

RIVEREAST

News Bulletin

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Carrying the Torch... There's a kind of Olympics going on much closer than Sochi: the residents and staff at Harrington Court Genesis Healthcare in Colchester are holding their very own Olympic Games with daily events. These include bowling, a hockey goal shot challenge, a snow ball target shoot and trivia challenges. During the opening ceremony, Therapeutic Recreation Directors Cathy Russi (left) and Deb Gideon (right) stand with resident Betty Holmes, who lit the ceremonial torch. See additional photo page 12.

School Board Approves Full-Day Kindergarten

by Elizabeth Bowling

The Board of Education voted at its meeting Monday night in favor of implementing full-day kindergarten to all East Hampton students starting in the 2014-15 school year.

The board tackled the hot-button issue after viewing a presentation from its full-day kindergarten feasibility committee at its meeting two weeks ago.

The board voted 7-1, with member Josh Piteo voting against, to move forward with the feasibility committee's recommendation for six full-day kindergarten teachers with three class sizes of 20 and three of 19 next year.

(The kindergarten classes for the current school year are as follows: three full-day teachers with class sizes of 22, 22 and 21; and two half-day teachers for four half-day classes each with a class size of 19.)

Piteo said he was concerned that some parents would prefer that their children attend half-day kindergarten rather than full-day. He said by moving forward with the committee's recommendation, the board is essentially "mandating" kindergarteners to attend school full-day.

Piteo said he'd rather move forward with the feasibility committee's alternative option, which was to implement four full-day teachers with class sizes of 20 and one half-day teacher for two half-day sessions with class sizes of 19 and 18 for the 2014-15 school year. Then, for the 2015-16 school year, the board would implement full-day kindergarten for all students.

Superintendent of Schools Diane Dugas af-

firmed that the alternative was just that — an alternative, not a second recommendation from the committee. She said the alternative was simply "a gradual implementation to full-day kindergarten."

But Piteo insisted, "What do you say to those parents then that wanted half-day?"

Assistant Superintendent of Schools Tim Van Tasle told Piteo a response to parents could be, "We're looking out for the best interest of your child."

A parent in the audience, who doubles as a member of the feasibility committee, Linda Sturm-Ribeiro, suggested that concerned parents speak with school administrators.

The feasibility committee also explained previously that East Hampton is the only district in its District Reference Group (DRG) that currently does a combination of half-day and full-day kindergarten. Out of the 24 schools in the DRG, 21 have only full-day kindergarten and two have only half-day kindergarten.

Van Tasle argued that if East Hampton continued to offer both half- and full-day, then "there would be a tremendous inequity" among students in the years following kindergarten.

The committee also supplied a survey to East Hampton residents with children in preschool and elementary school. The survey findings showed that 88 percent of respondents wanted full-day kindergarten for their children.

Dugas called the survey results "overwhelmingly positive for full-day kindergarten."

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Freezin' for a Good Reason

by Melissa Roberto

On Saturday morning, Feb. 8, the temperature in Colchester was zero degrees, and four Colchester men awoke to that bitterness outside on the Colchester Town Green with just their tents and clothes to keep warm.

But those four individuals—Fred Brown, Selectman Stan Soby, Colchester Police Sergeant Rob Suchecki and Colchester Hayward Fire Department Chief Walter Cox—did so by choice, with good intentions.

For the fifth year in a row the four men continued the tradition of Freezin' for a Reason, a weekend-long event held in February where the gentlemen camp outside on the town green to draw attention to the plight of the homeless. It also raises money for the Colchester Fuel Bank, a fund that allows emergency oil delivery to residents in need.

Brown explained propane, natural gas and oil prices rise each year, leaving residents with tough choices to make.

"You're either going to heat your house or buy medication or food," he said. "So what do you do? Keep your house at 50 degrees."

Soby also pointed out families are struggling due to a drop in fuel assistance from the state. "At one point the state provided more fuel

assistance than it does now so it's really fallen back onto individuals from the community to help out with filling that gap," the selectman said. "There's just so many people that are one paycheck away from a disaster and that includes being able to heat their houses or their apartments."

The gentlemen agreed Saturday that "everyone" is in need of some help. Therefore, Brown said, "I can certainly spend a couple nights out in these temperatures to raise money."

The event began last Friday, Feb. 7 at 3 p.m., and ended on Sunday at noon. The extreme low Saturday morning rose to a high of 28 degrees that afternoon, what Soby joked was rather "balmy" compared to the past 24 hours.

However, like years past, the men were taken care of by businesses in the community. Peg's Diner donated breakfast on Saturday and Sunday morning, and on Saturday night Plum Tomato sent over dinner.

Even strangers stopped by with goods including beef stew and coffee, and chocolate and donuts.

"It's a great community," Brown said of Colchester. "Not only do they stop by with a check, they come over and bring beef stew. It's

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From left, Colchester residents Fred Brown, Rob Suchecki, Stan Soby and Walter Cox stand on the Colchester Town Green, which was also their home last weekend as they camped outside to raise money for the town's fifth annual "Freezin' for a Reason" event.

Kindergarten cont. from Front Page

Board member Jeffrey Carlson took a few minutes before the vote Monday to share his personal experience with East Hampton’s kindergarten program. He said he currently has a daughter enrolled in full-day kindergarten – she was “lucky enough” to get selected via the lottery system, and he and his wife allowed her to attend full-day despite having reservations – and his older daughter, who is currently in third grade, was enrolled in half-day kindergarten when she was that age.

He said he sees “disparities” between his two daughters when he compares their development at the kindergarten age.

Regarding his and his wife’s decision to allow their youngest to attend full-day kindergarten, Carlson said, “We have never made a better decision.”

According to the feasibility committee’s study, the cost of implementation for next year would be approximately \$65,000 but after next year, the annual budget impact of implementation would be approximately \$58,000.

* * *

Also at Monday’s meeting, board members discussed their approximately \$28.83 million budget proposal for the 2014-15 school year, up 4.7 percent – or approximately \$1.29 million – from the current year’s approximately \$27.53 million budget.

Piteo said, “It’s too high. We need to make adjustments here on this board” rather than expect the Town Council and Board of Finance

to make cuts.

He added, “We cannot say yes to everything we want to do. The community won’t support that. To have credibility with the community, the board has to say ‘yes’ to certain things and ‘no’ to other things.”

Board member Emily Fahle also suggested that the board try to make some cuts.

Regarding Dugas’ original budget proposal, Fahle said, “I think it is our job as a board to give it great consideration and to see if there are any savings to be had that we can consider to give back to [Dugas]. I think that it’s important for her to make her ask, but I think it’s also very important for us as a board to think very critically and see if there are things that we might...give a second opinion on.”

Board Chairman Ken Barber suggested that Dugas show the board what two budget proposals with slightly smaller increases – one with a 4.5 percent increase and one with a 4.25 percent increase – would look like when it meets again to discuss the budget next week.

He said, “I’d like to see what some alternatives are.”

Board member Steven Kelley, however, noted, “Some items are uncuttable.”

* * *

The East Hampton Board of Education will have its next budget workshop Thursday, Feb. 20, at 7 p.m. at the East Hampton High School media center.

Freezin’ cont. from Front Page

that kind of community.”

As always, the group brought their own tents to camp out in and bundled up in sleeping bags during the overnight temperatures that were in the teens. In their waking hours the group stood by a fire accepting and thanking individuals in the community who dropped off donations.

Brown said this year’s donations were coming in slower than usual, but thanks to Family Pizza, a large donation was made on Saturday. The pizza restaurant’s owner, Kostas Anastasiou, stopped by to the green with a check for \$1,000. The business had been collecting money from its customers in a jar, and the owners matched the \$500 funds raised, for a total donation of \$1,000.

“You’ve got to help your community,” Anastasiou said of the business’s choice to donate. “We were going to donate that money no matter what but it’s better to donate through these guys who are out here in the cold.”

Overall, the event raised \$5,014—a total shy of the men’s goal of \$7,500. That total is also

less than the \$6,500 raised during last year’s Freezin’ for a Reason. Brown said he was “a little disappointed” of the money coming up under goal, but stressed that the fundraising effort doesn’t stop just because the weekend has ended.

Anyone who wishes to contribute to the cause can make donations to “Freezin’ for a Reason” at any Rockville Bank branch. The branch in Colchester is located at 99 Linwood Ave. Donations can also be dropped off at the Colchester Fuel Bank located at Town Hall.

After all, Suhecki said last Saturday, “This winter has been extremely trying for many families.”

But the men are aware these struggles will continue, which is why on Sunday morning they committed to blocking off another weekend in February 2015 to spend freezin’ for a good reason.

“We’re able to do a little something with everybody’s help,” said Soby.

Observations & Ruminations

by Geeta Schrayter

Mike’s out of the office this week so I took the reins to ensure – along with the rest of the highly capable *Rivereast* staff – that there was still a paper to read today.

Now, taking said reins leads me to another rein: reindeer. And *that*, in turn, leads me to Christmas, my favorite holiday (I can make anything relate back to Christmas). I can picture the wide eyes and furrowed brows of disbelief at my daring to utter that word in mid-February when people are pining for warmer weather, credit cards are still hot from this year’s purchases and Christmas 2014 is 313 days away.

But hear me out: it’s always the right time for Christmas. No, I’m not suggesting the lights be left up 24/7, nor am I suggesting eating copious amounts of the goodies common during the season year round or giving gifts every morning – at least not gifts of the material sort.

But this week as I was scrapbooking Christmas (scrapbooking is a hobby of mine and after concluding it wouldn’t be practical to scrapbook my entire life I decided to start documenting every Christmas instead), I realized while gluing photos of gatherings with family and friends and the tree and the treats and stockings hung by the chimney with care, I was smiling the whole time. Why? Because Christmas – commercialization and grumpy shoppers and tangled lights and long lines aside – brings good feelings.

During that most wonderful time of the year, everyone talks about holding onto the feelings that come with it for the other 11 months. Except that never seems to happen. Finding joy in the little things, spreading cheer, showing goodwill toward men, giving just to give, getting together with family for the sake of being together, reaching out to distant friends – these things seem to get put away and forgotten almost as soon as the ornaments are boxed up and the pine needles are vacuumed off the floor.

We say we want to hold on to them year round, then we get caught up in our whirlwind lives – or whatever the excuse may be – and forget about them until next December. Well, here’s a February reminder: don’t forget. The ugly Christmas sweater may need to be put away, but the spirit of Christmas looks good all year round.

As the American educator, teacher, scholar and author Mary Ellen Chase said, “Christmas, children [and adults, too!], is not a date. It is a state of mind.”

* * *

This mentality also applies to another holiday that’s a bit timelier – Valentine’s Day. I think Valentine’s Day is a lovely opportunity to show those near and dear that they’re loved. It’s a great excuse to eat more chocolate (although personally I’m still working off my Christmas indulgences) and to brighten up the home with bouquets of fragrant flowers during what can be a very dreary month.

And, if we’re to go by the statistics, many people take advantage of said opportunity:

The Society of American Florists estimated the number of roses produced for Valentine’s Day 2013 was 233 million. Valentine’s Day is the number one holiday for fresh flower purchases, accounting for 36 percent of holiday transactions and 40 percent of holiday dollar volume.

Meanwhile, a review of Valentine’s Day 2013 by the National Confectioners’ Association showed seasonal Valentine’s Day candy and gift boxes accounted for \$1 billion in seasonal candy sales; 59 percent of Valentine candy sales last year were for chocolate.

And, according to the National Retail Federation’s annual Valentine’s Day Spending Survey, the average person planned to spend \$133.91 this year and total spending was expected to reach \$17.3 billion. The percent of Americans who planned to splurge today was down from last year, but that number still amounted to 54 percent.

My boyfriend and I, I must admit, are not part of that number; we won’t be doing anything special today. That’s not because I don’t like chocolates or flowers but because we like to express our love every day – not just on one day in particular. He gives me flowers just because, and I give him cards whenever I find one that’s fitting (which is actually pretty regular considering I love Hallmark and can frequently be found browsing the store). We say “I love you” all the time and I make an effort to utter those words to family and friends, too, more often than not.

Ensuring the people I care about know that I care about them isn’t something to be relegated to a single day. If Valentine’s Day is a supplement to regular expressions of sentiment during other parts of the year, wonderful – but, as much as I don’t like to think about it, there’s no guarantee the people I love will be here when the heart shaped chocolate boxes appear on the shelves each year and jewelry stores start flaunting their sparklies as the perfect gift.

During my time here, I’ve written about the untimely deaths of three young residents in the *Rivereast* area – each well loved, with vibrant personalities and brilliant futures. That’s three too many, and I’d be lying if I said I wasn’t impacted by each one. I still think about the respective families and friends and their loss. Having lost a family member and a close friend of my own much too early, my heart truly goes out to them. Although I don’t know them personally, their losing a loved one has only heightened my belief and my efforts to make a heartfelt “I love you” and a call, letter, text – even a simple Facebook message or vanishing Snapchat - to a relative or friend just to let them know I’m thinking about them a regular occurrence.

So those are my reminders this week. Hold on to the feelings of Christmas all year long and keep saying “I love you” even after the chocolate’s been eaten and the flowers have wilted.

Life’s too short for those things to make an appearance just once a year.

Adjustments Made to Marlborough Operations Budget

by Melissa Roberto

The Marlborough Board of Selectmen reviewed the initial proposal of the town operations budget for the 2014-15 fiscal year last week, but in a special selectmen meeting held Tuesday, First Selectwoman Cathi Gaudinski updated board members on some adjustments that have already been made to it.

The adjustments come from recent negotiations and other updates that were not definite a week ago. Gaudinski and Assistant Treasurer Hayley Wagner updated fellow selectmen Dick Shea and Denis Soucy on the changes as the group combed through the budget.

The initial proposal from last week totaled a town operations budget of \$4,597,286, which reflected a 3.61 percent increase over the current spending package. A majority of adjustments Gaudinski shared showed decreases, but the impact to the bottom line number was not

yet communicated.

A confirmed rate for health and dental insurance increases was communicated. Gaudinski said insurance is generally “a moving target” until the numbers are locked in. Originally these insurance rates were budgeted to increase between 5 to 7 percent over the current year but a recent meeting confirmed the rates will increase by four percent over the current year’s rates.

Gaudinski explained the 4 percent increase will occur “across the board” for health and dental insurance, which affects 35 plans. Though spotted in two different line items, health insurance is anticipated to drop over \$6,000 from nearly \$332,000 that was budgeted in last week’s proposal. Additionally, dental insurance, also found in two separate line items, will drop nearly \$500 from the \$18,000 in-

cluded in the budget proposal last week. Both accounts will see a decrease over the current year’s budget.

Additionally, a significant change from last week’s proposal is a \$7,000 decrease in contacted services, which was initially budgeted at \$13,600 and now stands at \$6,600. The initial \$13,600 was a \$10,000 increase over the current year due to a new project where the town’s ordinances are going to be put online in a searchable database. Gaudinski said the reduction is due to the news that a historic preservation grant of \$5,000 can be applied to the project, as well as additional dollars coming from a revenue town clerk fund.

The mapping services line item under the assessor’s account is also going to see a drop of \$500 from the initial placeholder of \$3,500. Gaudinski said she had originally anticipated

the final quote from the mapping services vendor to increase, but was told it will stay the same, making the line item the same value of \$3,000 budgeted in the current fiscal year.

One adjustment that will cause an increase to a line item is a request to increase the number of hours the town clerk’s assistant works per week from 20 to 24 hours. Wagner said this would increase the budget by \$3,875, plus an additional \$300 for associated taxes.

In regards to summarizing the budget thus far, Gaudinski said, “As with any budget it’s down to salaries and benefits where our largest increases are and exposure in terms of town operations.”

The next regular Board of Selectmen meeting is scheduled for Feb. 18, 7 p.m. at Town Hall, where the budget discussion is likely to continue.

Selectmen Accept Report to Improve Colchester Fire Dept.

by Melissa Roberto

During the Board of Selectmen meeting Thursday, Feb. 6, the selectmen accepted a report with recommendations meant to strengthen recruitment and retention within the Colchester Hayward Fire Department (CHFD).

The report was submitted by the Fire Department Task Force, a group formed by the selectmen last year that was charged with studying the department and formulating a report with their recommendations.

The task force has been meeting for the last six months and at the start of Thursday’s discussion, First Selectman Gregg Schuster thanked the group for “a lot of effort and a lot of good discussions.”

Those discussions occurred between task force members and town officials, paid staff members of the CHFD, and volunteers that make up the Colchester Hayward Volunteer Fire Company (CHVFC). These discussions helped the task force to investigate issues at the department, according to the report.

The five members who make up the task force are Chairwoman Mary-Ellen Harper, Clifford Bartiss, Judi Didato, John Knapp and David Martin. All attended Thursday’s meeting to present the report to the selectmen.

Harper highlighted the intent of the report is to “lay a path for the future” of the fire department. When it came to CHFD recruitment, she said the task force found the department is “doing a great job.” However, negative aspects the task force discovered were highlighted. One was a “joint issue between the fire department and the town,” Harper said. This has been caused by either a lack of communication or lack of understanding between both entities, she explained.

Overall, Harper said the report concludes that the 160-year-old fire organization is in need of a “culture change.” On behalf of the task force she then presented the board with five recommendations that would help the department with retention.

The first recommendation is for the town and the fire department to negotiate a contract. The report explains this contract should specify the role of the CHVFC, fire department equipment and apparatus, and associated costs, as well as a grievance process to resolve issues between the town’s fire department and its volunteer company, among others.

The report concludes the contract would “give the emergency responders a sense of security regarding their status within the department.”

Other recommendations include simplifying the fire department’s training program so training is made to be “as convenient as possible” for volunteers, as well as establishing minimum training and educational requirements for all officers. Harper expanded on the latter.

“Today’s fire department is a multi-million dollar corporation,” said Harper. “You need to support your officers... Set them up for success.”

Additionally, the task force recommended that personnel and human resource aspects of the fire department become professionalized. Harper explained the task force felt this was necessary because they’d heard from individuals who said they did not feel as welcome as others in the department.

“There were a lot of feelings,” Harper said. “It’s not necessarily the way people are treated but the way they perceive they are treated.”

Lastly, the final recommendation calls for the

creation of a Colchester Fire Department Strategic Plan. This falls to the responsibilities of the board of selectmen, Harper said.

“The board of selectmen needs to make establishing a Strategic Plan for the future of the Colchester Hayward Fire Department a priority,” Harper said, “and task the Fire Chief [Walter Cox] with delivering a final production within a year.”

Other members of the task force commented on the report. Martin, also president of the CHVFC, said the recommendations amounted to a “tune up” of the department. He furthered the department has much pride and is led by individuals who “put in endless hours” to create budgets and set expectations. Now, Martin said, this needs to be appreciated by others.

“There needs to be a change and appreciation of what things are being requested by our leaders and officers of the department so that we become—in their attempt—proactive instead of reactive,” said Martin.

Knapp, treasurer of the fire company, told the Board of Selectmen the department needs its support.

“There’s a lot of pride in the organization,” said Knapp. “We do an excellent job. The job has to get done. We need from you the support to keep it going and to feel that the support is there.”

The Board of Selectmen commended the task force for a thorough report. Schuster said he personally feels the first step, a contract between the town and department, is “a no-brainer.”

The board unanimously accepted the report and said action on the recommendations would be discussed at future selectmen meetings.

Harper said she felt the charge of the task force had been completed. The report can be found on the town website colchesterct.gov under the Board of Selectmen Feb. 6 meeting minutes.

* * *

Also at Thursday’s selectmen meeting, the board unanimously supported a change to the scope of the building committee that will be responsible for the proposal of a new William J. Johnston Middle School project, following the WJMS/Community/Senior Center project that failed at referendum last fall.

The change was a simple addition to the scope that made it clear that Board of Education offices may be included in the design. Schuster said this change is based upon discussions he’s had with Chairman of the Board of Education Ron Goldstein. Schuster said the additional language makes the scope less ambiguous.

“The reason that was put in there is in case Pupil Services or IT [offices] were to be located there,” Schuster explained. “The point of this is to make sure there is no ambiguity of what the scope of the project is.”

The first selectman then stressed the future WJMS project would be “education only.” He said the building committee charge points out the project “shall *not* include a senior center, youth or community center, or any other town department” as the previous proposal did.

The adopted building committee scope can be found on the town website under the Board of Selectmen Feb. 6 meeting minutes.

The next regularly scheduled selectmen meeting is Thursday, Feb. 20, 7 p.m. at Town Hall.

Colchester Man Accused of Operating Drug Factory

by Melissa Roberto

A Colchester man was arrested last Wednesday, Feb. 5, after an unannounced visit from his parole officer resulted in the discovery of a mass amount of drugs inside his home.

On Wednesday afternoon at approximately 4:21 p.m. a parole officer from Norwich arrived to 43 Settlers Ln., the home of Ezckholm Jacques, 29, State Police said.

At the time Jacques was standing in the driveway, and upon the parole officer’s arrival, he allegedly ran and threw an object into the bushes, police said. The suspect then returned to the officer and surrendered.

Police said the officer located and seized suspected narcotics from the bushes. Jacques was then taken into custody and was transported to Troop K, the state police barracks in Colchester.

State Troopers, a K9 dog and detectives from the Statewide Narcotics Task Force then executed a search warrant at the Settlers Lane residence. Police said 600 bags of heroin, 62 grams of crack cocaine as well as packaging materials and \$2,738 in cash were seized from the home.

Jacques was charged with possession of narcotics, possession of narcotics with the intent to sell and operating a drug factory.

Jacques has previously been convicted of several offenses ranging from assault, carrying a pistol without a permit and illegally selling narcotics, according to the state judicial website.

Jacques was released on a \$250,000 non-surety bond and remanded to the Department of Corrections for violating parole.

He is scheduled to appear in court Feb. 27.

Portland Resident Named CT National Guard Spouse of the Year

by Elizabeth Bowling

There used to be a saying in the military that if the Army wanted a soldier to have a wife, it would have issued him one. Times have dramatically changed since the popularity of this phrase, but it nearly holds true for Portland's own Mr. and Mrs. McDaniel.

Connecticut's National Guard Spouse of the Year Dawn McDaniel, 40, met her husband Jeff McDaniel, 36, when they were in basic training together for the U.S. Army. They married shortly after and next month, the two will celebrate their 17th wedding anniversary.

McDaniel said her husband still jokes that "he was issued me as a wife."

But their marriage certificate isn't the only thing that makes McDaniel the 2014 Connecticut National Guard Spouse of the Year. Her title calls for much more.

McDaniel said her title is "not an award for accolades that you've done in the past." Rather, it is a way to advocate for and represent spouses and military families for the future.

She said she takes her role as the Connecticut National Guard Spouse of the Year "very seriously" and looks at ways to improve the lives of military families in the state of Connecticut.

McDaniel said in an interview Tuesday that her goal for 2014 is to bring employment rates up among Connecticut veterans by working with companies to promote the hiring of veterans.

She said her platform for the competition focuses on "workforce development and entrepreneurship" and she spoke about it passionately, noting that currently 52 percent of military spouses who want work are unemployed.

"That seems like a ridiculously high number," she said.

She backed up her argument with another statistic that states by 2017 over one million veterans will be leaving the service looking for work.

"Companies don't know that veterans are a good resource," she explained. "People think military skills don't translate to civilian skills and that's simply not true. The leadership that people in the military are exposed to and are required to execute on a regular basis, even at the lowest levels, far outweighs those experiences of someone who's in college who may

have had a job and may have work experience."

While she emphasized that she didn't mean to downplay a higher education, she said, "Four years of military experience cannot be trumped by four years of college education."

She said the military makes for strong leaders, and thus, strong employees.

"The military has very strong values – core values – of integrity, honor, duty, loyalty and discipline. These are things that develop over the course of being involved in that culture and that structure," she said.

McDaniel said she will use her one-year reign as spouse of the year to move forward with her platform at the state level. But if she moves on to the next round of the competition, her work could affect military families across the country.

At the start of the competition, more than 580 individuals were nominated for the 2014 Armed Forces Insurance Military Spouse of the Year presented by *Military Spouse Magazine*.

According to McDaniel, she was initially nominated by her "colleague and mentor" Kate Houlihan.

"She's so committed to helping veterans find jobs," Houlihan said when asked why she nominated her friend. "She's so enthusiastic about it and it's such a good cause."

After the initial nomination, McDaniel was selected via popular vote to move on to the top 18, which consists of three winners from each of the six branches of the military: U.S. Army, U.S. Air Force, U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Marine Corps, U.S. Navy and U.S. National Guard.

Those 18 will be narrowed down to six – one from each branch – on Thursday, Feb. 20. From there, one national winner will be selected as the Military Spouse of the Year at a live event in Washington, D.C. on May 9.

Candidates are scored based on their impact on community change, volunteer efforts, personal sacrifice, professional pursuits, goals, and specific efforts to support the military community.

The ultimate winner is selected based on 25 percent popular vote, 25 percent advisory board and 50 percent Military Spouse of the Year panel.

"I'm up against some very amazing people," McDaniel said. "These are, really, a really

amazing top 18 and they're doing amazing things for military families across the country."

Being named the Connecticut National Guard Spouse of the Year cleared a path for McDaniel's vision for the future, but her past is also very impressive.

Though she calls Colorado "home," McDaniel spent her youth on the move, as both of her parents were in the military.

"I've had drivers licenses in more states than some of my friends in Connecticut have visited," she laughed.

She got her bachelor's degree in communications from Chapman University in Southern California, took her first post-college job at a community college in Arizona, moved to Rhode Island and joined the Army, then completed her master's degree in public administration at Murray State University in Kentucky, and another master's degree in business administration from Walden University in Minnesota.

Husband Jeff McDaniel is a First Lt. in the Connecticut National Guard. He's been in the National Guard for eight years, but before that he was on active duty in the U.S. Army at Fort Campbell in Kentucky for six years. After his stint on active duty, he got out of the Army and moved to Connecticut where he earned his bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering from Central Connecticut State University.

Upon moving to Connecticut, the military couple lived in Hamden, Bristol, Camden and, finally, Portland, where they've lived now for seven years and plan to stay until their 12- and 11-year-old daughters graduate high school.

McDaniel was in the U.S. Army for four years and is now a veteran herself. For two years now she's owned her own business called "Bravo Delta Consulting LLC." She said it's a "woman-owned, veteran-owned company" that works with other companies "to help build and leverage their veteran and military family workforce."

Her business is similar to her National Guard Spouse of the Year platform. Essentially she helps companies "understand why veteran hires are so valuable," she explained. She also helps the companies recruit and retain those hires.

She said, "A lot of companies don't understand the cultural differences between civilian



Pictured here in her Portland home is Dawn McDaniel, the 2014 Connecticut National Guard Spouse of the Year. The award is hosted by *Military Spouse Magazine* and sponsored by Armed Forces Insurance.

and military. And especially here in the northeast there are so few people who have exposure to military lifestyle and that military culture. So I try to build that bridge and fill that gap."

Her second full-time job is as the executive vice president of the Connecticut Veterans Chamber of Commerce. She said it's a trade association for veteran-owned businesses, veterans, veteran employee resource groups and companies that want to do business with veteran-owned businesses.

"It's a way to create a network and collaborative effort across the state," she said.

The organization was formed in December and will hopefully be accepting membership by the end of March, McDaniel stated.

For more information on the Military Spouse of the Year competition, visit msoy.militaryspouse.com.

Andover Grand List Rises 1 Percent

by Geeta Schrayter

The Andover Grand List, which represents the assessed value of all taxable property in town, rose just over one percent for the year ending Oct. 1, 2013.

The total came in at \$269,069,700, which is an additional \$2,655,250 in assessment, or a 1.02 percent increase.

Vice First Selectman Jay Linddy called the increase low, but acceptable.

"We must not forget we don't have commercial property that enhances [the Grand List]," he stated. "We would like to have it more but 1 percent still is an acceptable increase for what we have" in town.

In a memo sent to First Selectman Bob Burbank and Board of Finance Chair Georgette Conrad Jan. 31, Tax Assessor John Chaponis said the increase equates to an additional \$81,700 in actual tax dollars based on last year's mill rate.

This week, he called that increase "fairly decent."

"In today's economy, municipalities are not seeing any large Grand List growth and any-

where from a small decrease to a small increase is expected," Chaponis said. "One percent is actually a fairly decent increase based on what other towns are experiencing and growth was pretty global and equal across the three different classes of property."

Real estate increased \$791,590 to \$229,801,100 while personal property increased \$869,480 to \$25,017,600 and motor vehicles increased \$364,180 to \$6,001,000.

The top ten real estate taxpayers were: Whispering Hills LLC at \$905,200, Martin, Marshall at \$790,200, Eastern Connecticut Housing Organization at \$781,800, B&B Realty Co. at \$765,800, Marcia, Kenneth R and Katherine at \$582,600, Hillside Self Storage Center LLC at \$578,300, Hatem, Pamela B at \$569,700, Andover Plaza LLC at \$524,700, Gude, Irene and Myron E at \$524,300 and Maric, Charles B and Radenka at \$510,000.

Meanwhile, Connecticut Light and Power Co. was the highest personal property taxpayer at \$3,267,720. Algonquin Gas Transmission LLC followed with \$484,520, then there was

Scott Electrocrafts INC at \$453,400, Tasneem, Saqib at \$218,750, AT&T Mobility LLC at \$198,260, Andover Landscaping LLC at \$120,700, Cellco Partnership at \$111,300, Sprint Spectrum LP at \$92,390, MTM Corporation at \$68,210 and Drake Petroleum Company INC at \$67,750.

This week, Conrad said she hoped the additional \$2,655,000 in assessment would help offset some increases and prevent the mill rate from going up.

"We [the Board of Finance] are really, really hoping to not go up on the mill rate – that's what we're working towards," she said. "And if we did have to go up we certainly wouldn't want to go up any more than what we dropped last year."

Last year the mill rate dropped from 30.80 to 30.77.

"We're hoping we can stay at 30.77 – that's what we're shooting for. Now whether we make it or not is another matter, but we will try desperately," she furthered.

Once set, the Grand List is used by the Board

of Finance to help set the mill rate for the upcoming fiscal year, by dividing the town's budget by the Grand List total.

The mill rate is then used to determine residents' taxes: a resident can determine their taxes by multiplying the mill rate by their total assessments. One mill is equal to \$1 tax per \$1,000 of assessed property. Under the current mill rate, a resident with a home assessed at \$250,000 would pay \$7,692 in taxes.

However, residents will have to wait to find out what their taxes will be moving forward, as Conrad said it was still too early to be determined.

"It's really too soon to tell," she said, explaining the finance board hadn't gotten that far in the budget yet due to rescheduled or cancelled meetings from conflicting schedules or snow.

The next budget workshop is scheduled for Thursday, Feb. 20 at 7 p.m. in the town hall community room; the next regularly scheduled Andover Board of Finance meeting and budget workshop is scheduled for Wednesday, Feb. 26 at 7 p.m. in the town hall community room.

East Hampton School Board Suggests Repurposing Center School

by Elizabeth Bowling

During the public comment portion of Tuesday night's Town Council meeting, the Board of Education chairman vocalized his board's interest in renovating Center School to house town offices and a new police station.

School board chairman Ken Barber presented the council with a formal letter on behalf of the Board of Education, which stated, "The East Hampton Board of Education strongly urges the Town to consider Center School as a resolution to the Town's need for space."

The letter further stated that according to a feasibility study conducted in 2005, Center School is a "viable resolution to the town's current space dilemma."

The two-paragraph letter also vaguely touched upon how the proposed project could be funded. It stated, "Center School offers the community the ability leverage state funds from the state for school construction."

Barber said the Board of Education would be willing to find ways to make the renovation work, for example by relocating students in Center School.

The Town Council and Board of Education will hold a workshop open to the public regarding the use of the Center School building Thursday, Feb. 20, at 6 p.m. at East Hampton High School.

The council also discussed, but did not yet take action, on a few other items including possibilities for a grant request, the 2014-15 town budget, and the town's dispatch service.

According to Town Council Chairwoman Barbara Moore, the council will need to come to an agreement regarding a Small Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP) grant request by its next meeting, as the application deadline is in April.

Each year, the state awards select towns with

STEAP grants of up to \$500,000. STEAP grants are annual opportunities for towns to receive state funding for a variety of projects that would boost local economy.

A town can apply for more than one grant, so long as the total amount the town applies for does not exceed \$500,000. For example, last year the town submitted two grant applications, each for \$250,000, but was only awarded one, which went toward putting a roof on the Epoch Arts building.

In a preliminary discussion on the coming year's budget proposal, council members voiced their opinions on what they'd like to see in the town manager's upcoming proposal and their reactions to the superintendent of school's proposal that was presented last week.

Speaking about the town budget, council member George Pfaffenbach said, "I've been a proponent of passing budgets that allow us to get something done."

He said budgets that allow the town to accomplish only the bare minimum "aren't putting us in any kind of position for the future."

Similarly, council man Philip Visintainer said, "There's a number of different issues that we've kept pushing down the road and soon we can't push them any more. We have to deal with them."

Moore noted that the fire and public works departments have "a real need for things to keep us safe, to keep our roads safe," that would need to be considered in the town budget.

Offering an opposing viewpoint, council member Mark Philhower said he thinks the town is already spending too much. He said, "I'm very concerned about what we spend right now."

Council member Ted Hintz echoed Philhower. He said the public votes on a spe-

cific budget but throughout the year the town continues to add purchases. For example, the town recently purchased a fire truck. He said, "I think that's very misleading to the taxpayers."

In terms of the Board of Education budget, Hintz said the town "gets the short end of the stick" because so much of the overall town budget goes to education.

Hintz also said it was "concerning" to him that the number of staff is increasing in the school board's budget proposal despite a decreasing student enrollment.

Barber responded to Hintz's concern later in the meeting during public comment. He explained that the declining numbers spread throughout all grade levels, so it's not like one full class size is gone and one teacher could be eliminated.

Hintz concluded that the Board of Education would need to "tighten" its budget, which is a proposed 4.7 percent increase from the current year's budget. (This year's budget is approximately \$27.53 million and the proposed budget for next year is approximately \$28.83 million.)

Council member Patience Anderson put simply, "I do think 4.7 [percent] is not a reasonable increase. I would like to see that come down considerably."

But vice chairman of the council Kevin Reich reminded the council that the Board of Education is still working on its budget. So far, the superintendent of schools presented a budget proposal to the board, but the board has not yet formally submitted it to the Town Council or Board of Finance.

In focusing on the town's budget proposal, which is yet to be presented by the town manager, Reich said he had "a problem" with the

process of creating the town budget proposal. He said he'd like the Town Council to be more involved.

He added, "I'm at a loss to talk about the budget because I know nothing about what is being thought of or planned by the town manager."

Finally, regarding KX, East Hampton's dispatch service, Town Manager Mike Maniscalco updated the council that the digital bridge project, which would connect the dispatch service to the East Hampton Police Department, is not yet completed but is "almost done."

He said his hope, as well as the hope of the East Hampton police chief, is that KX will have the project completed by the next Town Council meeting.

He added, "KX is more or less putting its best foot forward in an effort to try to get this done."

Also at Tuesday's meeting, the Town Council unanimously approved the adoption of a "resolution for veterans hiring preference," which calls for the town to "provide a preference for hiring veterans who demonstrate the appropriate knowledge, skills and abilities for advertised jobs."

It further stated, "The Town of East Hampton uses veterans preference when hiring and supports its local veterans."

In adopting the resolution, the council considered that the veterans' unemployment rate is 10 percent higher than the average unemployment rate.

The next regularly scheduled East Hampton Town Council meeting is Tuesday, Feb. 25, at 6:30 p.m. at the East Hampton Town Hall.

East Hampton Town Council Hosts Dam Discussion

by Elizabeth Bowling

The Town Council hosted a public roundtable discussion – which drew a crowd of about 40 – last Thursday, Feb. 6, regarding the levels of Lake Pocotopaug and the operation of its corresponding dam.

According to a statement provided by the Town Council to those attending the meeting, the dam associated with Lake Pocotopaug is located behind the American Distilling factory on Route 66 on the southern edge of the lake, and consists of a spillway allowing excess water to run over the top and flow through the stream in the Village Center.

The statement also included information provided by the current owner of the dam, Matt Bevin. It said the dam has been owned and operated by a private company owned by the Bevin family called the Pocotopaug Water Company for more than 100 years.

It stated, "The policy over the years has been that in the spring the dam is closed to fill the lake to prepare for fishing season and the summer months. In the fall the dam is opened to draw down the lake to allow boat owners and residents to take their boats out for the winter. The gate will be opened or closed at other times when a severe weather system is coming north."

The statement also informed the public that the state now mandates that all dam owners register their dams and provide management plans – something Bevin will be required to attend to in the near future.

Town Council Chairwoman Barbara Moore kicked off the night's meeting. She told the residents in attendance that the public discussion was their opportunity to "speak up and let us know what's on your mind" in regards to the lake and its dam.

The general consensus from last week's roundtable discussion held at East Hampton Middle School was that lake residents want lower water levels in the winter and higher levels in the summer and they support manipulating water levels as a result of weather emer-

gencies.

The discussion raised a lot of questions, including: who is actually calling the shots in regards to opening and closing the dam?

Moore affirmed that Bevin – who currently lives in Kentucky – is making those decisions.

In focusing on the summer months, residents expressed that they generally want the lake's water level to be higher than it was in summer 2013.

One resident complained that the water level was most recently lowered earlier than when Bevin publicized it would be. Another lakeside homeowner complained that this past summer his boat hit rocks every time he took it out, even in the middle of the lake. Others in attendance nodded in agreement.

Some residents suggested marking more rocks in a quick-fix effort to avoid damage to boats. But in a more long-term search for answers, one resident asked why the lake levels this past summer were so "extreme" and how can that be avoided in the future.

Representatives from the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection were present at the meeting; Art Christian, a supervising civil engineer, and Peter Spangenberg, a civil engineer III, fielded questions as best they could.

Spangenberg responded to the question about the "extreme" water levels last summer by speculating that Bevin "altered what he was doing."

Fortunately, more certainty may come this year, as it will be required by the Connecticut DEEP that dam owners get their dams inspected, Spangenberg said. The purpose of the inspection is so an engineer can make safety recommendations and discuss the operation of the dam.

But aside from that, Spangenberg said, "We don't really have a lot of control over how a dam operator operates a dam."

Most residents in attendance expressed up-

set with Bevin. Some said the town should "play hardball" with the dam owner because so far the town's "diplomatic approach" hasn't proven to be successful.

Many suggested the town take ownership of the dam via eminent domain. But Town Manager Mike Maniscalco said that's a "last resort."

He said it would be costly for the town to own the dam because it's a "huge liability" and taxes would have to increase to cover the cost of insurance.

Plus, Maniscalco said, it would be a "long, drawn out battle" and Bevin "has the money" to fight the town on it.

Joe Carbonell, a member of Friends of Lake Pocotopaug, the East Hampton Lake Commissions and the Connecticut Federation of Lakes, provided some information regarding the impact of changing water levels on plant life, fish and animals, and algae.

He affirmed that water level does not have "a major effect" on plant life, animals or algae. He said the Department of Agriculture is going to do a study of the plant life in Lake Pocotopaug this year.

Later in the meeting, residents were split up into groups. Each group was asked to discuss its members' relationships to the lake, the value of the lake, how water levels should be monitored and if the levels should be changed, and what the relationship should be between East Hampton residents, the town and the owner of the dam.

Of the 40 residents at last week's dam discussion, all of them had a direct relationship with the lake – many owned homes on the lake, while others lived nearby.

One group came to a consensus that there needs to be more definitive data regarding the lake's water levels. The group spokesperson suggested putting a gage in the middle of the lake that would inform boaters if the level of the water is safe for boating. He suggested col-

lecting data weekly.

The same group emphasized the importance of the town having "open dialogue" with Bevin. The town ought to know exactly when the dam will be operated and to what extent.

Also regarding communication, one group of residents said, "Residents should be represented by town management."

Another group suggested a "cooperative mutual agreement," which would essentially consist of Town Council members, Bevin and interested citizens.

Another group suggested measuring water levels in the same location – they suggested right at the dam – every two weeks. They also asked that the dates of dam operation be well publicized. They suggested April 1 a tentative date to close the dam and Nov. 1 a draw down date. But for the months in between, they suggested the water be at its highest level so long as it remains below dock level.

Another group's spokesperson was John Moore, the president of Friends of Lake Pocotopaug. He said he was "angry" to be leaving the discussion with so many questions.

He called Lake Pocotopaug "the most precious resource in East Hampton" and expressed his disappointment in Bevin. He said the town "came to his rescue" two years ago when his family business, Bevin Brothers Manufacturing Co., burned down in a fire and now those community efforts aren't being reciprocated.

He said he doesn't want Bevin in control. "It should belong to the town," John Moore said about the dam.

The majority of people in attendance – an estimated 75 percent – raised their hands when the night's moderator asked who in the room wants the town to take over the dam.

In concluding the meeting, Barbara Moore assured those in attendance that she would follow up with Bevin. She also said she'd like to see changes by this summer.

"We will work on it right away," she said.

Hebron Grand List Rises Slightly

by Geeta Schrayter

The results are in, and the 2013 Grand List has increased slightly in Hebron, with the Net Grand List moving up to \$778,651,850, which is \$6,647,555 or .861 percent more than the Net Grand List from Oct. 1, 2012.

There was a \$3,533,160 increase in real estate, bringing the total to \$691,458,040. Assessor Debra Gernhardt explained in a memo the increase was mostly due to new residential dwelling construction, improvements to existing buildings and the CVS/Pharmacy that was under construction at the time but has since opened.

The top ten real estate taxpayers for 2013 were: Village Shoppes LLC at \$1,995,070, Hebron Properties LLC at \$1,470,000, Blackledge Country Club INC. at \$1,464,680, Hebron Country Manor LLC at \$1,309,770, Grayville Estates of Hebron LLC at \$1,112,720, 41-61 Main Street LLC at \$1,071,350, Holland, Deborah and Jones Street LLC at \$857,920, Houston, Hayden O. Jr. at \$846,930, Hulk, William T. and Amelia at \$840,070 and Hebron Lincoln LLC at \$819,560.

Gernhardt went on to explain personal property increased \$900,480 mostly due to the purchase of new items by property owners.

Connecticut Light and Power Co. was the highest personal property taxpayer at \$7,006,540, followed by The Connecticut Water Company at \$1,514,960, Teds INC at \$399,230, Cellco Partnership at \$314,660, AT&T Mobility LLC at \$308,480, Blackledge Country Club INC. at \$266,080, Tallwood Country Club LLC at \$257,560, CT Solar Leasing LLC at \$239,690, Hebron Center Dentistry LLC at \$216,780 and Sprint Spectrum LP at \$190,530.

Motor vehicles also increased \$2,213,915 to \$72,039,440 which Gernhardt said was expected. She explained the list typically mirrors what happened with the prior year's Supplemental List and in 2012, there was an increase due to the purchase of new vehicles. In addition, there was an increase in the values of some of the older cars and heavy duty trucks due to a change in the way the vehicles are priced.

Gernhardt wrote she "felt some of the vehicles were valued too low and not at a fair and equitable level as the rest of the list."

She explained 80 percent of the motor vehicle list is supplied to the town by the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) with their values already assigned. The remaining 20 percent however, which contains mostly older cars, light and heavy duty trucks and trailers, needs to be valued.

Typically this value was assigned using three different pricing guides: a National Automobile Dealers Association (NADA) guide for older cars, the Cars of Particular Interest (CPI) guide and the Old Cars Report; Connecticut's Office of Policy and Management recommends pricing vehicles based on the National Automobile Dealers Association (NADA) guides.

Gernhardt explained most of the older cars and light duty trucks were priced using the Old Cars Report in the past, which rates cars one to six based on their condition, with one being excellent and six being a parts car. In order to be more in line with NADA – and therefore the 80 percent of the list supplied by the DMV – the range previously used for the older cars and light duty trucks of five was switched to three, which is closer to the NADA description.

Meanwhile, the NADA guide for older cars

has three ranges: low, average and high with low having the description closest to NADA; the CPI has excellent, good, and fair ranges, with good being closest to NADA.

Using these two guides, Gernhardt explained the values were close for most vehicles, but using the Old Cars Report guide the values were considerably lower.

"To have the pricing of motor vehicles fair, equitable and in line with the rest of the vehicles, the values used for older cars and light duty trucks reflect the values from the NADA older car guide and the CPI guide," she wrote.

Gernhardt added there aren't as many pricing guides available to assign values to older heavy duty trucks and trailers; NADA has a guide for newer heavy duty trucks but not older ones, and The Truck Blue Book the office uses only goes back to the mid 90s – and a few trucks in town are older than that. In addition, neither guide includes values for truck bodies, so they haven't been getting assessed.

In order to assess trailers, a bit of research is required. The office previously used a chart that based values on the gross vehicle weight of trailers. Now, websites like "Commercial Truck Trader;" and "Machinery Trader;" were used to find trucks and trailers for sale that were the same or close to those vehicles that needed a value, along with manufacturer's sites that listed used equipment for sale. Through that research it was discovered the values that had been applied to the trailers were an average to low value of the listed prices.

"I do believe this method of valuing these special types of vehicles is a more accurate way of valuing," Gernhardt wrote. "Owners of these vehicles do have the ability to appeal these val-

ues, if they feel they're too high. They'll need to provide the Board of Assessment Appeals documentation of what they found for what they believe the value should be."

Regarding the overall Grand List, Town Manager Andrew Tierney said this week, "It was a small increase but an increase is better than a decrease and we'll accept that."

"I hope to increase that even more going through this upcoming year," he continued, by getting more businesses in town, or some more business construction. In addition, Tierney said the town would "hopefully get some movement" on John E. Horton Blvd.

"Overall [the Grand List] was good news. Any additional revenue we can use to offset the tax increase is welcome."

Once set, the Grand List is used by the Board of Finance to help set the mill rate for the upcoming fiscal year, by dividing the town's budget by the Grand List total.

The current mill rate is 34.70 but Finance Director Elaine Griffin said Thursday it was still too soon to know what that may be moving forward.

"We're still compiling our data so [Tierney] hasn't even finalized where we're going to be and what's going to be presented to the Board of Selectmen," she said. "I expect hopefully that will be completed by the end of next week."

Once the mill rate is set, it's used to determine residents' taxes: a resident can determine their taxes by multiplying the mill rate by their total assessments. One mill is equal to \$1 tax per \$1,000 of assessed property. Under the current mill rate, a resident with a home assessed at \$250,000 would pay \$8,675 in taxes.

East Hampton Police News

1/28/14: Stanley McMullen, 72, of 9 West High St. was placed under arrest and charged with second degree threatening, East Hampton Police said.

1/31/14: David Gaudino, 55, of unknown address in New Haven was arrested for violating a protective order, disorderly conduct and second-degree threatening, East Hampton Police said.

1/31/14: A 15 year old East Hampton juvenile was issued a summons for first-degree threatening and second-degree breach of peace, Police said.

2/1/14: Kerri E. Devine, 26, of 43 Main St., turned herself in pursuant to an active warrant for her arrest. Devine was charged with failure to drive right, driving under the influence, possession of marijuana and possession of narcotics, Police said.

2/4/14: Brooke Tegge Jr., 19, of 5 Niles St., was arrested pursuant to an active warrant. Tegge Jr. was charged with sixth-degree larceny, Police said.

Marlborough Police News

2/7: State Police said a one-car crash occurred on route 2 approximately four tenths of a mile west of the exit 12 off ramp at 6:08 p.m. Police said a vehicle driven by Ronald Dunlap, 63, of 28 Jenny Jenks Rd., Norwalk, went off of the right shoulder of the road and the trailer he was towing rolled onto its left side. Police said Dunlap's vehicle then struck a wire rope guard rail. Police said the Marlborough Volunteer Fire Department transported Dunlap to Middlesex Hospital for precautionary measures.

2/4: State Police said Jared Vanburen, 24, of 81 Jan Dr., Hebron, was charged with second-degree failure to appear, possession of drug paraphernalia and possession of marijuana.

Hebron Police News

2/7: State Police said a two-car crash occurred at approximately 4:11 p.m. on Gristmill Road. Police said Michael Christopher Losty, 18, of 102 Flood Rd., Marlborough, was traveling west on route 66 when Kali Grace Lower, 17, of 17 Carriage Ln., Marlborough, stopped for a stop sign at the intersection of Gristmill Road and route 66. Police said Lower then drove in front of Losty's vehicle, causing the two vehicles to collide. Police said the Hebron Volunteer Fire Department transported Lower to the Middlesex Hospital for a complaint of pain. Police said Lower was later given an infraction for failure to obey a stop sign.

2/7: State Police said John B. Swanson, 43, of 71 Papermill Rd., Hebron, was charged with disorderly conduct and DWI.

Colchester Police News

2/3: Colchester Police responded to a one-car accident on Miller Road at approximately 4:04 p.m. Police said Meagan Macgregor, 26, of 156 Mill Hill Rd., struck a utility pole with her vehicle. Police said Macgregor was transported to the Marlborough Clinic for possible injuries.

2/4: State Police said Nicole Smith, 22, of 9A Robert Dr., Columbia, was charged with sixth-degree larceny and failure to appear.

2/5: State Police said Andrea O. Malkasian, 34, of 1804 Southgate Ln., was charged with DUI and failure to drive in the proper lane.

2/7: State Police said at approximately 1:54 a.m. a resident of West Road reported a suspicious vehicle parked in front of his residence and subsequent damage to his exterior light post. Police said this case is still under investigation.

2/8: Police said a pedestrian was struck by a car on South Main Street at approximately 6:35 p.m. The vehicle, driven by Lisa Parks, 23, of 198 Hebron Rd., Andover, struck a juvenile on South Main Street one tenths of a mile south of Norwich Avenue, according to Police. Police said the pedestrian reported minor injuries and was transported to a medical facility for evaluation. Police said the pedestrian was found to be at fault for the accident.

2/9: Colchester Police said Nicholas A. Inkel, 23, of 32 Hammond Ct., was charged with disorderly conduct, threatening and second-degree reckless endangerment.

2/9: State Police said Stephen Labonsky, 49, of 55 Mcdonald Rd., was charged with DUI, two counts of reckless driving, possession of narcotics, improper registration and improper use of marker.

Portland Police News

1/29: Portland Police said a 17-year-old male was arrested for third-degree assault and disorderly conduct.

2/7: Portland Police said Timothy Grote, 40, of 76 Spring St., Middletown, was charged with third-degree arson, third-degree criminal mischief and sixth-degree larceny.

2/8 Portland Police said Matthew Metell, 31, of 354 North Windham Rd., North Windham, was charged with driving under the influence and traveling too fast for conditions.

Obituaries

Portland

Paul F. Kelley

Paul Francis Kelley, 49, formerly of Glastonbury and Portland, passed away on Feb. 4 in Venice FL, after a long illness.

Paul was born on June 17, 1964. He was the son of Betty Ann Gamer and John J. Kelley, Sr.

Paul was a sensitive and caring person. He loved life and was always giving to anyone in need. He loved his family, his pets and he had many friends, who loved him in return.

Paul was a member of the Operating Engineers, and was part owner of the Portland Golf Courses until his moving to Florida.

He is survived by his parents, Betty Ann and Charles Gamer and John and Christina Kelley; his stepdaughters, Brooke and Brittany Vigneri; his brothers and sisters-in-law, John and Laurie, Kevin and Ellen, Shawn and Tina, J.T. and Melissa, as well as many nieces, nephews, aunts, uncles, cousins and many dear friends. Paul will be missed by all.

A memorial service will be held at St. Mary's Catholic Church, 51 Freestone Ave., Portland on Saturday, Feb. 15, at 10 a.m. In lieu of flowers contributions may be made to Middlesex Hospital Hospice and Palliative Care c/o Middlesex Hospital Office of Philanthropy, 28 Crescent St. Middletown, Ct. 06457.

(ran last week – needs to go again)

East Hampton

John Bayerowski

John Bayerowski, 76, of East Hampton, went home to the Lord Jan. 28, succumbing to complications of renal cell carcinoma.

John was born May 2, 1937 at Backus Hospital in Norwich, the son of the late Zigmund and Mary Grace Bayerowski.

He was married for nearly 40 years to his surviving wife, Patricia.

He was an avid animal lover and also leaves his cats and dog Penny. His interests included fishing, boating, dancing, watching NASCAR racing, maintaining his property grounds since he was proud of his home, and listening to country music.

Along with his wife, he is survived by two children from a previous marriage as well as grandchildren, great-grandchildren and extended family and friends.

He was predeceased by stepson Scott Fowler. Caregivers commended during this trying time include his wife Pat, Holly, Dr. Robert Levy, Dr. Christopher Bentley as well as Middlesex Hospice staff.

Donations can be made to Protectors of Animals. Abbey Funeral Home in Rocky Hill is in charge of crematory arrangements. Burial is private.

Colchester

Joanne Elizabeth Kenney

Joanne Elizabeth Kenney, 67, of Colchester, passed away Wednesday, Feb. 5 at the Middlesex Hospital in Middletown. She was a daughter of the late John Francis and Norma (Rice) Kenney. She had lived in Albany, N.Y. before moving to Connecticut to be closer to her family.

Throughout her career, she worked for numerous agencies for Workers Compensation cases as a Senior Claims Specialist; most recently for Murphy & Beane in New London. After her retirement, she volunteered helping children in the TVCCA Head Start program.

She was an avid fan of the Boston Red Sox, loved fishing, lobstering, sailing and her Labrador Retrievers.

She leaves three sisters, Christina, Patricia and Norma Jean; seven brothers, William, John "Paul," Thomas, Richard, David, Timothy and Terrance; and numerous nieces, nephews, extended family members and friends.

A Memorial Service was held Sunday, Feb. 9 at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester.

Donations in her memory may be made to the TVCCA Head Start, Attn: Phyllis Goldstein, 1 Sylvandale Rd. Jewett City, CT 06351.

For online expressions of sympathy visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

Portland

Paul L. Burchard Jr.

Paul L. Burchard Jr., 51, of Portland, beloved father of Maria Collins of Middletown and Felicia Burchard of East Hampton, passed away Tuesday, Feb. 4 at Middlesex Hospital.

He was born Sept. 5, 1962 in Middletown and was a lifelong resident of Portland.

Besides his daughters, he is survived by four grandchildren, Tara Collins, Tapanga Burchard, David Wimler and Corey Polzun; five sisters, Sylvia "Annie" Jeffers of Va., Sandy Burchard of Conn., Susan Burchard and Cindy Burchard both of Fla. and Debra Umstead of W.Va.; two brothers, Jack Burchard of East Hampton and Charles "Little Chuck" Burchard of Fla.; two son-in-laws, Andrew Wimler and Thomas Polzun. He was predeceased by his parents, Paul and Barbara Burchard and by a brother, Charles L. Burchard.

Services will be private and at the convenience of the family. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Maria Collins, 86 Grove St., Middletown, CT 06457

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

Colchester

Roland Joseph Cyr Jr.

Roland Joseph Cyr Jr., 59, of Colchester, passed away Thursday Feb. 6 at Hartford Hospital.

Born Dec. 5, 1954 in St. Johnsbury, Vt., he was the eldest son of Roland and Betty (Clark) Cyr of Willimantic.

Known for his strong work ethic, Roland was a machinist for Pratt & Whitney Aircraft for over 40 years. In his spare time, he enjoyed the outdoors; especially fishing and hiking.

In addition to his parents, he leaves his loving wife, Susan (Cassone) Cyr; two children and their spouses, Michael and Dee Cyr of Rocky Hill and Nicolle and Ahmed Elshennawy of Manchester; two stepchildren, Catherine Stebbins of Colchester and Alexandra Stebbins of Brooklyn, N.Y.; a grandson, Karim; five siblings, Cheryl Ausburger, Michelle Charafeddine, and Roger, Mark and David Cyr; and Susan's parents, William and Nancy Cassone of Long Island, N.Y.. He was predeceased by a son, Timothy.

The family received guests Monday, Feb. 10 at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Road, Colchester.

The Funeral Service was observed Tuesday at Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 1 East High Street, East Hampton. Burial will be private in Linwood Cemetery, Colchester.

Donations in his memory may be made to the Salvation Army, 440 West Nyack Road, West Nyack, NY 10994-1739.

For online expressions of sympathy visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

East Hampton

Randall Britney

Randall Britney, age 50, of Middle Haddam, best friend and husband of Brenda Byers-Britney, passed away Thursday, Feb. 6, after a battle with ALS, just days before his 28th wedding anniversary.

Randy worked a number of years in the tire industry before going on to Axelrod Tire and Service in 1992, first as manager and then as owner. He sponsored the Haddam Neck Fair Road Race for many years. Randy was an avid skier and would look forward to each ski season, planning weeklong trips to Sugarloaf each February. He loved spending time with his family and dogs, hiking, swimming, kayaking, going to movies and playing games. Randy was someone who loved life. He will be remembered by those who knew him well as a kind and caring man, who was always doing things for others.

Along with his wife, Randall is survived by his two daughters, Pamela Byers of Sunrise, Fla. and Elizabeth Britney of Middle Haddam; son-in-law, Marc Richardson of Sunrise, Fla.; two grandchildren, Jeremy Richardson and Ashlyn Richardson, both of Sunrise, Fla.; his parents, Robert and Jane Britney of Leesburg Fla.; and two brothers, Ronald Britney and his wife Karen of Boca Raton, Fla. and Robert Britney of Hamden, CT.

A special thanks to those who gave him friendship and comfort throughout his illness; his sister-in-law and brother-in-law, Amy and Mark Pomeroy, the Weir family, the Rittman family, Natalia Parra, Kacey Elfstrom, Middlesex Home Care and Middlesex Hospice (Mary Lynn, Rachael, Kiley, MJ, Jan, Kathy, Nicole and Eileen) and other close family and friends.

A Celebration of Life will be held of Sunday, Feb. 16 at St. Clements Castle, Rt. 66 in Portland from 3-6 p.m. The service will begin at 3:30. Family and friends alike are welcome to attend.

Memorial donations may be made in Randy's name to The ALS Association of Connecticut, Attn. Stacey Rahl Care Service Coordinator, 4 Oxford Rd., Unit D4, Milford, CT 06450.

East Hampton

Robert Merrill Brewer Sr.

Robert (Bob) Merrill Brewer Sr., 79, of Middletown and formerly East Hampton, passed away from brain cancer Feb. 3 surrounded by his family at The Connecticut Hospice in Branford.

Bob was born in West Palm Beach, Fla. on December 23, 1934

to Merrill and Genevieve Brewer. He grew up in Bar Harbor Maine and Joined the United States Coast Guard. After returning from the Coast Guard, Bob did what he loved to do; he owned and operated a lobster boat. Bob loved the ocean and there wasn't anything he didn't know about fishing.

Before retiring Bob worked as a Custodian for the East Hampton school system for a number of years. He enjoyed traveling with his wife Margie and his sister-in-law Helen and her husband Hank whom meant a lot to him. They went everywhere together. Every winter they would pack everything up and head for Largo, Fla. where they have residence and an abundance of very close friends. There isn't anyone Bob met that he didn't leave a lasting impression on. He was truly a one of a kind man, a great father and a wonderful husband and will be missed by many.

Bob is survived by his loving wife of 23 year Margery (Margie) whom he loved dearly; one sister, Susan Brewer Lane of Bar Harbor, Maine and Florida; three sons and one daughter, Robert M. Brewer Jr. of Middletown, Brian M. Brewer and his wife Sherry of East Hampton, Sabrina Brewer and Anthony Lombardi of Deep River and Scott D. Brewer of Newington; two stepsons and a stepdaughter, James Gledhill and his wife Bobbie of Maine, Lisa Gledhill and her wife Debbie of Cape Cod, Mass., and Dwight Gledhill and his wife Maria of Md. Bob had ten grandchildren whom loved him very much, one great-grandchild and one on the way.

Bob was preceded in death by his parents and a sister, Jane.

There will be no calling hours. A celebration of Bob's life will be held at The Veterans Memorial Cemetery in Middletown Saturday, Feb. 15 at 11:30 a.m.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be given to Connecticut Hospice, 100 Double Beach Road, Branford, CT 06405.

The family of Robert Merrill Brewer Sr. wishes to thank the whole staff at Connecticut Hospice who gave exceptional care to our husband, father, grandfather, brother and friend. You made our journey so much easier with your love and support. We can't thank you enough.

Colchester

Norma Roberts

Norma (Salata) Roberts of Bozrah died Feb. 6. Norma leaves behind her loving husband of 58 years, Ronald Roberts Sr.; six children, and 11 grandchildren.

The family will receive guests at a "Celebration of Life" gathering Saturday, March 1 at 2 p.m. at the Bozrah Volunteer Firehouse, 239 Fitchville Rd., Bozrah.

Arrangements by the Robinson, Wright & Weymer Funeral Home in Centerbrook. Go to www.wfh.com to view Norma's full obituary and to share a memory of her or send a condolence to her family.

Marlborough

Dorothy L. Rozanski

Dorothy L. Rozanski, 85, of Marlborough, the wife of the late Samuel M. Rozanski, died Tuesday Feb. 4 at Marlborough Healthcare Center.

She is survived by her son and daughter-in-law, Bruce and Mary Kraushaar of Vernon; grandchildren James Kraushaar and wife Tera and great-grandchildren James and Kimberly of Belin, N.M.; daughter Darla McCoy Ayer and companion Michael Suthers of Bowdoin, Maine; grandchildren Steven McCoy and wife Lisa and great-grandchild Caitlyn of Greene, Maine,

And Kenneth McCoy and wife Renee and great-grandchildren Kyle and Chloe of Mooresville, N.C.; daughter Darcy Blanchette and her husband Jeffrey Blanchette, grandchildren Sarah Nicole and Jennifer Lynn all from Gales ferry; brother Robert Condrick and wife Myrna of San Jose, Calif. and nieces Pat and Linda.

The John F. Tierney Funeral Home in Manchester has care of the arrangements. For online condolences visit tierneyfuneralhome.com.

Marlborough

Martha Jane Wells

Martha Jane Wells, 67, of Marlborough and formerly of Palmer, Mass., widow of the late Nelson Wells, passed away Tuesday, Feb. 11 at home.

Born July 21, 1946 in Providence, R.I., she was a daughter of the late William and Jane (Mainey) Chase.

Early on, she worked for Specialty Brush and later for Kmart Corp. as a retail associate. She was an avid fan of the Boston Red Sox, New England Patriots and Facebook, and enjoyed crocheting, reading and spending time at the beach.

Her greatest joy was found caring for and spending time with her family, especially her grandchildren.

She leaves two daughters and their spouses, Kathleen and Richard Hurley of Amston and Erin and David McWhinnie of Palmer, Mass.; a son and daughter-in-law, Kevin and Katie O'Connor of Wilbraham, Mass.; five grandchildren, Meghan, David, Cian, Brendan and Declan; four siblings and their spouses, William and Linda Chase of Buffalo, N.Y., Nanci and James Neill of Naples, Fla., Lillian and Terry Hawk of Palmer, Mass. and David and Bonnie Chase of Jacksonville, Fla.; and numerous extended family members, as well as a host of wonderful friends at the Florence S. Lord Senior Housing Center in Marlborough.

The family would like to extend their heartfelt thanks to Dr. Timothy Hong and Anne Soucie, RN, of the Helen & Harry Gray Cancer Center, as well as Dr. John McArdle and Keighley of the CT Multispecialty Group, for their exceptional care and concern during Martha's courageous battle with cancer.

The Memorial Liturgy will be celebrated Saturday, March 1 at 10:30 a.m. at the Church of the Holy Family, 185 Church St. (Rte. 85), Hebron. There are no calling hours and burial will be private.

In lieu of flowers, donations in her memory may be made to Marlborough Association For Senior Housing, Inc., 155 South Main St., Marlborough CT 06447.

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

East Hampton

Patricia W. Buchko

Patricia W. Buchko, 83, of Wallingford, formerly of East Hampton, died Sunday, Feb. 9 at Masonicare Health Center.

She was the loving wife of the late Edward S. Buchko.

She was born in Meriden, Feb. 21, 1930, a daughter of the late Lester and Catherine Wilcox, and was a member of the First United Methodist Church of Meriden.

She graduated from Meriden High School and then worked for the C.N. Flag Co., staying with the company for 51 years until her retirement.

She is survived by her sister, Eleanor W. Underwood of Wallingford; her nephews, Thomas Underwood and his wife Mary of Cheshire, and Scott Underwood of Kensington; her grand nephews, Connor and Trafford Underwood; and her grand nieces, Lindsay and Abbie Underwood.

She was predeceased by her brother-in-law, Burton Underwood; and her niece, Carleen Underwood.

A funeral service will be held Wednesday, February 12 at 11 a.m. in the First United Methodist Church of Meriden, 159 East Main St. Interment will be private.

In lieu of flowers, gifts in her memory may be sent to the First United Methodist Church of Meriden, 159 East Main St., Meriden, CT 06450, or Masonicare Home Health and Hospice, 33 North Plains Industrial Rd., Wallingford CT 06492.

Arrangements are under the direction of The Wallingford Funeral Home. See wallingfordfh.com.



Colchester

Jennie Marsh

Jennie “Nanny” (Chemerynski) Marsh of Ft. Lauderdale, Fla., previously of Coventry, passed away peacefully Dec. 31, 2013.

Jennie was born May 3, 1921 in Colchester to the late George and Mary Chemerynski and was the beloved wife of the late Ernest “Bud” Marsh.

Jennie worked in retail for many years. She was a member of the American Legion Post # 52 of Coventry and enjoyed cooking Sunday dinners for her family and spending time with them at the trailer in Tyson, Vt. and summers in Black Point, Conn.

She lived in Coventry for over 60 years and was best known to everyone as “Nanny.” She will be missed by her loving family and many friends.

She is survived by her two daughters, Virginia Smith of Mansfield and Andrea Cooper and her husband, Richard of Coventry. She is also survived by her grandchildren, Lori Smith-Lalla, Joelle Carbonell and Brooke Clemons; six great children, Amber, Jeremy, Erin, Amani, Shannon and McKena.

Jennie was predeceased by her siblings George, John, Helen, Mildred and Howard.

Burial will be at Storrs Cemetery in Storrs at the convenience of the family. Memorial donations may be made to the Multiple Sclerosis Society of Greater Connecticut, 659 Tower Ave., 1st Floor, Hartford, CT 06112 or to the American Cancer Society, Meriden Executive Park, 538 Preston, Ave., Meriden, CT 06450.

Coventry Funeral Home, 2665 Boston Turnpike, Coventry, CT 06238 is assisting with funeral arrangements.

Portland

James Michael McAllister

James Michael McAllister, 60, passed away Jan. 27.

He was born in Greenport Brooklyn, N.Y. Aug. 5, 1953 and lived in Portland for 30 years. He lived his remaining five years in Florida.

He is survived by his daughter and son, Brianne and Ryan McAllister, and his soon to be son-in-law, Evangelos Papahristou, all of Portland; his father, Joseph McAllister and sisters, Kathy Kelly and Eileen McAllister.

A service was held in Long Island, but we will also be having a party in his honor, to laugh, cry and raise a glass to an amazing father, son, and brother.

He was never afraid of death, and would always say, “when it’s my time, it’s my time, and there is nothing anyone can do.”

“Don’t grieve for me, for now I’m free, I’m following the path God laid for me, I took his hand when I heard Him call, I turned my back and left it all. Perhaps my time seemed all to brief, don’t lengthen it now with undue grief, lift up your heart and share with me, God wanted me now, He set me free.” -Unknown