sit down and look at the ordinance that's in place and see if we can't amend

that," he said, after which they would come back to the selectmen with suggested amendments.

* * *

The selectmen also discussed and adopted a new social media policy for the town.

Town Manager Andy Tierney said different town organizations and departments wanted to establish a Facebook page, Twitter or other social media account to communicate with the public.

Tierney explained while the town had a couple of different policies in place, "there is nothing covering social media."

"We felt it was important to put something together," he said, explaining policies in other towns were examined, after which one was drafted for Hebron and reviewed by the town attorney.

The policy includes such requirements as having all town social media sites approved by the town manager and department director, adhering to copyright laws and citing sources, and the inclusion of an introductory statement specifying the purpose and scope of the site.

In addition, content or comments that contain any of a provided list of content aren't allowed, including profane language, sexual content, solicitations, anything defamatory or libelous or any personal material.

The policy also gives the town the right to restrict or remove any content that violates the policy or any applicable law.

Tierney said the policy was kept simple and to the point, but the administration wanted to have "some sort of teeth," when dealing with social media and any information coming from a town entity.

The board unanimously approved the policy.

* * *

Also at the meeting, the selectmen authorized

Tierney to participate in the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM) Energy electric purchasing and enter into an energy contract with the recommended vendor if the price was equal to or less than the town's current rate of .08220 per kw hour.

CCM representative Andy Merola was present at the meeting and explained the town had gone out to bid with CCM for energy two years ago and said this was a good time to do it again since it's "shoulder season."

During this time, appliances that drive up the demand for electricity during the summer, such as air conditioners and dehumidifiers are no longer used, but neither is heating, which drives up the demand during the winter, according to ctenergyinfo.com.

As a result, "there's the potential to get better pricing than other times of the year," Merola said.

In addition, Merola stated if the result of the bid – which took place Wednesday – was unfavorable, there would be the opportunity to go back into the market and do it again.

"We will repeat the process for you until you're satisfied and that's our goal: to make sure you're comfortable with both the term of agreement and pricing."

But going out again won't be necessary, since a favorable bid was received; on Thursday, Tierney said the rate was less than what the town is currently paying, however he was hoping it would be lower. However, he entered into the energy contract with Constellation NewEnergy, Inc. at a rate of .079 per kw hour, good for 36 months.

* * *

The next regular Board of Selectmen meeting is scheduled for Thursday, Oct. 3, at 7:30 p.m. in the Hebron town office building.

Fire Department Warns About Spontaneous Combustion

by Elizabeth Bowling

The East Hampton Fire Department has confirmed that last month's house fire at 64 North Maple St. was caused by spontaneous combustion – an all-too-common occurrence in town over the past couple of years.

The early morning structure fire Aug. 8 left the East Hampton home burned and smoky, but not fully destroyed, officials said.

According to Fire Marshal Rich Klotzbier, the fire was caused by the spontaneous combustion of oily rags.

"The homeowner was staining his deck. He had used some rags to wipe off his deck," Klotzbier said, explaining the ordinary activity that led to the house fire.

The homeowner then put the used rags into buckets, known as "Homer Buckets" – made popular by The Home Depot – and put the buckets in his basement, Klotzbier said.

In explaining how the oily rags started a fire, the fire marshal said, "As they start to dry out, they generate heat... Enough to start to a fire."

Klotzbier furthered that the rags from this specific incident took about six and a half hours to catch fire – that is, six and half hours passed between the time the homeowner of 64 North Maple St. wiped the stain off his deck and the time the fire department got the call.

Klotzbier affirmed that that's a typical timeframe for these kinds of incidents.

He also affirmed that in addition to last month's fire, three other local fires in the past two years have been the result of exothermic reaction, another term for spontaneous combustion.

Klotzbier said he wants to bring attention to the issue in an attempt avoid any further fires caused by spontaneous combustion.

He said the best way to avoid any problems is to "basically either follow the manufacturer's instructions" or hang oily rags outside to dry "like clothes on a line."

Once the rags have fully dried out, they can be thrown into the garbage, he said.

Another option, Klotzbier explained, is to place oily rags in a container filled with water and seal the container before disposing of it.

He also urged residents to keep these tips in mind when working with garden equipment or motor vehicles.

"A lot of people do their own repair work," he said, including refilling oil into a lawn mower, snow blower or car, for example.

The resulting mess from using home improvement oils should be disposed of properly.

Oils to be mindful of include paint thinner, wood stain, linseed oil, turpentine and polyurethane.

For more information, contact Klotzbier at 860-267-0088.

Marlborough Police News

9/11: State Police said a one-car rollover accident occurred two-tenths of a mile west of exit 13 at approximately 4:25 p.m. Police said Thomas Maloney, 40, of 46 Upland Rd., Holyoke, Mass., was traveling in the right lane on Route 2 west when his vehicle crossed over the center and left lanes and went off the road. Maloney's vehicle then struck an earthen embankment with its front end and did a complete roll over. Police said Maloney was transported

to Hartford Hospital via the Marlborough Volunteer Fire Department for precautionary measures. Maloney was later given an infraction for failure to drive in the proper lane.

9/12: State Police said Andrew Ferrente, 43, of 50 Stage Harbor Rd., was charged with violation of probation.

9/15: State Police said Kyle A. Potorak, 26, of 89 Jeffry Rd., Newington, was charged with speeding and DUI.

Colchester Police News

9/7: State Police said Tyler Vashalifski, 20, of 8 Jan Dr., was taken into custody for an arrest warrant for sixth-degree larceny.

9/10: Colchester Police said a fire inside of a plastic trash can outside of Harry's Restaurant located at 104 Broadway was reported at approximately 10:35 p.m. Police said there was no damage to the building. Resident Trooper Sergeant Joseph Mercer said Monday there were no accelerants found so it does not appear to be intentionally set. Mercer said the Colchester Hayward Fire Department responded to the scene. The sergeant confirmed this week the case is still under investigation.

9/11: Colchester Police said Jeffrey Goodale, 31, of 419 Old Hartford Rd., was charged with disorderly conduct and third-degree assault.

9/11: State Police said Matthew John King, 29, of 2155 South Main St., Marlborough was

charged with second-degree custodial interference.

9/12: State Police said Alex Nives, 29, of 107 Lebanon Ave., Unit 3, was charged with breach of peace and second-degree threatening.

9/13: State Police said Daniel Duclos, 30, of 218 Marguerite Rd., Middletown, was charged with speeding and DUI.

9/13: State Police said Thomas Comkowycz, 53, of 32 Sunset Dr., Ashford, was charged with DUI and failure to drive right.

9/13: State Police said Scott Connors, 55, of 89 Witch Meadow Rd., Salem, was arrested on a PRAWN warrant for second-degree failure to appear.

9/14: State Police said Joseph T. Hudock, 53, of 48 Wall St., Apt. 3, was charged with criminal violation of a protective order.

Hebron Police News

9/14: State Police said Zachary Cosban, 18, of 9 Poquonock Ave., Apt. 2E, Windsor, was charged with illegal possession of fireworks and second-degree criminal mischief.

East Hampton Police News

9/8: East Hampton Police responded to a report of an erratic operator in a large pickup truck heading east bound on Route 66, being followed by a Middlesex paramedic. Police located the truck in question, which they said was weaving back and forth over the double yellow lines, and successfully initiated a traffic stop. Patrick Brogan, 21, of 23 Dogwood Dr., was charged with DUI, failure to drive right and having improper fenders, police said.

Obituaries

Colchester

Joseph "Joe" Huron

Joseph "Joe" Huron, 91, a resident of Colchester until 2006, passed away peacefully Thursday, Sept. 5, at his home in Worcester, Mass. He was born in Colchester on Sept. 5, 1922. He attended Colchester public schools and graduated from Bacon Academy in 1940.

A U.S. Army veteran, Joe served in WWII's Pacific Campaign from 1942-45. He was a member of the VFW and the American Legion. From 1952-63, Joe was a licensed member of the Connecticut Milk Producers Association. He joined the Connecticut Carpenters Union in 1964, retiring when he was 62. Joe was a member of Colchester's first zoning board and the Colchester Farmers Club. He was an active member for many years of the Colchester Lions Club and served as president from 1980-82. In 1994, Joe received the International Lions' Melvin Jones Fellow Award for distinguished leadership.

He is survived by Dorothy Huron, his loving wife for over 66 years; a daughter, Donna Huron Marosy and her husband John Paul of Worcester, Mass.; three cherished grandchildren, Laura Huron of New York City, Matthew Huron and his wife Anna of Denver, Colo., and Martin Marosy, also of Denver, Colo.; and numerous beloved nieces, nephews and friends.

He was predeceased by his son, James Huron (1947-09).

Family and friends are invited to attend Joe's memorial Mass, to be celebrated at St. Andrew Roman Catholic Church, 128 Norwich Ave., Colchester, Saturday, Sept. 28, at 11 a.m. Interment of his ashes will follow at the New St. Andrew Cemetery. A repast will be held at St. Joseph's Polish Society.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to Summit Elder Care, 277 East Mountain Street, Worcester, MA 01606 or summiteldercare.org.

Care of arrangements has been entrusted to the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home of Colchester.

East Hampton

Vera P. Parker

Vera P. Parker, 84, of East Hampton, beloved wife of John C. "Jack" Parker Sr. died Saturday, Sept. 14, at Middlesex Hospital.

Born June 23, 1929, in Guilford, she was the daughter of the late George W. and Rose (Havelin) Pavelka. She had worked in the cafeteria in the Higganum School System and as a daycare provider before her retirement.

Besides her husband, she is survived by her sons, John C. Parker Jr. and his wife Paula of Middletown, James J. Parker of East Hampton; her daughters Denise Scranton and her husband Mike of Middle Haddam, Linda Mardirosian and her husband Richard of East Hampton; a brother, Daniel Pavelka of Florida; a sister, Georgianna Beers of East Hartford; nine grandchildren, Ryan, Erin, Kevin, Rachael, Matthew, Daniel, Kelsey, Brittany and Colin.

She was predeceased by a grandson, David. Friends called at the Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton, on Wednesday, Sept. 18. Funeral services were held that morning, with the Rev. Thomas Kennedy officiating, followed by burial in Union Hill Cemetery in Middle Haddam.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the East Hampton Volunteer Fire Department 5 Barton Hill Rd., East Hampton, CT 06424; the East Hampton Ambulance Association, P.O. Box 144, East Hampton, CT 06424, or to the charity of the donor's choice.

To leave online condolences, visit spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

Portland

Anthony Fazzino

Anthony "Tony" Fazzino, 61, of Portland, loving husband of Jean (Erasmus) Fazzino passed away suddenly Tuesday, Sept. 17, at Middlesex Hospital. He was the son of the late Luigi and Giuseppa (DiMauro) Fazzino. Born Feb. 8, 1952, in Mellili, Sicily, he has lived in Portland for the last 27 years.

Besides his wife, he leaves his sons, Keif Fazzino of Portland and Donovan Fazzino of New Haven; a brother, Sal Fazzino and his wife Lisa of Wallingford; a sister, Rosemary Wilkins and her husband, Gary of Middletown; many loving nieces and nephews and his loyal companion, Torq.

Tony was a private, compassionate man and his greatest joy in life was his family. He was a talented artist and crafter of specialty knives.

Funeral services will be private and at the convenience of the family.

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

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

East Hampton

Lorraine M. Anderson

Lorraine M. Anderson, 78, of East Hampton, beloved wife of Harry T. Anderson died Tuesday, Sept. 17, at Middlesex Hospital. Born Nov. 19, 1934, in Teaneck, N.J., she was the daughter of the late Hector and Doris (Imhoff) Anstett.

Lorraine was a resident of East Hampton since 1949. She had worked as a Dutchmaid clothing supervisor from 1965 until 1985, she then worked at Ben Franklin in East Hampton.

Besides her husband she is survived by her three sons, Les Anderson and his wife Carol of Moodus, Steven Anderson and his wife Kathleen of East Hampton, Michael Anderson and his wife Allison of East Hampton; a daughter, Heidi Ingraham and her husband Donald of East Hampton; two brothers, Jack Anstett and his wife Josie of East Hampton, Rick Ocelik of East Hampton; a sister, Bonnie McLean of East Hampton, eight grandchildren Ryan, Sean, Julia, Melissa, Makenzie, Jacob, Tara, and Brian, and four great grandchildren Alyssa, Mackayla, Gavin and Casey.

She was predeceased by her son Gary Anderson, and a brother Donald Anstett.

Friends may call at the Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton, today, Sept. 20, from 5-8 p.m. The funeral procession will form at the Spencer Funeral Home Saturday, Sept. 21, at 10 a.m., followed by the funeral liturgy at 11 a.m. in St. Patrick Church. Burial will follow in St. Patrick Cemetery.

To leave online condolences, visit spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

Colchester

Bernice J. Brown

Bernice J. Brown of Norwich passed away Thursday, Sept. 12, at Harrington Court in Colchester. She was born March 4, 1920, to the late Christopher and Amelia Busch. Bernice was the last surviving child of 11.

She was a state retiree, having worked for the Norwich Superior Court for over 30 years. Bernice loved watching both the Red Sox and the Yankees, and was a fan of the UConn Huskies basketball teams.

Bernice is survived by her two daughters, Elizabeth Gernhard and companion Vern Jones; and Kathleen Swider and husband James. She leaves behind two grandchildren, Lisa and Andrew; two great-grandchildren, Samantha and Stephanie; and several nieces and nephews.

The family would like to thank the staff at Harrington Court Genesis Healthcare for the care given to Bernice for many years.

A Mass of Christian Burial was held Tuesday, Sept. 17, at the Cathedral of St. Patrick in Norwich. Burial followed at St. Joseph Cemetery. There were no calling hours.

Memorial donations can be given in Bernice's name to St. Patrick's School, 211 Broadway, Norwich.

Woyasz & Son Funeral Service of 141 Central Ave., Norwich, is in charge of arrangements.

Portland

Evangeline Conroy

Evangeline Conroy, 91, formerly of Portland, wife of the late Thomas J. Conroy, died Sunday, Sept. 15, at Marlborough Health Care Center. She was born in St. Johnsbury, Vt., daughter of the late Zeff and Delina (LaPlante) Bushey.

Evangeline was employed with the Premium Audit Department of The Hartford Insurance Company and later worked at Xavier High School.

Evangeline is survived by a son, Thomas Conroy and his wife Ginny of Windsor; a daughter, Patty Gannon and her husband Dave of Portland; son-in-law Laurence Kalinowski of East Hampton; eight grandchildren, Michael Conroy and his wife Sharon, Christopher Conroy and his wife Suzanne, Kerry Hicks and her husband Gerald, Dr. Jennifer Gannon, Kelly Reyes and her husband Ruben, Rebecca Baenig, Jamie Hull and her husband James, Kevin Kalinowski and his wife Ericka; nine great-grandchildren, Olivia and Aidan Conroy, Christian and Sydney Hicks, Andrew and Benjamin Reyes, Nathan, Timothy and Christopher Hull; also several nieces and nephews.

Besides her husband, she was predeceased by her son, David Conroy, her daughter, Eileen Kalinowski, and six sisters.

Her funeral liturgy will be held Saturday, Sept. 21, at 11 a.m., at St. Mary Church, 51 Freestone Ave., Portland. Burial will be in St. Mary Cemetery, Portland. Friends may call at Biega Funeral Home, 3 Silver St., Middletown on Saturday from 9:30-10:30 a.m.

Those who wish may send memorial contributions to St. Mary Church, 51 Freestone Ave, Portland, CT 06480.

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

Marlborough

Todd Edward Dorey

Todd Edward Dorey passed on from this life Monday, Sept. 9. Born May 5, 1979, he grew up in Marlborough, ventured to Oregon, Alaska, Australia, Florida and Bangladesh before settling down in Middletown, where he worked at Gorilla Graphics.

Deeply mourning his loss are his mother, Kim Dorey Wallis of Cheshire; his father Ed Dorey and his wife Carol of Hebron; his beloved brother, Adam Dorey of Lawrence, Mass., and adoring niece Madyson Paige Dorey of Vernon and Lawrence, Mass.; his maternal grandparents, Lloyd and Barbara Wallis of Kennebunk, Maine, and Tucson, Ariz.; Uncle Mark and Auntie Sheila Wallis of Southington; Auntie Patty and Uncle Richard Barthe and son Jeff of Port Richey, Fla.; stepbrother and stepsisters, John and Dawn Ashton of Pt. St. Lucie, Fla., Robin and Irv Glenney, and Diane and Michael Barrett of Marlborough; and many other family and friends.

Todd was a gentle, kind man who loved music, the written word, nature and his people. He maintained his sense of wonderment, was intrigued with the world's controversies and his exceptional wit and sense of humor set him apart from ordinary people.

Relatives and friends attended a celebration of Todd's life Monday, Sept. 16, at the Newington Memorial Funeral Home, 20 Bonair Ave., Newington, with Pastor Ron Payne officiating. Calling hours were Monday, before the service, at Newington Memorial.

Those of you who would like to have Todd's memory live on may contribute to Shriners Hospital for Children, 51 Blossum St., Boston, MA 02114 or Town of Marlborough Parks and Rec., P.O. Box 29, Marlborough, CT 06447 (please notate Todd Dorey on the memo line of the check). Because of allergies in the family, living plants (as opposed to cut floral arrangements) are preferred.

To share your sorrow, visit newingtonmemorial.com.

Marlborough

Virginia K. Brady

Virginia K. Brady, 88, of Marlborough, formerly of Manchester, beloved wife of the late Robert J. Brady, died Friday, Sept. 13, at Manchester Memorial Hospital. Born in Hartford, she was the daughter of the late Leo "Brick" Kane and Emma (Huckle) Kane. Virginia retired from Hamilton Standard's shipping department after 35 years of service.

She is survived by her daughter Pat Cleveland and her husband Orville of Vernon; her grandchildren Karen Krueger and her husband Raymond of Manchester, and Robb Cleveland of Portland, Maine; her great-grandchildren Amanda and Thomas Jedynek and several nieces and nephews.

Besides her husband, she was predeceased by her brother Leo, and sisters, Betty, Marilyn, Nancy and Phyllis.

A Mass of Christian Burial was held Monday, Sept. 16, at St. Bartholomew Church, 736 Middle Tpke., Manchester, followed by burial in East Cemetery, Manchester. Virginia's family greeted friends at St. Bartholomew prior to the Mass.

Memorial donations may be made to the American Diabetes Association, 2080 Silas Deane Highway, 2nd Floor, Rocky Hill, CT 06067.

For online condolences, visit tierneyfuneralhome.com.

Marlborough

Pauline B. Marcinczyk

Pauline B. (Domijan) Marcinczyk, 92, of Marlborough, passed away Thursday, Sept. 12, at her home. She was the beloved wife of the late Edward Marcinczyk Sr.

Born and raised in New Britain, she was a Marlborough resident for the past two years and a member of Sacred Heart Church in New Britain and its Ladies Guild. She was also a member of the Fafnir Retirees Club and enjoyed spending time in her flower and vegetable garden, and tending to her roses.

A beloved mother, grandmother and great-grandmother, Pauline leaves her son Edward Marcinczyk, Jr. of Plainville, her daughter Claudia Marcinczyk of Marlborough, and her son Paul Marcinczyk and his wife Kathy of Southington; her four grandchildren, Kimberly, T.R., Paul Jr., and Michael and his wife Christian; and two great-grandchildren, Evan and Ella Grace.

A Mass of Christian Burial was held Saturday, Sept. 14, at Sacred Heart Church, New Britain. She will be laid to rest privately in Sacred Heart Cemetery.

Memorial donations may be made to Sacred Heart Church Renovation Fund, 158 Broad St., New Britain, CT 06053 or Hospice of Eastern CT, 34 Ledgebrook Dr., Mansfield Center, CT 06250.

To share a memory with her family, visit burritthill.com.

Portland

Peter R. Rybczyk

Peter R. Rybczyk, 73, of Newington, formerly of Portland, beloved husband of Louella (Sequenzia) Rybczyk, died Saturday, Sept. 14, at St. Francis Hospital in Hartford. He was born in Middletown, son of the late Jack and Nora (Quirk) Rybczyk. Peter worked as a production manager at Goodyear Rubber Company and then later at Canberra Industries for 30 years.

In addition to his wife, he is survived by his son, Robert Rybczyk and daughter-in-law Linda Champagne of Newington; his daughter, Diane Johnson and son-in-law, Arne McLellan of Portland; his brother, Paul Rybczyk of Maryland; his sister, Mary Ann Zakrzewski and her husband Steve of Hewitt, Texas; two other brothers and their wives and families; four grandchildren whom he adored, Jeremy, Ariel, Rachel and Derek; and aunts, nieces and nephews.

He will always be remembered as a loving husband, father and grandfather who will be deeply missed by all.

Funeral services and burial are private. There are no calling hours.

Those who wish make memorial contributions to the Peter R. Rybczyk Cancer Fund, c/o Diane Johnson, 12 Burr St., Portland, CT 06480.

Biega Funeral Home has care of the arrangements. To share memories or express condolences online, visit biegafuneralhome.com.

