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Marine Lance Cpl. Jacob Beebe accepts a certificate of thanks from the town, presented by Town Councilor Ted Hintz Jr., as Board of Education member Chris Goff looks on. While in Afghanistan, Beebe's unit performed mobile assault clearance duties, specifically route IED disposal.

One Last Yellow Ribbon Untied

by John Tyczkowski

After nearly three and a half years, the last yellow ribbon on the tree in East Hampton's Village Center has been untied.

Last Saturday afternoon in a ceremony at the Yellow Ribbon Tree, town officials and residents, as well as state and federal officials, welcomed home Marine Lance Cpl. Jacob Beebe from a tour of duty in Afghanistan.

Beebe's ribbon was the 21st ribbon tied on the tree since program started in 2011.

Anne McLaughlin, the head of the Yellow Ribbon Committee and the founder of the program, said her oldest grandson inspired her to start the town-wide effort.

Staff Sgt. Aaron McLaughlin served in the Army and had been deployed to both Iraq and Afghanistan before he returned home.

"When he came home, he just came home. We had our family party, but that was it. I had said to him, 'I wish we had a big celebration,'" she said. "And we decided, from then on, we were going to have a big celebration for every East Hampton soldier that served in harm's way."

She also said she was grateful to have the continual support of town residents.

"We had a lot of ceremonies, putting up 21 ribbons and then taking them down," she said.

"And every time, the wonderful people of East Hampton came out, and I'm so happy for that. I really am."

McLaughlin said she approached the town council with the idea in March of 2011, and the first Yellow Ribbon Ceremony took place shortly after, on Memorial Day.

Saturday's ceremony consisted of a series of speeches around the Yellow Ribbon Tree in the Village Center, with a color guard consisting of officers from VFW Post 5095.

Fifers, as well as the East Hampton Middle School band, were on hand to provide martial and patriotic music.

McLaughlin began by recognizing Beebe in her opening speech.

"Jacob, today is America's day of giving, and what would be more fitting than to have us give you a big thank you?" she said to Beebe. "Welcome home."

McLaughlin also recognized Paul's and Sandy's Too with a certificate of recognition for donating the current Yellow Ribbon Tree, after the original one was destroyed in the freak Halloween snowstorm of 2011.

She also recognized all of the organizations that had participated in the ceremony today and

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Who Will Take Pam Sawyer's Place?

by Geeta Schrayter

Next Tuesday, voters will decide who will follow the 22-year tenure of retiring state Rep. Pam Sawyer.

Sawyer, a Republican from Bolton who has spent the last 22 years representing the 55th District and the RiverEast towns of Andover, Hebron and Marlborough (along with Bolton and Columbia), announced in April she would not be seeking re-election.

Running to take her place are Republican Gayle Mulligan of Hebron and Democrat Joe La Bella of Marlborough.

Mulligan, who has lived in town since 1996, is currently chairwoman of the Hebron Board of Selectmen. She was first elected to the board in 2007; she was made its vice chair that same year and remained in the role until she was made chairwoman last year. On the board, Mulligan has also been liaison to the fire department, the Commission on Aging and RHAM, something she said allowed her to get "an overall view of what different groups and people are feeling, the struggles they're facing; it's been really enlightening."

Along with being a selectwoman, Mulligan has also spent time on the Zoning Board of Appeals and was appointed Republican Deputy

Registrar in 2004.

Over the years, her community involvement has also included helping at Hebron Center Nursery School when her two children attended, the Hebron Parent Teacher Association where she acted as co-president for two years, coaching youth soccer and acting as a member of the Hebron Soccer Board of Directors.

Mulligan is also a member of Gilead Congregational Church, a Justice of the Peace and works part-time at the Hebron Quick Lube.

This week, she said she decided to run for state representative after Sawyer asked if it were something she'd consider.

"She asked if I would consider it and it was a huge honor, and after having spent some time thinking about it, I think with the background I have and the time I spent here [on the Board of Selectmen] it's a good fit, and it's a good next step for me."

Mulligan added, "My kids are getting big-



Joe La Bella

ger, they're more independent, so I feel I have the time and I'd like to be able to advocate for all of our small towns and hopefully make a difference at that next level."

For Mulligan, the biggest issue facing the state is taxes. She explained, "There's over 300 taxes in this state and we're up to our ears in debt. We keep borrowing and spending and we're not putting away for operating expenses with the pensions and that kind of thing. We need to tighten up our belts. We need to hold the government a little bit more accountable."

Mulligan said she'd be in favor of lowering the gas tax in the state, but added "you can't just slash taxes left and right and say things are going to be better because there's going to be a loss of income. So you need to know where that will come from; I would not cut taxes and cut services. A lot of services are already cut to unacceptable levels."

Mulligan added the state needed to learn to handle the budget more like municipalities and individuals do.

"You can find a way to tighten the belt. I do that at home. The electric bill goes up, I have to find somewhere else to pay for it. As those things change you have to find other ways to make up that difference and people do it every

day," she said. "The government should be accountable in the same way."

Along with taxes and lowering spending, Mulligan said it was important to keep and increase small businesses in the area.

"We don't have big box companies or big businesses bringing up property taxes and workers and that kind of thing. We rely on the small businesses, and the harder it is for them to stay in business the harder it is for our communities to thrive," she stated.

In addition, Mulligan stated it was important to ensure the small municipalities continue to receive state funding through programs like the Small Town Economic Assistance Program, and to create an environment that would keep college graduates in the state. She also said groups should be formed to look into state fraud and the welfare system "to see where it's broken, and if it's broken, find ways to fix it... we need

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Gayle Mulligan

Political Previews Inside



Marine Lance Cpl. Jacob Beebe takes down his yellow ribbon from the tree in the East Hampton Village Center, as his family and others look on. Beebe's ribbon was the 21st and last to be removed from the tree in the program's three-year history.

Yellow Ribbon cont. from Front Page

continually over the past three years. These included the members of VFW Post 5095 and the VFW Ladies' Auxiliary and their color guards, American Legion Post 64, the town's police and fire departments, town manager Michael Maniscalco and numerous town clubs and organizations.

Lieutenant Gov. Nancy Wyman also attended the event, representing the Office of the Governor. During her speech, she had all of the veterans in attendance raise their hands and be recognized, to a round of applause from the crowd.

"We need to thank you all, no matter where or when you served," she said. "If it wasn't for all our veterans, we would not be here today with the freedoms we have."

In addition, all 20 veterans who had their names and ribbons on the tree during the past three years, and they, along with their families, were named and invited up to the tree as well.

VFW Commander Roger Anderson then spoke and gave an account of Beebe's military life since he joined the Corps in 2013.

He began by mentioning how Beebe, a 2012 East Hampton High School graduate, had always told his mother that he wanted to be a Marine. Beebe joined the Corps in July 2013 and earned his Expert Marksmanship Medal while stationed at Parris Island, S.C. He was then stationed at Camp LeJune in North Carolina with the 2nd Combat Engineer Battalion.

After receiving pre-deployment training at 29 Palms in California, Anderson said, Beebe was then deployed to Afghanistan, where his company "was responsible for route IED clearance."

"Outstanding work," Anderson said, as he turned and saluted Beebe.

Anderson then said though he's attended these Yellow Ribbon ceremonies before, this one was different.

"Even after this final ribbon is removed from the tree, this tree will represent both pride and honor for all military people in our town," he said, as he turned once again to Beebe. "So therefore, Corporal, welcome home."

U.S. Senator Richard Blumenthal, who had been at the naval base in Groton for a submarine dedication ceremony, was able to come to East Hampton at the last minute, and also offered some remarks.

"I know that this community is strong, and the fabric of this community is demonstrated by the Yellow Ribbon program," he said. "Thank you to Corporal Beebe, and thank you to every member of our armed services and every veteran here today for your service and sacrifice."

Anderson escorted Beebe to the tree, where Beebe removed his ribbon. The corporal's father, Jeff, mother, Sue, sisters Caitlin and Megan

and several other relatives were present along with him.

Town Council Chairwoman Barbara Moore also spoke at the event, recognizing the residents who had come to the Yellow Ribbon events over the years.

"I'd like to thank all of you who are standing here before me, to honor those men and women who we're all so proud of, for their service," she said.

After, Councilor Ted Hintz Jr. presented Beebe with a certificate of thanks from the town council and the town, extending "heartfelt appreciation" for Beebe's service in the Marine Corps.

State Sen. Art Linares and state Rep. Melissa Ziobron also spoke at the event.

Linares began his comments by praising the town.

"It's an honor to be here today and celebrate this wonderful occasion," he said. "You are a beautiful, strong community, East Hampton, and you have proven that small towns can accomplish great things."

He also addressed Beebe directly, thanking him.

"You are the reason why we live in the greatest country on earth, the greatest country there ever will be," he said. "Thank you and God bless you."

Ziobron then presented Beebe with an official citation from the General Assembly, recognizing his "dedicated service to the country as a member of the United States Marine Corps."

"I remember being here when your parents tied that ribbon on, and I know they're so thrilled to have you back, as we all are," she said, addressing Beebe. "Thank you very much for your service."

Beebe stepped up to the mic and thanked those attending.

"I want to thank everyone for coming out today," he said. "This ceremony really shows what kind of town I come from. Thank you."

After the ceremony, Beebe said he'll be headed back to Camp LeJune, where he's stationed, where his duties will include training new Marines.

He also said he was glad to be back home briefly before retuning to North Carolina.

"It's a little bit different to be home, but it's really nice to see my family and friends," Beebe said. "And I'm hoping I really am the last one, and that no one else goes back."

* * *

Visit the Rivereast News Bulletin's Facebook page, [facebook.com/RivereastNewsBulletin](https://www.facebook.com/RivereastNewsBulletin), for a full gallery of photos from last week's Yellow Ribbon Ceremony.

55th District cont. from Front Page

to have checks and balances in place across the board."

Mulligan added she isn't a "typical politician."

"I'm a volunteer. I represent my community. I'm involved because I care about my family, the future of my state, the future of my community, and I'm just really here to work and to make things better" she said, adding "I listen and take into consideration everybody's issues; I'm not going to just drop judgment and make a decision because my party tells me to or because one group of people want something. I'm fair and willing to listen to what people have to say."

She concluded, "I'm going to go to advocate for all four towns and try to represent our district and make sure people are getting the things they deserve and that they're paying for in their taxes."

* * *

Up against Mulligan is former Marlborough selectman Joe La Bella. La Bella, a Democrat who has lived in town for almost 20 years, spent five years on the selectmen board, along with 10 on the Board of Finance prior to that (including a one-year stint as board chair).

His community involvement also includes being vice chairman of the Marlborough Democratic Town Committee, involvement with the Marlborough Soccer Club when his two sons were younger, and moderating the Future Problem Solvers program at RHAM Middle School. La Bella has also coached youth soccer and baseball in town and has taught the Faith Formation class at St. John Fisher Roman Catholic Church.

He is also an attorney at his own practice in town, which opened last October.

For La Bella, there are three main areas of focus.

The first, he explained, has to do with the area.

"One is a real focus on our area and on Eastern Connecticut. I think we need a strong advocate in Hartford because I think that our voice tends not to be heard in the debate," he said. "I think that we tend to be forgotten."

He said this can be seen in some of the discussions that take place, and mentioned the towns in the area were "well below" the goal for Education Cost Sharing.

"I want to make sure our voice is heard," he said.

Secondly, La Bella said he wanted to improve the business climate in the area.

"I want to improve the climate for all of us in the 55th District and in Connecticut. I sum that up as what I call 'smart growth,' he explained. "All four towns need to broaden their tax base. I'd love to see that done and we need to see that done without sacrificing the unique character of the towns."

As an example, La Bella said over the last four years there have been a number of loans and grants that have led to the creation of dozens of jobs in town.

"Each of those businesses tend to employ local people, so money is circulated back into the community and at a relatively low cost. So that's the type of growth we really need to focus on," he said.

Lastly, La Bella said he had a focus on "educational excellence." Although he said the RHAM school district and the local schools in each of the Region Eight towns were "great," he added "I think we can do a better job of how we provide that [education]" so that it's done "more efficiently."

Regarding some of the changes that need to be made in the state, La Bella, like Mulligan, said, "I think one thing we need to do is look at how we spend our money."

"I think we really need to focus on [the question] 'are we spending our money effectively?'"

In addition, La Bella said he thinks the salaries of deputy commissioners needs to be examined along with whether or not their positions are really efficient. Furthermore, he said, "Another area we could look at the local level is educational efficiencies."

La Bella furthered "I think the state should be more friendly toward regionalization. For example, as we do testing for children with special needs, maybe that's something that could be regionalized" instead of having testing in each town, he said.

Speaking on why people should vote for him, La Bella said it was due to his experience, but also "my willingness and ability to do what's best for the district. I'll stand up for the district."

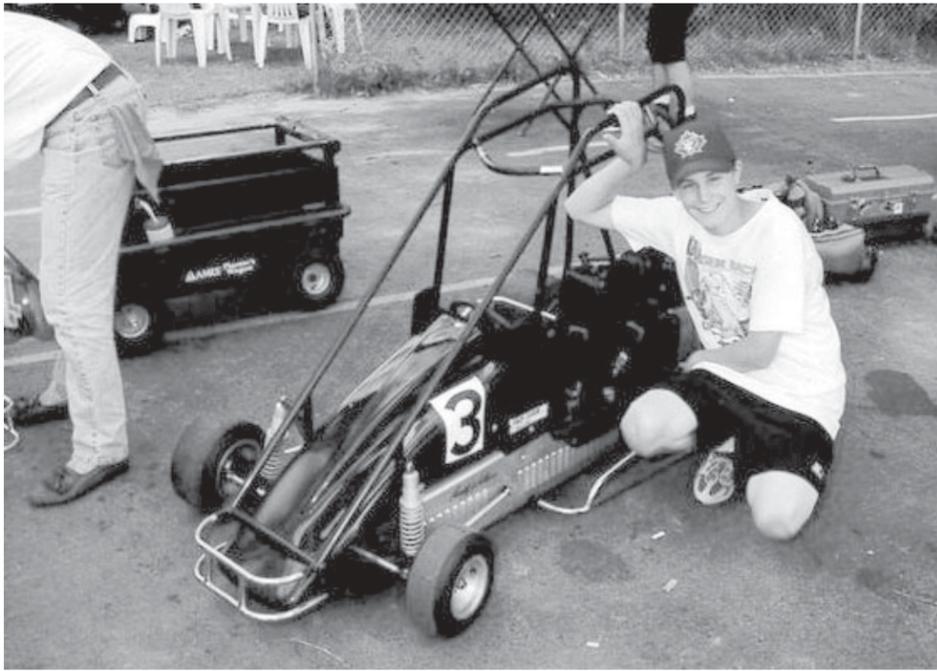
La Bella also mentioned a situation last year where he was involved with the presentation of a budget amendment during a Board of Finance meeting at the last minute.

"Whether people agree or disagree [with his actions] I hope people will respect the fact I was willing to stand up for what I believed was right. That wasn't a Democratic or a Republican thing - there were a lot of Democrats who were upset with me for that but I'm willing to take the heat to do the right thing," he said.

"I'll have no problem going to Hartford and doing what's best for the 55th District," La Bella concluded. "Whether Democrat or Republican, we need to find solutions."

* * *

Election Day is next Tuesday, Nov. 4. Polls are open from 6 a.m.-8 p.m. In Andover, people can vote at Town Hall; in Hebron, they can vote at Hebron Elementary School, 92 Church St. (Route 85); and in Marlborough, people can cast ballots at Marlborough Elementary School, 25 School Drive.



At left, Alan Cavanna and the quarter midget – in either 1996 or '97 at “Little T” Speedway in Thompson. His interest in racing later took another turn. These days, Cavanna works for NASCAR.com, and is host of *The Preview Show* and *Race Center Extra*. He’s shown here at right (in a photo by Jeff Siner of the *Charlotte Observer*) rehearsing prior to taping last month.

Former Marlborough Resident Finds a Home with NASCAR.com

by Théoden Janes

The Charlotte (N.C.) Observer

Alan Cavanna grew up in Glastonbury and later in Marlborough – which is roughly between New York City and Boston – so he grew up around boys who wanted to be Roger Clemens, or Patrick Ewing, or Drew Bledsoe or Mark Messier.

The only child of George Cavanna and Sue and Bob Crawford, Alan was quite possibly the only kid in that quiet Hartford suburb who idolized NASCAR star Rusty Wallace.

But his dream wasn’t to be the 1989 Winston Cup Champion; his dream, really, was to interview him. To talk to lots of race car drivers, in fact, as well as crew chiefs and team owners; to tell stories about them, in front of a camera; and to get paid to do it.

Today, Cavanna is just shy of his second anniversary with Charlotte, N.C.-based NASCAR Digital Media, where he serves as a video reporter and host for NASCAR.com and also as proof that sometimes childhood fantasies do come true.

“I’ve always wanted to do this one thing, and I never diverted from that,” says Cavanna, who started his dream job on Nov. 19, 2012, the day after he turned 30. “I don’t know. Sometimes dreams change. Mine didn’t. So maybe I’m just stubborn. Maybe I’m a stubborn idiot,” he says, laughing.

Racing came naturally to Cavanna. His grandfather, George, was a professional sprint car champion in New England in the 1940s; and as a youth, his father raced Quarter Midgets, which are like go-karts but more powerful.

Around his ninth birthday, Cavanna began racing Quarter Midgets himself, at tracks in nearby Meriden and Thompson, and at 15, he won the New England championship in his class.

Talking, however, didn’t seem to come naturally to Cavanna – at least in his parents’ view.

“He’d get in the car after school, and I’d say, ‘How was your day?’ And he’d say, ‘Fine.’ I’d ask, ‘What’d you do?’ He’d say, ‘Nothing.’” Sue Crawford says. “Yet Alan got on this kick: He never wanted to get into racing; he wanted to report about racing.”

“He sort of silently developed all this information within him, about the tracks, about everything involved with NASCAR,” George Cavanna says. “People were amazed by his ability to know all that at such a young age.”

Before he even had reached RHAM High School in Hebron, after moving from Glastonbury after middle school, Alan Cavanna already was set on attending Syracuse University’s S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications, which had produced Bob Costas, Marv Albert, Mike Tirico and other sports broadcasters.

In high school, he volunteered to do the morning announcements to get a little experience, then got more by pitching in to help a guy in town with his public-access sports talk show – contributing a racing segment called “The Copa Cavanna,” with intro music by Barry Manilow.

And over the next dozen years, every step of the way, he put on a textbook display of hustle and focus.

• As a junior at Syracuse, in 2003, he found himself at a speech by alumnus Ed Goren, president of Fox Sports. During a Q&A, Cavanna pointedly asked Goren whether the network had ended the most recent Daytona 500 broadcast because it was raining, or because Fox didn’t want anything in the way of the 300th episode of *The Simpsons*, set to air that night. Goren called Cavanna a “smartass,” then offered to let him work as a production assistant during races at Dover International Speedway and Pocono Raceway. (“The first race I actually ever saw in person was from the broadcast booth,” Cavanna says. “That’s a pretty cool place to

start.”)

• As a 21-year-old reporter making \$18,000 a year at the ABC affiliate in Joplin, Mo., Cavanna exploited the fact that NASCAR driver Jamie McMurray hailed from Joplin, getting approval for work trips to Kansas Speedway and the Daytona 500. This, despite the fact that Cavanna was hired to cover topics such as crime and education.

• In Evansville, Ind., where he also was assigned to the news department, Cavanna sweet-talked his way into covering the Brickyard 400 in Indianapolis. Twice.

Then WSOC in Charlotte came calling in June 2008, and although it again was a news reporting job, Cavanna saw the position as a big break that could pave the way for his biggest.

“Charlotte was always the goal,” he says. “If I wanted to be in NASCAR, I knew I had to be in Charlotte or some sort of NASCAR-oriented city. ... They [WSOC] knew I was a NASCAR fan, but they didn’t bring me here because I knew NASCAR. They made it clear: ‘Look, you’re not gonna do a lot of sports stories. Don’t come here thinking you’re gonna do sports stories.’”

So what did Cavanna do? He made news out of sports.

He arrived in Charlotte during the height of the recession, and quickly pitched and did stories about how it was affecting NASCAR. Then in 2009, his bosses turned to him for his expertise throughout the controversy involving driver Jeremy Mayfield, who twice tested positive for methamphetamine and was suspended. Twitter had taken hold with the public, and Cavanna – returning to the handle “@CopaCavanna” – built a following with Mayfield- and other NASCAR-related tweets.

And when NASCAR Digital Media reached out to him in the fall of 2012, he leaped.

“Very quickly,” Cavanna says. “I never weighed the decision, like, ‘Well, I’m not gonna do this, I’ll wait for something better to come along, I’ll go do another live shot in the rain.’ No, this was it. This was the opportunity I’d been waiting for.”

He’s now winding down his second season of reporting racing news and hosting web series for NASCAR.com. Though he will be reporting this week in the run-up to the Bank of America 500 at Charlotte Motor Speedway, Cavanna will miss Saturday night’s race because it conflicts with his 10-year reunion at Syracuse.

Cavanna doesn’t operate now as an independent journalist. NASCAR.com is owned by NASCAR and serves as the organization’s official website.

“I’m still a huge race fan,” he says. “If there’s an awesome end to a race, I am still as excited as ever. The only difference now is that it doesn’t matter who wins. I’m still that same race fan that appreciates good racing, and I just have the opportunity to tell that story now, which is awesome.”

Cavanna pauses, just briefly, as he sits in his uptown office beneath the Charlotte Convention Center. It’s adorned with broadcasting awards; a trophy from a media go-kart race in Mooresville; a piston from an engine-build competition at Hendrick Motorsports; dirt from Eldora Speedway in Ohio; and several photos – including one of him with his dad at the Brickyard, and a sepia-toned shot of his grandfather next to a sprint car.

He leans in and smiles.

“I’ll tell you, though: I got to interview Rusty Wallace when he went into the Hall of Fame, and I geeked out on that a little bit. I’ll admit it.”

[Thanks to Théoden Janes and the *Charlotte Observer* for permission to reprint this story.]

Marlborough School Board Approves Full-Day Kindergarten

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

The Marlborough Board of Education met last Thursday, Oct. 23, to discuss and ultimately approve full-day kindergarten for the 2015-16 school year.

After the idea was originally proposed by Superintendent of Schools David Sklarz last November, the board had been discussing the idea for many months, debating what was best for Marlborough school children.

At last week's meeting, Board of Finance member Cliff Denniss, who said he was speaking as an individual, spoke to the board during the meeting's public comment period about a potential way to handle half- and full-day kindergarten. Denniss mentioned he had visited a school in Massachusetts, which had a lottery system for its full-day kindergarten. He said parents can put their name in specifying if they want full-day or half-day kindergarten; once names are pulled, parents chosen for full-day kindergarten would pay \$3,000 for it.

However, the Marlborough board members told Denniss they had debated the idea before and would never charge parents for kindergarten. Board member Theresa Brysgel also said Hebron had tried a lottery system for a few years, but wound up eventually going completely to full-day kindergarten.

"You try and please everyone, but you don't please as much as you hope for," Sklarz said.

One parent said after moving to town nine years ago, she was shocked then that Marlborough did not have full-day kindergar-

ten. Christine McLaughlin, another parent, said she was still opposed to full-day kindergarten because she had not seen any convincing evidence, and added her current kindergartener is drained after just the half-day program. The board debated after the public comment period that the reason students may be drained is because the half-day program is packed with academics while the full-day program would allow for more outside recess time and social time in general.

Sklarz began the discussion to explain the current situation with the new Common Core State Standards.

"We have been doing Common Core with kindergarten for the last two years and we've been doing it well, but the teachers feel we can do a better job," Sklarz said. "My conversations with teachers are that right now we are taking on Common Core and meeting standards, but our belief is that we can do a better job with more time. It's a good opportunity for teachers to take students and work at a better pace."

Sklarz went on to explain that full-day would mean not more academic work, but a more joyful experience of Common Core to "work, play and discover."

Betty O'Brien, vice chair of the school board, mentioned that maybe "not one size fits all."

"My concern is children that might not be ready," board chair Ruth Kelly said. "Is there an assessment to determine certain children that are just not ready?"

Sklarz said he has never been in a district so divided over the issue.

Board member Wes Skorski said he's been constantly "flip-flopping" over the issue.

"Studies show that full-day helps low income students and not others," Skorski said.

Board member Carole Shea again mentioned the idea of a transition program where part of the year would be half-day and part would be full-day. She also said they should consider again the eight-week remedial program in the spring for children that are lagging in the half-day program. The remedial program includes the child going to both sessions, morning and afternoon, of kindergarten for eight weeks.

"People are talking about readiness," board member Mimi LaPoint said. "Some children are not ready for kindergarten on the first day. What is the majority? Parents have a choice to not send their child to kindergarten. If you don't think they are ready, keep them home."

Current law states children do not have to go to school until they are seven years old, according to LaPoint.

"It's a good point about readiness," Sklarz said. "Some is readiness and some is personal preference. Parents want one more year to have their child home. We need to sort out those factors."

"It was me," Brysgel said about her own choice to enjoying half-day kindergarten with her children. "They were all ready."

"I don't think the teachers are going to cram

all of the academics on the first week," board member Louise Concodello said. "They'll go slowly and gradually and take their time. Teachers are smart enough to know which kids need more time and care."

Sklarz said he "knows for a fact that each teacher we have now knows where each child is with readiness and who needs more transition time."

The board put up a motion to approve full-day kindergarten with three classes of 20 students with a paraprofessional in each classroom. The main driving force behind this, Sklarz said, was that the building cannot currently support a fourth kindergarten class with the necessary added bathroom and it would be costly to make such an addition to the school. The board agreed an addition like that wouldn't be needed, especially if they continue to have decreasing or steady enrollment.

The motion passed and the board approved the full-day program with a 6-2 vote, with Shea and Kelly voting against it.

Parent Kim Disomma thanked the board after the vote for approving full-day kindergarten.

"Thank you for giving our children the gift of time," Disomma said. "My daughter is going to love it."

The next Board of Education meeting is Thursday, Nov. 20, at 7 p.m. at Marlborough Elementary School.

Marlborough | Hebron | Marlborough

Everett Looks to Unseat Osten in 19th District

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

Republican Steven Everett is challenging incumbent Democrat Cathy Osten in the race for the state senate seat of the 19th District. The 10-town district includes the *Rivereast* communities of Hebron and Marlborough.

According to Osten, the race has been fairly quiet and low key, with a focus on jobs.

Osten, who is seeking her second term, said she was especially proud of the Platform to Employment program she was involved with. Recently this month, the program graduated a group of its participants with 27 of those that had been critically unemployed with jobs.

"I focus on legislation passed to impact people in a positive way," Osten said. "My first year I was feeling the way around and my second year I focused on Platform to Employment [a program that works to help unemployed get jobs], sexual abuse law Erin's Law, and legislature to identify dyslexia."

Connecticut was the 14th state to pass Erin's Law, which she said encourages kids to learn about boundaries including what a safe secret is and what a safe touch is.

"It's one more tool to protect kids," Osten said.

However, Everett questioned Osten's handling of the state's Early Release law – which allows inmates to get out of jail before serving their full sentences – following her work with sexual abuse laws.

"She worked hard for Megan's Law and Erin's Law, but when it was time to repeal the early release, she voted not to repeal and allowed them to get out without their full sentence," Everett said. "I don't understand that, and that's not me."

Osten said the biggest issues facing the state currently are stabilizing the economy and getting jobs back into the area.

"We have a 2 percent lower unemployment

rate in the district from when I started, but we still have a long way to go," Osten said.

Osten went on to explain how Platform to Employment and her work with community college and certification levels is helping residents return to work.

"We got welding back into vocational technical schools and added a sheet metal fabrication program for Three Rivers Community College," Osten said. "Businesses are saying they need employees. We need to find programs to train people for the jobs available."

On taxes, Osten stressed she had nothing to do with the \$1.8 billion tax increase the state approved in 2010 – as that was before she was in office. (Osten was first elected to the state Senate in 2012.)

"I never voted on the tax increase," Osten said. "The tax increase was in 2010. Years of municipal leadership has taught me to look for ways to make efficiencies to support needs without raising taxes."

Osten said jobs are key to stabilizing the economy. One of the ways she said she's helped businesses is by stabilizing the cost for workers compensation with the NCCI, or National Council on Compensation Insurance, which could have caused dramatic increases for state businesses in the upcoming years.

"The whole point is to get people back to work," Osten said.

If re-elected, Osten said she's excited for another two years in Hartford.

"There's a lot still to work on and I plan on working as hard as the last two years on issues



Cathy Osten

of the state," Osten said.

Of Everett's ideas for returning jobs to the state, he envisions a revitalized Norwich and New London area filled with more tourism, bringing jobs and expansion to the eastern part of the state – thanks in part to the new commuter rail.

"With the railroad upgrade from New London up to Norwich, Willimantic, Stafford Springs and Massachusetts, it's a great start," Everett said. "It means more passenger movement in eastern Connecticut and it could be a great tourism area."

Everett added the state should consider partnering with the casinos to work together to make eastern Connecticut more of an attraction with shops and things to enjoy much like Providence, R.I.

"We need to work with what we have and capitalize on that," Everett said. "It's a vision for the future and yes it's far-fetched, but it's doable."

With the casinos coming to Massachusetts, Everett said the state should focus now on saving those casino customers and keeping them in the state before the casinos have to begin laying off workers, leaving more people out of work.

"There are towns with nothing to do right now," Everett said. "If the area has more to offer, it helps businesses decide to expand there."

Everett said too many students with bachelor degrees are coming out of school either jobless or working low paying service jobs.

"People pay \$3.50 [for] a gallon of gas to get to an \$11 or \$12 an hour job," Everett said. "With the cost of feeding their families, they don't have enough money."

Everett said one resident whose door he knocked on mentioned blight in the neighbor-

hood, but Everett saw the problem slightly differently from the resident.

"With blight, it's from people who moved out or are not working enough to pay for the upkeep," Everett said. "They have to decide between groceries or paint."

Everett said people truly pay too high of taxes and once families do have children, that's "when it starts getting tough."

"I'm the type of guy who works for the people in the 19th and people in Connecticut," Everett said. "I won't fight Democrats or agree with Republicans if the idea isn't right for Connecticut. Party lines go out the window on Nov. 4."

Everett said that, if elected, he will be passionate about the job and work to succeed in Hartford in order to represent the eastern side of the state.

"Sometimes the state borders ends at the Connecticut River," Everett said. "No First 5 program benefited eastern Connecticut. I want to represent eastern Connecticut so we can prosper as Connecticut grows."

First 5 is a program by Governor Malloy to give dollars to large corporations so they will expand into the state.

Election Day is Tuesday, Nov. 4. Polls are open from 6 a.m.-8 p.m. In Hebron, voters can cast ballots at Hebron Elementary School, 92 Church St. (Route 85), while in Marlborough, voting takes place at Marlborough Elementary School, 25 School Drive.



Steve Everett

Hebron, Marlborough to Share Building Official

by Geeta Schrayter

From a young age, the phrase “sharing is caring” is instilled in most people. As adults, that phrase holds true, but sharing can also mean other things – like saved money for example, or access to more services – reasons behind the recent decision between officials in Hebron and Marlborough to share a building official.

Hebron Town Manager Andrew Tierney said this week he initiated the possibility in an effort to listen to residents who expressed a desire to see a reduction in town staff and administration, more regionalization and, of course, savings.

At its Oct. 2 meeting, the Hebron Board of Selectmen unanimously authorized Tierney to move forward with the possibility and negotiate an agreement with Marlborough.

He explained, “This will save us approximately \$40,000 by contracting [Hebron building official Joe Summers] out with Marlborough; There’s going to be a 60/40 percent split with all expenses.

Under the agreement, Hebron will pay for

approximately 60 percent of Summers’ salary along with 60 percent of the associated benefits such as health insurance, life insurance and vehicle/gas reimbursement; Marlborough meanwhile, would be responsible for the remaining 40 percent.

The amount of time Summers’ spends working for each town will be similarly split, with approximately 16 hours, or 40 percent, of his regular 40-hour work week being spent on Marlborough, and approximately 24 hours, or 60 percent, being used for Hebron.

The Marlborough Board of Selectmen voted 2-1 in favor of entering into the agreement at their Oct. 21 meeting, with Denis Soucy against.

Marlborough First Selectwoman Cathy Gaudinski said the town currently has a temporary building official who has been in place since the town’s part-time official left in the spring. She explained the amount of money the town spends under the agreement “works out to about the same” that’s currently being used for the temporary official, but the town will have

more coverage.

“We’re looking at it in that it’ll provide us more accessibility to a building official,” she stated.

Summers will be in Marlborough Monday, Tuesday and sometimes on Friday, Gaudinski shared, so “we’ll have more day coverage. Then we’re also anticipating flexibility in terms of if it’s not a scheduled office hour that someone needs services, if it’s a Hebron time and [Summers] can make it, he’ll also come into Marlborough at that time.”

The agreement the two towns struck furthers, “The weekly schedule shall be as mutually agreed to by the parties. And, nothing in this agreement shall prevent the building official from combining inspections in a single trip in both towns for the most effective use of his time.”

Gaudinski further explained Marlborough budgeted for a full-time building official in this year’s budget in anticipation of some further building projects. However, “since those have

not materialized as of this date we felt we’d like to give this situation a try.”

Gaudinski added the agreement is year-to-year, giving both towns flexibility in terms of any changes that might occur down the road. The agreement can also be terminated by either town “at its convenience,” with 30 days’ notice.

Tierney added the agreement was just another effort by the town to reduce staff and realize savings.

“We changed a full-time position in the tax department to a part-time position to save money on the benefits package there,” Tierney said, “and this is another attempt to offset Hebron’s cost by sharing with Marlborough.”

He furthered, “it’s also another best effort to do regionalization with other towns – that’s a popular thing and one of the goals the selectmen had asked me to do.”

Tierney concluded, “I’m very happy to say that’s going to move forward possibly as soon as Nov. 1 which is right around the corner.”

Three-Way Race in 33rd District

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

Next week incumbent Art Linares will face Democrat Emily Bjornberg and Green Party candidate Colin Bennett at the polls for the state senate seat of the 33rd District.

The 13-town district includes the *Rivereast* towns of Colchester, East Hampton and Portland. Linares, a Republican, has held the Senate seat for one term.

Linares, a native of Westbrook, said so far the campaign has gone well and he’s been focusing on a positive campaign tone.

“I feel strongly and confidently that my message has resonated,” Linares said. “I originally decided to run to get fresh ideas and innovative thinking in Hartford. I also put the constituency first.”

Linares said the two biggest issues he’s seen are creating jobs and growing the economy.

“There’s lots of issues, but I’ve heard most about tax increases on the middle class and seniors,” Linares said. “The parallel has been people are struggling for jobs.”

Linares said it’s been difficult to keep people in Connecticut with the tax increases being at a competitive disadvantage with neighboring states.

“We first need to consider growing the economy and making jobs then there will be more revenue at the state,” Linares said.

Linares said he wants to discontinue the First 5 program and the bus way idea from Hartford to New Britain. The First 5 program, as Linares described it, is a program by Gov. Dannel Malloy that allows him to give tens of millions of dollars to large corporations to stay in the state.

“We need to spend money more wisely and it will show constituents that we are taking things seriously,” Linares said. “Right now, Connecticut is spending irresponsibly and it gives a bad signal.”

Linares said it’s a disadvantage to Connecticut’s economy for state taxes to be higher than those in nearby Massachusetts, New Jersey or Rhode Island.

“It’s truly driving business out of the state,” Linares said.

Another problem, Linares said, is the general attitude in the state.

“We need to do a much better job at changing the attitude toward businesses and the constituency,” Linares said. “The constituency believes Hartford is not working for the people

and that they are working for Hartford.”

One of the problems concerning businesses, Linares said, is that from day one, they have to pay \$250 a year in tax, regardless of whether they are a small business or a Fortune 500 company.

“We need to work to streamline regulations,” Linares said. “We haven’t made that a priority in the last four years. We need to make Connecticut conducive to job growth organically so we don’t have to give money away.”

Linares also said he wants to phase out the retirement tax, since Connecticut is one of the only states with it and also change the hospital tax since it resulted in the loss of 1,400 jobs in the hospital industry.

“I’m running on ideas and solutions to problems,” Linares said. “I avoided participation in the negative campaign culture as well. I’ll work tirelessly for the people of the 33rd District.”

Linares has been endorsed by the Family Institute, the National Federation of Independent Businesses, and Connecticut Realtors among others.

Bjornberg, a native of Lyme, said she had been frustrated with the government and decided to run.

“I feel like I’ve been standing on the sidelines for quite some time,” Bjornberg said. “A lot of the funding, laws and mandates coming down the pike are designed for big cities in mind and I live in the smallest town in the district. We deserve a voice.”

Bjornberg said she comes from a family who has operated their small business in the same location for over 150 years and as such, she is heavily invested in the lower Connecticut valley.

“If you are looking at ways to make government more effective, there’s no better example than non-profits,” Bjornberg said. “They stretch dollars and because I’ve spent the last 10 years working from within those non-profits, experience will pay off.”

Bjornberg said the biggest issues she’s seen are: the bulk of town budgets going to educa-

tion, the support of small businesses and how economy, environment and education are intertwined.

“When we see lack of funding [for education] and we fail to pull in our fair share of funding from Hartford, there’s an immediate effect on the towns,” Bjornberg said. “It’s a burden on property taxpayers.”

Bjornberg went on to explain that it’s important to also tailor education mandates in ways that have positive effects on students and to exempt schools already excelling from filing paperwork with the state each year proving they’re meeting the requirements of the mandate.

“What we’ve seen in the last two years are statewide mandates, which are a very blunt tool, designed for big cities in mind as opposed to small towns,” Bjornberg said. “There are unintended consequences for communities. It drives taxes upward without being positive for the kids.”

Bjornberg suggested the schools already excelling above the mandates’ levels should possibly only have to file one out of four years, freeing up administrators to work with students rather than just shuffle paperwork.

Bjornberg said she comes from a family of small business owners, and that another of the big issues is how mandates and laws have unintended consequences on small businesses.

“Politicians talk about getting more jobs, throw money at giant corporations and get big corporations to come into Connecticut,” Bjornberg said. “We’re having the wrong conversation. Small businesses function inside of a town in a very different way than corporations.”

Bjornberg explained how small business owners typically live in their town and pump all of their resources back into the town by having kids in the school system and serving on town boards among others.

“Those guys don’t feel like they have a voice,” Bjornberg said of small business owners. “They look at Hartford like Hartford is working against them. Mandates come down

with giant corporations in mind and they have teams of lawyers and lobbyists to make sure the regulatory mandates are not painful to them.”

Bjornberg said it’s easy for politicians to augment support for corporations, but it’s harder for small businesses because it takes time to unravel how mandates will affect the small businesses.

Bjornberg also explained that without a successful economy, it makes support for the environment and education difficult. If the environment isn’t preserved, tourism suffers which has an effect on the economy and education is important for economy and the environment.

“All three need to support each other, not work against,” Bjornberg said. She said many times politicians choose between one or another, instead of realizing how they all affect each other.

In regards to her opponent, Linares, Bjornberg said she knew she had to run after looking at Linares’ voting record.

“Linares votes against bans that would keep toxins from our kids,” Bjornberg said. “As a parent, I am not okay with my current sitting representation prioritizing the health of an industry over the health of my children.”

Bjornberg also mentioned she’s worried that Linares is backed by industries that stand against women’s right to choose and have access to birth control in any form.

As to why people should vote for her, Bjornberg said she will be a “voice to continually make sure statewide mandates are tailored in a way that are helpful to communities.”

Bjornberg has been endorsed by U.S. Senator Chris Murphy, the Connecticut Education Association, the American Federation of Teachers, and the Connecticut Police and Fire Union among others.

Bennett, the Green Party representative, is running for the seat for the fifth time. A resident of Westbrook, Bennett focuses on environmental health and is formerly of the U.S. Coast Guard and a former volunteer firefighter for Westbrook. He also co-founded the Great Land Conservation Trust.



Art Linares



Emily Bjornberg



Colin Bennett

Ziobron, Perrotti Face Off for 34th District Seat

by John Tyczkowski

The race for the 34th Assembly District is coming to a crescendo, as Election Day approaches in a few short days.

Republican incumbent Melissa Ziobron of East Haddam is running against Democratic challenger Mimi Perrotti of East Hampton.

Ziobron was elected in 2012 and has served for one term, representing East Hampton, East Haddam and the Westchester portion of Colchester.

Ziobron, an East Haddam resident, said clear communication has been a hallmark of her freshman term.

"You have to have a big voice at the capitol to advocate for your small towns," she said. "I'm pretty proud of the things I've done and the promises I've kept in my first two years."

Ziobron said two campaign promises she kept were to reopen Sunrise State Park and to eliminate taxpayer funded junk mailings.

Regarding the park, she said that her work on state parks has been among her "most valuable" actions in the Assembly.

"I begged to be put on the environment committee during freshmen assignments," she said, laughing. "I'm passionate about the parks; they're one of the most important things to me and my constituents in this district."

Specifically, Ziobron mentioned how in addition to action at the legislature, she worked with the DEEP to help revitalize Sunrise Park in East Haddam by organizing a clean up day with town residents to pick up trash on the property.

"It would be hard to beat that kind of accomplishment, in less than two years as a freshman representative," she said of the entire process of cleaning up the park.

As for the junk mailings, Ziobron said she is one of the few members of the state General Assembly to waive their franking privileges, which allow unsolicited mailings at taxpayer expense.

"It's a matter of principle," she said. "How can I tell the appropriations committee and other legislators that we need to be serious about spending, and then turn around and send out a fluff piece on the taxpayers' dollar?"

"I feel that it's my duty to communicate to my constituents through social media or letters to the editor, and that franking privileges are an abuse of taxpayer spending," she added. "I had a lot of pressure to continue to do that from both parties, and I refused. I'm pretty proud of that."

Ziobron also said she "absorbed" herself in

the budget process as a freshman representative.

"I asked a lot of tough questions and did my homework," she said. "The state budget is a big document, and I still don't know everything about how every single line item works, but I'm learning and am very proud of my contributions to the discussion and my caucus."

Ziobron said she values her close communication with those in her district.

"I know there's a vacuum of communication with representatives sometimes," she said. "I have a very special connection with my constituents; whatever they ask, I respond, and I'm honest. And I ask for their feedback as well."

She mentioned how during a debate in the legislature on an aid on death and dying bill, she asked her constituents on Facebook for their comments and concerns on the topic.

"My Facebook page went crazy, and it was a good thing; I heard from both sides," she said. "I think people have come to appreciate that they can share their opinions with me, that I listen and that I take them very seriously."

In addition, Ziobron said reaching across the aisle is a very important part of her work in Hartford.

"What we're missing in politics is being able to have disagreements without being disagreeable," she said. "I can't start making a checklist of people I'm not going to speak to. A competent state representative is not going to say, 'I only represent one segment of the population.' I've never done that, and that's another reason I think I've been successful."

In terms of plans for her next term, Ziobron said continuing her "common sense" approach to balancing the state budget and spending is one of her major guiding principles.

"We have a spending addiction at the capitol, that's a fact. If we're going to spend more, we've got to cut from somewhere," she said. "If I want to eat steak for dinner on Friday night, on Saturday night I have a tuna fish sandwich, I don't keep eating steak. And that's the mentality that doesn't happen in Hartford."

Ziobron is being opposed by East Hampton resident Mimi Perrotti. Perrotti is a member of



Melissa Ziobron

East Hampton's Democratic Town Committee, as well as the town's Economic Development Commission and the town's Community Emergency Response Team. She is also the owner of MIMI Design and Lakeside Signs.

She also credits her business experience as building a solid foundation for the skills a state representative needs.

"I grew up in a family business; when I was 2 years old, I was working," Perrotti said. "It didn't matter how old you were, you had a job. That helped develop me into someone who is ready for the world and capable of taking on challenges."

Perrotti said that running her own business with long hours and interacting with a wide range of people is not unlike a state representative's work.

"People come in to my sign business and they have a need, but they don't know the specifics. I have to listen closely to help solve their problem," she said. "There's negotiation, listening and astuteness involved in working with the customer to find a solution."

In addition, she said she's used to thinking on her feet under tight deadlines.

"Something comes up and a customer needs signage in a week, and you're also working within a budget," she said. "Things are going to be thrown at you, situations are going to arise, and you have to know how to deal effectively with whoever's in front of you and with whatever new concerns they bring."

She also said she's been instrumental in helping new small businesses get their start in town.

"A new business owner will come in and ask me for help with a logo, and by the time the conversation's over, I've invited them to a [Economic Development Commission] meeting and worked to help them get a grand opening," she said.

According to Perrotti's website, her priorities if elected would be securing state aid to keep property taxes low, promoting job opportunities for veterans and social services for seniors, promoting small business initiatives, supporting high education standards and protecting open space and public land.

Perrotti said she is specifically focused on programs for small businesses, and supports the recent minimum wage increase, since she said the state of the economy affects all the other priorities.

"If we can't provide support for our small businesses, then property taxes will continue to rise," she said. "We have to get some mea-

asures in place to help those businesses establish themselves, which will then help everyone in the district by lowering property taxes."

Perrotti said her business has helped with accessibility to community members as well as giving her visibility among people in the district.

"People see my business [on West High Street] as a home base; they know they can find me here," she said. "I truly am accessible on any issue – a fund-raiser, if some-one's very sick, people reach out to me and I do my best to help."

She also stressed her commitment to bipartisan cooperation.

"I think it's very important. If you can't roll up your sleeves, cross the aisle and be willing to work with someone, it's not going to turn out well," she said. "A middle compromise will make more people happy than a 'no.' You have to be prepared to offer an alternative solution, not just reject a choice."

Perrotti also said she would not toe her party's line in Hartford.

"I'm going to be committed to doing what's right for the district," she said. "It's not about my affiliation; it's about what the people need."

Perrotti said her negotiation skills from her business would be especially helpful with that process.

"I wouldn't be successful with my business if I refused to compromise with customers on what they wanted," she said. "You're never going to please everyone, but meeting in the middle can get a lot done."

She also said she would continue her business if elected.

"Being a state representative is a part-time position," she said. "If elected, I'm still going to be here in town. I'm a very good manager of my time, and I'll be able to serve people in the capacity that they need."

* * *

Voters in East Hampton can cast their ballots on Tuesday, Nov. 4, from 6 a.m.-8 p.m., at the high school located at 15 North Maple St. Westchester voters can go to Abundant Life Assemblies of God Church, located at 85 Skinner Rd. during that same window.



Mimi Perrotti

New East Hampton Police Station Top Committee Priority

by John Tyczkowski

The Facilities Evaluation Committee presented their report Tuesday evening at the town council meeting, which they had been compiling for over half a year. The report included a number of recommendations for the council that were arranged by priority.

But before delving into the report's details, Council Chairwoman Barbara Moore took a moment to honor town icon and committee member Jim Morris, who was struck and killed by a car two weeks ago.

"Jim loved being on the facilities commission," she said. "He had some different ideas, he always had different ideas, but they were great ones. He was a thinker."

Moore continued as she fought back tears, "I hope that you'll keep him and his family in your prayers. He would say to smile, so let's keep smiling and move on."

There was a moment of silence before proceeding with the meeting.

The main recommendations then presented by the committee were arranged by priority, with a police station replacement at the top, following by new town offices for the town hall and Board of Education.

Also on the list were Fire Station Company #2, Center School and Fire Station Company #3, in order of priority.

Committee Chairman Glenn Gollenberg listed the priorities for a new police station as being located central to the town population; having about 11,000 square feet of functional area for offices, cells and other needs; visibility to the public; adequate parking; and space for a town Emergency Command Center.

The current police station is located underneath the town hall, and is only about 3,000 square feet, lacks adequate facilities for its employees and is not ADA compliant. In addition, officers must travel to a separate facility at 205 East High St. to pick up and drop off

their police cruisers and gear.

The recommended site for the new police station is located at 195 West High St., a 1.2 acre parcel of land with an existing structure on-site, good street access and the potential to house fire and police facilities together.

"We've considered a public safety campus design where we could co-locate those two departments," Gollenberg said. "We would also have to renovate what's already there to meet with police safety standards."

A slide on the cost of the project showed that a new police station could cost approximately \$6.9 million, based upon research the committee did with Downes Construction, who is not only handling the high school renovations but is also overseeing the construction of a new police station in Old Saybrook.

Regarding new town offices, the committee's priorities for the building include having space for all town agencies, which would mean a 25,000 to 30,000 square foot building; parking; and a central town location.

Currently, the town hall crams its municipal offices into an approximately 12,000 square foot building with inadequate parking for its employees and residents. Also, CL&P recently offered to buy the lot the hall sits on for \$1 million, an offer the town council is still considering.

Gollenberg also said that the committee decided to combine the Board of Education offices with town offices due to "heating and energy and accessibility" issues at that current site.

The committee's recommended site for the new town offices would be behind the current Board of Education building at 88 and 90 Main St., on a lot available for purchase with access to the Airline Trail.

However, the question remained, Gollenberg said, about what to do with the Board of Education building, a historic but unregistered struc-

ture.

"We could demolish the existing Board of Education building, if that were appropriate, and use that space for parking," he said. "But this is still only in the recommendation stage and we could discuss other options as well."

Regarding new town offices, the total cost to the town could range from \$10.7 million to \$12.4 million.

This range of figures was developed after adding in a 50 percent reimbursement from the state Department of Education, due to the fact that the Board of Education offices would be included in the same building as the town hall.

Numbers for discussion purposes provided by finance director Jeff Jylkka showed the increased debt service the town would take on in the event of the town working on the police station and town office projects at the same time as the high school renovations.

A graph displayed at the meeting showed that the town's debt as defined by Standard & Poor's, from whom the town currently has an AA+ municipal bond rating, would only rise from "very low" to "low" over the next 21 years.

"The process will not be cheap," committee member Adam Dawidowicz said. "But the net effect as you can see here as that while debt service will increase, it will then level out before it decreases."

The town council took no action on the report and recommendations that evening, but Moore promised that they would not simply accept and forget them, and that the council would consider them seriously.

* * *

Town manager Michael Maniscalco also brought an agreement to the council's attention that's in the works between East Hampton and Middletown police departments.

The town has been critically short of officers for private duty details, such as directing

traffic during roadwork.

"I think everybody's seen recently that there have been some police cruisers in town that are from Portland or Cromwell," he said. "We're realizing it's becoming harder and harder to fill private duty jobs with police officers internally."

Maniscalco furthered, "The chief has been reaching out to Portland and Cromwell, begging and pleading for officers to come and help."

Maniscalco endorsed the agreement as an important step for the town to make sure it has officers to station on private duty, given a slew of upcoming road projects.

"We have the Route 66 and 196 interchange project for next summer, possible the natural gas project next summer, the Christopher Brook project that could take place next summer," he said. "There could be a very significant need from the department for a lot of those private duty jobs."

According to the agreement as proposed, the police chief of either East Hampton or Middletown would be able to request the support of the other department for private duty assignments.

In all cases, the town providing the requested police aid would be the one to pay police officers, and to cover related police costs incurred during private duty detail.

Councilor Ted Hintz, Jr. said that the town should review their police agreements with Portland and Cromwell to see how they compared to the one proposed with Middletown.

Councilors agreed to review the agreement in-depth and suggested they might take action on the agreement at the next meeting.

* * *

The Town Council agreed to meet next in a special meeting Thursday, Nov. 13 at 7 p.m., with the location to be determined.

True Tales from the Graveyard in East Hampton

by Geeta Schrayter

Considering it's Halloween, talks of ghosts, ghouls, graveyards and skeletal remains are likely to abound. But for Ruth Shapleigh-Brown of the Connecticut Gravestone Network, which educates the public on the importance of old graveyards and cemeteries to history, the latter two are regular topics of conversation.

And on Wednesday night, Shapleigh-Brown paid a visit to East Hampton Public Library, where she spoke to those present about those very things; as she clicked through a slideshow of various grave-related photographs, she shared information on old graveyards and gravestones throughout New England, including what the layout says, what the symbols on a stone can mean, how to preserve old cemeteries and clean old stones.

Shapleigh-Brown explained in colonial times, graves weren't laid in straight rows but often in little groupings. She shared people were usually buried toward the east for religious reasons.

"Everything revolves around Judgment Day," she explained, when the dead are supposed to rise from their graves.

Shapleigh-Brown furthered in colonial times, graves usually had both a headstone and a footstone marking where someone had been laid to rest, but over the years, many of the footstones have been lost.

"Out of ignorance, when people go in and clean things up they wouldn't acknowledge the stupid little stones were actually marking graves and we carried them all away," she explained. She added they also proved problematic for lawn mowers and were "just little nuisance stones" that were sometimes taken from the grave and used for other purposes. Shapleigh-Brown said she's received calls before where walkway stones were overturned and writing was found on the other side.

Shapleigh-Brown added the loss of footstones is a reason why some of the older cemeteries may have empty spaces between graves. Along those same lines, she explained empty spaces could also be "because in the earliest time, two-thirds of the population would never get gravestones and if they did, especially if it was sandstone – we have lost so many."

Sandstone, she explained, hasn't held up well over the years.

Further still, Shapleigh-Brown shared another reason for an empty area in a graveyard may be due to a mass burial. For example, she explained Old Farm Hill Cemetery in Middletown has what appears to be a large empty section. However, the area is actually the location of over 100 burials from an influenza epidemic.

"We just don't have records to clarify who, but you can read the ground, see sinkholes – so just because a spot looks empty does not mean no graves are there," she stated.

Shapleigh-Brown also spoke about some of the damage that has been done to older gravestones. In the 1960s, she shared stones that had faces carved on the top were broken and used for "death head" collections. Said activity led to a mentor of Shapleigh-Brown proving a piece being sold in a New York auction house came from a cemetery where he lived and, eventually, the enactment of a law that makes it illegal to remove anything from a cemetery.

She said people who are enthusiastic about gravestones, but uninformed, have also caused damage to stones by putting shaving cream on them. The shaving cream is spread on the stone then wiped off, and the cream remains in the etchings, making it easier to read. However, the shaving cream doesn't come off in the rain, due to oils and other components of the product. And when the shaving cream dries, Shapleigh-Brown said it's "like taking wax off stones."

"So if you hear anyone thinking that's a wonderful idea, please squish it for me," she stated.

Related to cleaning the stones, Shapleigh-Brown shared it's one of her favorite things to do. She said she holds workshops on the proper way to go about cleaning them and stressed that it's done very carefully.

"You can't be careful enough; you can't use enough water," she said. "Halfway through you may find a particular stone is not a good candidate and you have to back off, but the idea is you can retrieve an image."

She added the idea isn't to go out and clean the stones on an annual basis, but to remove something like lichen, so the stone can be photographed and documented.

Also during the presentation, Shapleigh-Brown talked about some of the symbols that might be found on a stone. She mentioned they

needed to speak to those who could not read.

One common symbol is an arch.

"You might see a double arch or a triple arch – think of it as a doorway for souls. So two souls, two arches," she said.

A skull with wings, she furthered, was representative of all that remained of a person on earth (their bones) and hopefully, their ascension to heaven.

Doves, meanwhile, were often used on graves for children and represent the soul and purity; while the appearance of a willow tree represents earthly sorrow; and anchors and ships could mean a seafaring profession or hope and Christian steadfastness.

As she clicked through the photographs, Shapleigh-Brown shared one of a stone with two tree carvings on the top; one of the trees was broken. She explained people used to plant two new trees on either side of the doorway at a new home, representing the tree of life and marriage. Therefore, the trees on the stone "are telling us of the end of the marriage; one tree of life has left."

Shapleigh-Brown also shared a photo of a gravestone with two flower buds that had snapped at the stem, and mentioned "flower languages."

"I try to guess a person's age just by looking at the symbols, and I'm right 80 percent of the time," she said. "This," she continued, referring to the photograph, "is two infants, because they're buds and they're broken. If a bud appears to be partially open or has one petal turned, it's usually a girl between 9 and 12 [years old]."

If a few petals are open or the flower is half open, she added she might guess the girl was 14-16 years old but didn't fully blossom and become a wife or mother.

Throughout her work, Shapleigh-Brown shared she's been involved in cemetery rescues, where, with the help of other volunteers, the weeds are cleared away from a forgotten cemetery and the area is documented. In one instance, she said they found 28 burials the historical society didn't know they had.

Shapleigh-Brown has also done work excavating crypts. Particularly during the Victorian era, she shared these tombs were set up to wel-

come family who might come on a Sunday to sit with their deceased relatives, playing music or reading poetry. She shared a photo of an old tomb from the New London area that had subway tiles on the walls, mosaic tiles on the floor, a table, decorative urns and a wrought iron bench.

Related to excavating, Shapleigh-Brown also talked about a project that took place around 2001 to have a grave moved from East Hampton to Hebron. She explained Dr. Joseph Peters of East Hampton treated people with smallpox and came down with it himself. He died in 1761 and was buried on his property in town. When plans came about to subdivide the land where he was buried, a local real estate dealer got a hold of the archeology office and told them.

In response, Shapleigh-Brown explained an effort was made to track down his family lineage so permission to move Dr. Peters could be granted by a relative. A family connection was discovered in Canada, and the relative came down to sign the paperwork and the move got underway.

When the grave was opened, Shapleigh-Brown said Dr. Peters was "pretty much intact. When I passed the skull up it crumbled in my hands; it was like tissue paper. But we took his leg and arm bones, everything we could, and reburied him with the rest of his family in Hebron."

Dr. Peters can now be found in the Godfrey Hill Cemetery in Hebron near his firstborn son and daughter. His parents are also nearby, in the cemetery off Route 85.

"He's now in company," she stated.

In the end, rather than frightful fictional tales of cemeteries and the dead, those present Wednesday night experienced an informative talk on the true tales that the graveyards and gravestones in Connecticut and beyond have to tell; tales in danger of being lost, if they're not documented and preserved before time – and people – take their toll.

* * *

To learn more about graveyards, gravestones and related topics, or the Connecticut Gravestone Network, go to ctgravestones.com or contact Shapleigh-Brown at shapbrown@cox.net.

East Hampton Board Discusses Buses and Grants

by John Tyczkowski

Bus route concerns stemming from the transition from Nichols Bus Service to DATTCO were the main topic of discussion at the Board of Education meeting Monday evening.

Business Manager Karen Asetta presented to the board on the current state of the town's bus routes, which were redone for this school year with considerations including improving service to parts of town far-flung from the schools and improving efficiency.

"We also wanted to redo the routes to more effectively utilize the two hours we have for each bus, as well as increase fuel efficiency," she said. "In the past, pockets of buses have gone back and forth over the same routes for various reasons, and we wanted to eliminate that waste if possible."

Asetta mentioned she and Linda Miner, administrative assistant to the director of facilities, plotted out by hand and personally ran through all of the bus routes, behind the wheel, to verify they would fit the town's needs.

"We got together and Linda went into her office with a map and colored markers and got it done," she said. "We don't have a computer system for this. We've been doing it this way for years."

Asetta continued, "Then, as she developed the routes, she drove the routes as if she was the bus, made the stops and we made adjustments. We tried to be sure we had a good plan for the town."

Following the presentation, board member Scott Minnick asked why the town's own Central Services staff was creating bus routes, instead of DATTCO staff, and Nichols staff before them.

"I guess my big issue here is that our business manager is in charge of scheduling our

buses," he said. "I am astounded that the bus company hasn't been and isn't doing it, though I'm not saying that you're not doing a fine job."

"Last month we had Mr. Johnson from DATTCO come in and assure us that he and his company with their electronic software would be taking care of the irregularities with the bus routes," Minnick said. "So I'm doubly surprised."

Board of Education Chairman Ken Barber also expressed his surprise.

"It sounds like we've been spending an awful lot of money for something we've been doing ourselves, and we wouldn't [have ever] known about it had these issues not come up," he said.

Asetta added she and Miner collected and passed along bus route data to DATTCO, and said they would also be meeting to interpret the data.

"We're going to have to help them clean up the data," Asetta said. "We're going to have to work together to input the data into their system, to make sure it works right, because they aren't very familiar with our town yet."

Minnick read from the town's bus contract, which said that the bus company has the responsibility to plot bus routes under the direction of the Board of Education.

"It looks like maybe we should be charging them," he said, of the town developing its own routes.

Asetta also said the new routes that she and Miner developed were just implemented on Wednesday, Oct. 22, and that Central Services had not received any parent complaints on the new routes so far.

Piteo defended Asetta and Miner's work over the years.

"These two ladies provide an important service to the town, they know the routes, they know the parents," he said. "I think they've given a great service to the community."

He furthered, "When parents want to know where their kids are, they want to talk to someone they know and trust. 'I'm going to call up the school, not the bus company.'"

Board member Steven Kelley also commended the data-collecting duo.

"I think we're very lucky to have these two individuals doing what they're doing for the town," he said.

Barber said he agreed and didn't "want to diminish" Asetta's and Miner's roles in planning bus routes over the years, and that they had done important work and he was supportive of them working with DATTCO to "bring their software and routing up to speed."

"DATTCO will drive the routes, and Central Services will closely monitor the routes and maintain that personalized approach to parents," he said. "We know why this problem came up, we've solved it and we don't want to see it again."

* * *

The Board also discussed applying for a \$1,485 grant to help math teachers at the middle school better understand the new Common Core math standards, and to better help teach the curriculum to students.

More specifically, the grant would provide materials such as books and other resources for teachers to supplement their instruction to students.

"This would not be a primary teaching resource," Assistant Superintendent of Schools Tim Van Tassel said. "There's a teacher's guide

included with the lessons, which would help the teachers to really understand the standards and implement them."

Also included would be activity guides for modeling math lessons, as well as guides for discussion on the math process.

Several board members had questions for Van Tassel.

Piteo wanted to know if this grant would be a recurring cost, and if the resources it would buy would be "outdated or revised within six months," thus costing the town more.

Van Tassel said the materials could become outdated if math standards are realigned in the future, but that would not happen in the short term.

"In time, they very well could change, but I would say these particular documents will not change any time soon," he said.

Superintendent of Schools Diane Dugas backed up Van Tassel.

"These materials are helpful for teachers' immediate understanding and implementation of the new standards," she said "The grant amount is a one-time purchase and not a cost we're looking to sustain year after year."

The board decided to postpone a vote on the grant until the next board meeting Nov. 10, as applications are not due until Nov. 12.

Barber also praised the Middle School math department for their proactive approach.

"I'm impressed that the staff took the initiative to find a grant, put it together and work together on it," he said. "Good for them."

* * *

The next Board of Education meeting is scheduled for Nov. 10 at 7 p.m. in the East Hampton School library.

Phase III of Marlborough Sewer Project Heads to Voters

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

When they head to the polls next Tuesday, voters in Marlborough – in addition to being faced with choices for political office – will also face a multimillion-dollar question.

Phase III of the town's sewer project is on the ballot for referendum, needing 15 percent of all eligible voters to be passed. The phase carries a price tag of \$3.5 million.

Phase III includes Coleman Lane, North Main Street, Lafayette Road, Lake Road, Pettengill Road, Roberts Road and Walker Lane. The phase affects 98 properties, which includes 105.25 Equivalent Dwelling Units (EDUs). For instance, a four bedroom home would have 1.25 EDUs.

Earlier this month, the Board of Finance reported that, with money from the state's Clean Water Fund already earmarked for the project, the town may not get a chance to do this phase again at this cost.

Some of the benefits of the project, the Board of Selectmen reiterated during a town meeting on the project earlier this month, include stabilizing the operating and maintenance budget, helping businesses by not increasing operating and maintenance costs, and this is the only chance to get it done because of the aforementioned Clean Water grant and

loan.

The cost breakdown of the project was outlined in an insert in last week's *Rivereast*. The Clean Water grant covers \$848,750 of the \$3.5 million price. The remaining \$2,651,250 will be paid for via a loan, also from the Clean Water Fund. However, the town will repay that loan over a 20-year period, at a 2 percent interest rate; thus, including interest, the cost of the loan will be \$3,218,936. Included in the loan payment is the user contribution to the yearly loan payment for residents living in the sewer district which would total \$63,000 a year and add up to \$1,287,574 over the 20 years.

Concerning residents in the district, households would pay \$603 a year per equivalent dwelling unit (EDU) toward the loan payment, and an operating cost around \$431 per EDU. The operating costs are flexible and could increase or decrease. Therefore if a homeowner in the sewer district has a larger house, they are paying more than \$1,034 depending on the amount of EDUs.

If approved by voters next week, the project will start May 1, 2015, and is expected to be completed by Oct. 31, 2016.

Colchester Police News

10/21: State Police said Samuel Parker, 45, of 41 Brook St., Willimantic, was arrested and charged with second-degree failure to appear.

10/23: State Police said Miguel Aguilar, 23, of 96 Emerald Ave., Willimantic, was arrested and charged with two counts of second-degree failure to appear.

10/24: Colchester Police said they are investigating a burglary from a home on Chestnut Hill Road. Entry was made through an unlocked door, police said, and cash and jewelry were stolen. Anyone with information about this in-

cident should call Colchester Police at 860-537-7270.

10/26: State Police said Elijah McCall, 22, of 11 Tavern Ln., Colchester, was transported to the hospital with minor injuries after he failed to negotiate a curve and went off the road, hitting a mailbox and tree. He was later issued an infraction for improper right turn, police said.

10/26: State Police said Thomas Kirby, 56, of 27 Parkside Dr., Colchester, was arrested and charged with second-degree failure to appear.

Andover Police News

10/25: State Police said Kevin Kroeger, 31, of 72 Wolf Den Rd., Brooklyn, was arrested and charged with DUI and failure to drive right.

10/26: State Police said Justin Scales, 18, of 180 Center St., Manchester, was arrested and charged with first-degree criminal trespass.

Hebron Police News

10/22: State Police said Frank Grabner, 33, of 6 Carolina Dr., Oakdale, was arrested on a warrant and charged with second-degree criminal trespass and sixth-degree larceny.

East Hampton Police News

10/17: Jennifer VanWycke, 34, of 14 Myrtle Rd., was arrested pursuant to an active warrant for her arrest, and charged with second-degree failure to appear, East Hampton Police said.

10/17: Troy McIntosh, 32, of 28 Main St., was issued a summons for operating a motor vehicle without a license, police said.

10/20: Stephen J. Guerin, 50, of 17 Huckleberry Acres, was arrested for DUI and failure to drive right, police said.

Hartford Man Dies After Route 2 Crash

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

A Hartford man died after his car went off the road last Saturday, Oct. 25, around 8 a.m. on Route 2, according to state police.

Pavankumar Boppudi, 28, of 250 Main St., Hartford, was pronounced dead at the scene after his car, a 2001 Mazda 626, veered off, hit multiple tree stumps and turned over, police said.

Boppudi had been traveling west in the area of exit 16 between Marlborough and Colchester at the time of the accident, police said. Police said that section of Route 2 was closed for approximately two hours following the crash.

The crash remains under investigation, police said.

Obituaries

Portland

Michael Rossitto Celebration of Life

There will be a Celebration of Life for Michael Rossitto of Portland Saturday, Nov. 8, at 1 p.m., at Quarry Ridge Golf Course, 9 Rose Hill Rd. There will be a buffet and golf open.

Rossitto, 63, passed away Tuesday, Sept. 2. He was a lifelong resident of Portland, and was owner and operator of F & W Caterers in Portland. He left behind a wife, Donna (Wing) Rossitto, and three daughters, Michelle Engel and her husband, Joseph, Anastasia Rossitto and Rebecca Otlowski and her husband Michael, all of Portland.

For more information, call 860-342-6113 or 860-342-1399.

Portland

Stanley L. Bailey

Stanley L. Bailey, 83, of Portland, husband of the late Beverly (Walden) Bailey, passed away Friday, Oct. 24, at Middlesex Hospital. He was the son of the late Burton O. and Maryellen (Hicks) Bailey.



Born March 23, 1931, in Middletown, he lived in Middlefield and then resided in Portland for the last 23 years. He worked as a construction worker for many years until his retirement and he was also a U.S. Marine Corps veteran having served during Korea. He was a member of Portland Fire Dept Company No. 2, the Middlefield Fire Dept for 10 years, the Marine Corps League, the VFW and he enjoyed woodworking.

He leaves his daughters, Debra Bailey of Portland, and Elain Siena and her husband, Jeff of Durham; grandchildren, David and John Forlini and Jen Siena; niece and nephews, Betty Reynolds of Higganum, Denis Bailey of Torrington and Mark Bailey of Fort Hood, Texas; and many other nieces, nephews and grandnieces and grandnephews.

Funeral services were held Monday, Oct. 27, at Portland Memorial Funeral Home, 231 Main St., Portland. Burial was in the Swedish Cemetery, Portland. Relatives and friends called Sunday, Oct. 26, at the funeral home.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Portland Fire Dept Company 2, P.O. Box 71, Portland, CT 06480.

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

Portland

Thomas McMellon

Thomas McMellon, 89, of Portland, beloved husband of Sheila Corr, died Friday, Oct. 24, at Hartford Hospital.

Born Oct. 2, 1925, to the late Thomas and Beatrice (Swanson) McMellon in Bridgeport, Tom was a survivor of the battle of Iwo Jima, serving with the U.S. Marine Corps during World War II and the Korean War. He was a master engraver. He owned and operated the New England Stamp Company for over 40 years.

He was very active in the Cromwell Lions Club and then the Portland Exchange Club, holding officer positions in both, including president in each organization. In his spare time, he enjoyed woodworking, and had been an avid golfer since his childhood.

Besides his wife, Thomas is survived by his children, Susan Otocky, and her husband David, Thomas McMellon III and his wife Fidelina. Timothy McMellon, Stephen Pierson; six grandchildren, Jennifer McMellon and her fiancé, Ed, Thomas McMellon IV, Daniel McMellon, Mallory Otocky, Kimberly Otocky and her fiancé, Johnny, Zachary Nyari; and two great-grandchildren, Kaleeya and Mia. He is also survived by his brother Alan (Vera) of North Carolina, and sisters Dorothy Leggett of North Carolina and Lois Martynec of California, as well as several nieces and nephews.

A memorial service was held Wednesday, Oct. 29, in the Mulryan Funeral Home, 725 Hebron Ave., Glastonbury. Military honors immediately followed.

Memorial donations may be made to the Iwo Jima Memorial Historical Foundation, P.O. Box 310516, Newington, CT 06131, or to a charity of the donor's choosing.

For online condolences, visit mulryanfh.com.

Colchester

Alan Alphonse Fafard Sr.

Alan Alphonse Fafard Sr., 71, of Colchester, went home to Heaven Friday, Oct. 24, surrounded by his loved ones.

He leaves his loving wife of 50 years, Claire (Gagnon) Fafard; five children, Alan Jr. and wife Deborah of Manchester, Michelle Lilly and husband David of Hubert, N.C., Desiree Fafard, Anthony and Leonora of Marlborough and David of Lebanon; 13 grandchildren; five great-grandchildren; three siblings, Roland of Thompson, Joann Dubois of Thompson and Robert of North Grosvenordale; and numerous extended family members and friends.

May he live on in the hearts of all those whose lives he touched – in so many different ways.

Visitation was held at St. Andrew Church, 128 Norwich Ave., Colchester, Monday, Oct. 27. The funeral liturgy was celebrated Tuesday, Oct. 28, at the church. Committal with full military honors followed in the New St. Andrew Cemetery, Colchester.

In lieu of flowers, donations in his memory may be made to Immaculata Retreat House, P.O. Box 55, Willimantic, CT 06226.

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

Colchester

David Paul Hosp

David Paul Hosp, 45, of Colchester, passed away Saturday, Oct. 25.

He leaves his wife of 18 years, Carrie Ann (Duff) Hosp; six daughters, Kelsie, Amber and Taylor Ann Hosp, Victoria Cutsinger, and Kari and Stephanie Hosp; a grandson, Hunter; his parents, Joseph and Peggy (Reinbeau) Hosp of Lisbon; two sisters, Shelva Carner of Florida and Sheila Tarrant of Arizona; his parents-in-law, Lisa Duchesneau of Uncasville and Robert Young of Lebanon; and numerous extended family members and friends.

He was predeceased by his brother, Joey Hosp. David had worked in cable construction for many years. In his spare time, he was an avid motorcyclist, hunter and coin collector.

The family received guests Wednesday, Oct. 29, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. A Celebration of his Life will be held at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, donations in his memory may be made online at davidhospmemorialfund.mydagsite.com.

Portland

Donald R. Rinaldo

Donald R. Rinaldo, 83, of Portland, husband of Gloria (Siena) Rinaldo, passed away Sunday, Oct. 26, at Middlesex Hospital. He was the son of the late Sebastian and Helen (Uliano) Rinaldo.

Born on June 26, 1931, in Middletown, he lived in Florida for 25 years, then moved to South Carolina and then resided in Portland for the last three years. He worked at Pratt & Whitney for 35 years until his retirement. He was a U.S. Army veteran, having served during Korea, and was a member of the Church of St. Mary in Portland.

Besides his wife, he leaves a son, Richard Rinaldo and his wife Liz of East Hampton; daughters, Donna Babich and her husband Vic of Wallingford and Margret Howie and her husband, Russ of Franklin, Mass.; six grandchildren, Tory Davis, Victoria Babich, Kimberly Rinaldo, Thomas Rinaldo, Mikayla Howie and Jack Howie.

He was predeceased by his brothers, Anthony and Richard, and by a sister, Lucille Mikucki

Funeral services were held Wednesday, Oct. 29, at the Church of St. Mary, 51 Freestone Ave., Portland. Burial was private.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the American Cancer Society, P.O. Box 22718, Oklahoma City, OK 73123-1718.

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

East Hampton

Debra Pratt Kohn

Debra Pratt Kohn passed away Friday, Oct. 24, amongst family and friends. Debi, born Nov. 6, 1955, was a graduate of East Hampton High School and Central Connecticut State University.

She was a dedicated member of the East Hampton Little League, in which she formerly served as the player agent. Debi retired after working at United Technologies Corporation for 35 years.

She is survived by her husband, Terence O. Kohn; parents, Joan and Kenneth Pratt and his wife Wendy Labreche Pratt; her mother-in-law, Vivian Kohn; her three sons, Terence M. Kohn and his wife Siri and their daughters Caitlin and Lillian, Brian Kohn and Justin Kohn; and her five sisters, Sherry Pratt-Totten and husband Steven, Terri Pratt, Sandra Karavolis and her husband Steven, Judy Pratt, and Janet Stone and her husband Jeff. She is also survived by many loving nieces and nephews.

Debi was a caring, loving, and selfless woman who lived every day to the fullest. She loved her family, butterflies, birds, and gardening. Debi had a passion for and a special talent in photography, which she constantly used to brighten the lives of those around her through her calendars, sports pictures, and other means. She loved watching her sons play sports and her nieces and granddaughters dance. She refused to miss any opportunity to be with her family, regardless of how she felt. Her family and friends will dearly miss her.

Her family would like to thank all of the doctors and nurses at the Helen and Harry Gray Cancer Center and at Hartford Hospital for their care and support.

A memorial gathering was held at Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton, Thursday, Oct. 30.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that you instead make a donation to Susan G. Komen Connecticut (komenct.org/page/show/donate/donate-now) or the National Park Foundation (nationalparks.org/support-parks).

To leave online condolences, visit spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

East Hampton

Margaret Davis Jordan

Margaret "Meg" Davis Jordan, 53, residing in East Hampton for the past 12 years with her husband Chris and son Garrett, succumbed to her battle against ovarian cancer Tuesday, Oct. 28, at her home in East Hampton.

Meg, born at St Vincent's Hospital in Bridgeport Nov. 29, 1960, was the third child of four born to Louis William and Grace Joyce Davis. Meg grew up in Fairfield. Her career in information technology as a program manager at Aetna in Hartford afforded her many accolades and award recognitions for providing exemplary service.

Meg was very active in the autistic community and founded and ran the Connecticut Autism Research and Education (C.A.R.E) Alliance organization in East Hampton, where she touched many families' lives by providing a network of support for parents and caregivers of children with autism spectrum disorders. Meg's work was recognized by the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the National Institutes of Health (NIH), and the office of the Surgeon General of the United States. Meg worshiped at the Hope Church in East Hampton.

Those who were fortunate to know and love Meg will always remember her as a strong, vibrant woman who was driven in her work and life and fiercely loyal to those whom she loved.

Meg Jordan is survived by her husband Chris, her son Garrett, and family dog Brooke in East Hampton; her mother Grace in Southbury; brother Jeffrey and wife Doreen in Newtown; her sister Linda Davis Biron and husband Al Biron in Shelton.

Meg is predeceased by her brother Christopher, who passed away in May 2012, and father Louis, who passed away in August 1998.

Friends and family are asked to join Meg's service at Hope Church, 230 East High St., East Hampton, Saturday, Nov. 1, at 11 a.m. Pastor Jermaine Keller of Hope Church is officiating. Guests of the service are welcome to join Meg's family for a quiet reception at Angelino's Restaurant in East Hampton immediately following the service. At her request, Meg's ashes will be scattered at her favorite vacation place in Nantucket, Mass.

Meg and her family request that any donations be directed to standup2cancer.org or cancer101.org.

To leave online condolences, visit spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

Marlborough

Evelyn Perry Sleeper

Mrs. Evelyn Perry Sleeper, 83, of Marlborough, passed away peacefully Wednesday, Oct. 22, in Middlesex Hospital Hospice, with her family by her side.

Our beloved Mother was born in Rockland, Maine, to Raymond and Natalie (Regnier) Perry on September 21, 1931. Evelyn was a 1949 graduate of Rockland High School, and a graduate of Colby Jr. College in New London, N.H. She also held a certificate from the Kathryn Gibbs Business School in Boston, Mass.

Evelyn worked as an executive secretary in Boston, Mass., and in Bridgeport at Sikorsky Airport. For the past 15 years, Evelyn enjoyed living in Connecticut near her family, during which time she had an apartment at the William B. Clarke Congregate Housing in Glastonbury, which she just loved.

Evelyn is survived by her three children, Denice R. Elliott of Deep River, Susan E. Sleeper of Brewer, Maine, and Phillip H. Sleeper of Standish, Maine. Mrs. Sleeper is also survived by nine grandchildren, Carmine, Michaela, Judah, Sarah, Kerrilynn, Joel, Patrick, Josiah and Elijah. She is survived by three great-grandchildren, Amaya Lynn, Eleanor-Rose, and Roy; and Evelyn is also survived by her loving sister, Jane P. Lindquist of Falmouth, Maine.

Evelyn loved music, reading autobiographies, knitting, taking long walks, and writing. In high school, Evelyn played the trombone and was a member of the Rockland High School band. In college, Evelyn sang alto as a member of the glee club, and loved to ski as a member of her college ski club. Most of all, Evelyn loved her children and being a mother.

A private memorial service for Evelyn will be held at the Farley-Sullivan Funeral home in Wethersfield. The Farley-Sullivan Funeral Home has care of the arrangements.

To extend online condolences, light a candle for Evelyn, or to share a story or pictures, visit farleysullivan.com.

Cobalt

John A. Bystrek

John A. Bystrek, an amazing husband, father and friend passed away Monday, Oct. 28, after a brief illness. He lived with his loving wife of 54 years, Carole (Pritchard) Bystrek, in Cobalt. He was born in Middletown to the late Anthony and Stephanie (Cyruulik) Bystrek Feb. 23, 1939.

John graduated from Vinal Technical High School, served in the U.S. Army and was employed as a foreman at E.I.S. manufacturing in Middletown for over 35 years. John had been retired for 15 years, which allowed him to spend time with his family and to pursue his many hobbies. Those who knew John well probably remember some of the things he loved the most: fly-fishing on the river or in his boat on the Long Island Sound, his daily three-mile walk in Hurd Park, or just watching the deer and wild turkeys in his backyard with his family. He was a kind, warm and generous man and he inspired others to be the same. John will be incredibly missed.

He is survived by his beloved wife, Carole, his son Brian Bystrek of Colchester, his daughter, Bonnie Bystrek and her partner Kevin Goldfarb of Somerville, Mass.; his brother Anthony Bystrek and his wife Laura, and his brother, Robert Bystrek and his partner Christine Fazzino, all of Portland. He also leaves several loving nieces and nephews.

A funeral Mass will be held Saturday, Nov. 1, at St. Francis Church, Elm Street, Middletown, at 11 a.m. Burial will be in Calvary Cemetery. There are no calling hours.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the "Closer to Free Fund", P.O. Box 7611, New Haven, CT 06519-0611 or at giveclosertofree.org. This is part of the Smlow Cancer Center at Yale New Haven Hospital.

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

Colchester

Marjorie Elton

Marjorie Elton, 88, of Harrington, died Wednesday, Oct. 29, 2014, at Harrington Court in Colchester.

Mrs. Elton was born on Nov. 17, 1925, in Waterford, the daughter of Stephen and Bertha Hayes.

She is predeceased by her husband, Donald Elton.

A graveside service will be held at 11:30 a.m. today, Oct. 31, in Jordan Cemetery, Waterford. Fulton-Theroux Funeral Home, New London, is handling the arrangements.

Colchester

Maureen Helen Jello

Maureen Helen (Maloney) Jello, of Kennedy Drive, died Sunday, Oct. 19, at Middlesex Hospital. Born July 23, 1934, in Norwich, she was raised in Lebanon and later settled in Colchester with her husband, the late Edward Jello.

She was the administrator at Abbey Manor Nursing Home for many years and was for a time involved in town politics. She is remembered for her many gatherings of friends and family and loved tending her plants and caring for her cats.

Maureen is survived by sons Donald Jello of Bluffton, S.C., and Kenneth Jello of Albany, N.Y.; three grandchildren; one great-grandchild; and sisters Donna Abell of Fort Myers, Fla., and Arlene Carta of Fern Park, Fla.

Church & Allen Funeral Home of Norwich is handling funeral arrangements, to be held privately at the convenience of the family.

Memorial donations can be made to the Alzheimer's Association or the Humane Society.

Colchester

Dustin Thomas Cote

Dustin Thomas Cote, 26, of Colchester, passed away unexpectedly Friday, Oct. 24. Born Dec. 6, 1987, in Hartford, he was the son of Shawn and Tammie (Thomas) Cote of Ellington (formerly of Colchester).



He also leaves his cherished son and greatest gift, Owen Cote Murphy; his girlfriend (and Owen's mother), Kelly Murphy of Colchester; his brother and best friend, David and wife, Leslie Cote of Fallston, Md.; his grandparents, Leonard and Judy Cote and Peter and Charlotte Thomas, all of Ocala, Fla.; and numerous aunts, uncles, cousins, extended family members and friends.

The family received guests Tuesday, Oct. 28, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester, before a chapel service that evening. Burial was private.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations to benefit his son, Owen, may be made online at dustincotememorialfund.mydagsite.com.

From the Editor's Desk

Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

The time has come, everybody. It's time to get out and vote.

I'm a registered Democrat – no shock to anyone who regularly reads this column, I know – but I'm not yet sure of everyone I'll be casting ballots for next Tuesday. But I will be voting, and I hope all of you will be as well. It doesn't matter who you vote for – just vote.

Every November, I make a push for higher voter turnout rates. Because every year, it seems, they can be better. True, there's no presidential race this time around, but there's the governor and a number of state offices – all of which carry a heck of a lot of import. Plus, in towns like Hebron and Marlborough, there are separate ballot initiatives on items that will definitely impact the town. (My town of Manchester, for example, has a large \$84.2 million school renovation on the ballot – a project that includes the unfortunate shuttering of the elementary school I went to as a child. That's among the votes I'm unsure of.)

So, again, no matter who, or what, you want to support – just vote.

If you've been driving around the area recently, I'm guessing you've noticed what I have – gas prices are going down, down, down. In fact, a friend of mine this week filled up at a place in Newington for under \$3 per gallon. In Manchester, they're hovering around \$3.20, which is of course more than what my friend paid – but a welcome respite from the \$3.80 something prices I was paying not that long ago.

It's not just in Connecticut – prices are dropping nationwide. Just how much are they dropping? I read Tuesday that, according to the latest consumer price data from the U.S. Department of Labor, the average price of a gallon of milk in cities nationwide in September was \$3.73. Meanwhile, gas was \$3.40 a gallon and heating oil was \$3.64.

And that was the September report. I imagine the October one will provide even starker of a difference. (Meanwhile, I weep a little for the price of milk. It doesn't seem like all that long ago you could find it for \$1.99 a gallon at some places – and if you paid more than, say, \$2.39/gallon you were getting ripped off. Not anymore.)

I'm anxious to see how far gas drops. It may not fall below \$2 a gallon like it did in late 2008/early 2009 – but hey, I can dream, can't I?

As I write this, I don't know who's won the World Series – Kansas City and San Fran-

cisco played in the pivotal for-all-the-marbles Game 7 Wednesday night. KC's backs were against the wall Tuesday night, when they were down to the Giants, 3 games to 2. But they went ahead and blew out San Fran, 10-0, setting up Wednesday's game. Coming back from down 3 games to 2 has been done plenty of times in World Series history – my Mets did it in 1986 – so it's certainly not impossible.

But in this case, maybe it is – if Taylor Swift has anything to say about it.

I came across a (very much tongue-in-cheek) story Tuesday about a strange connection between Swift's albums and the Giants' world championships. On Oct. 25, 2010, Swift released her third album, *Speak Now*. The album – which is terrific, by the way – debuted at No. 1 on the *Billboard 200* chart, selling more than a million copies in its first week.

Two days later, on Oct. 27, the Giants opened up the World Series against the Texas Rangers – and went on to win it in five games.

On Oct. 22, 2012, Swift released her fourth album, *Red*. That album – which, while maybe not quite as great as *Speak Now*, is still very good – also debuted at No. 1 on the *Billboard 200*, selling more than a million copies in its first week.

Two days later, on Oct. 24, the Giants opened up the World Series against the Detroit Tigers – and went on to sweep Detroit in four games.

Now, what happened this past Monday? Yup, Swift released her fifth album, entitled *1989*. (I haven't yet purchased the album, but such places as *Rolling Stone* and *The New York Times* have given it rave reviews, and I'm looking forward to giving it a listen.) Given the promotional push it's gotten and the fact Taylor Swift is, well, pretty huge these days, I fully expect it to top the *Billboard 200* charts and sell well over a million copies this week.

By the time you read this, you'll know if the "Taylor Swift Curse" holds true – or if the Royals are planning a championship parade.

If the former holds true, sure, the Giants can give credit to their superb pitching (looking at you, Madison Bumgarner), quality hitting and their just overall smart level of baseball? Sure. But I hope they don't forget – and again, tongue in cheek here – to credit Taylor Swift as well.

Maybe she can sing the National Anthem at Opening Day next year?

See you next week – and by the way, Happy Halloween!