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Andy Weatherwax, pictured here, of East Hampton, is hosting "Poets for Parkinson's" tonight at South Congregational Church, 949 Main St., Glastonbury, from 6:30 to 8:30 to raise money for the Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research. The event will feature readings from Weatherwax's new book, *Renegade Pinky*, as well as an art auction, which will include the pieces seen here.

Poetry Fundraiser for Parkinson's Tonight

by Elizabeth Bowling

An East Hampton man suffering from Parkinson's disease is hosting a fundraiser tonight for the Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research, which seeks to find a cure for the disorder.

The event will feature host Andy Weatherwax reading poetry from his new book *Renegade Pinky*, which focuses on life with Parkinson's.

According to Weatherwax, "Over five million people worldwide are living with Parkinson's disease, a chronic, degenerative neurological disorder whose symptoms typically progress from mild tremors to complete physical incapacitation. In the United States, an estimated 60,000 new cases will be diagnosed this year alone. There is no known cure for Parkinson's disease. Current treatments mask symptoms but do not alter or slow disease progression."

The Meeting House Poets will join their fellow member, Weatherwax, in his poetry reading tonight in Glastonbury. The group of eight gets together once a month to perform "all different styles of poetry," Weatherwax said.

"I'm amazed at the writing of my fellow poets," he furthered.

Regarding his book of poems and prose, *Ren-*

egade Pinky, Weatherwax said, "How I processed the illness of Parkinson's disease was through my writing."

The title of the book represents one of Weatherwax's earliest signs of Parkinson's disease — his pinky would not do as his brain told it to do.

The title poem in the book states, "my renegade pinky runs happy and free; deciding on its own when to press down a key; making it tough to type this melodic phrase; taking time to delete extra s's and a's."

The book includes more than 70 poems, "not all of which have to deal directly with Parkinson's," Weatherwax said. "Some deal with just the idea of illness."

He said he decided to share his poems to help others garner what goes on over the course of a regular day for someone with Parkinson's. His poetry discusses: Weatherwax's daily doses of medication — or as he calls them, "Rx cocktails;" feelings of isolation; costs of his treatments; and what it's like to have strangers confuse him for being drunk or get angry with him for moving too slowly.

"It was never my intention to become a poet,

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Colchester Budgets Off to Referendum

by Melissa Roberto

The town meeting wasn't without some back-and-forth among residents, but ultimately those in attendance Wednesday decided to send the proposed 2014-15 budget back to referendum next week.

The \$53.37 million spending package will go before the voters next Thursday, May 29. Voting will take place from 6:30 a.m.-8 p.m. at Town Hall, 127 Norwich Ave.

Taxpayers will actually be voting on two budgets — a \$39.93 million schools spending package and a \$13.44 million budget for town operations. Both failed at referendum May 6, and last week, the spending plans for both were trimmed: \$286,012 from the school budget, and \$39,012 for town operations.

If the reduced budgets pass, the mill rate would climb .60 mills, from 30.28 to 30.88.

While all but one voter in the room approved each spending package to head to referendum, many in attendance spoke in regards to the school budget before a vote was taken.

Among those was resident Vincent Rose, who said he was concerned that the cuts to the school budget means the district's per pupil expenditure (PPE) would "go further down." A PPE is a dollar amount calculated by the state of Connecticut that represents how much a district spends on each student in the school district. Rose asked the finance board to justify why cuts were made to the school budget.

Finance board chairman Rob Tarlov responded, "It was made based on the first refer-

endum vote where it was two to one against the budget."

Resident Tom Mills also questioned the PPE. He asked if a district's PPE is reached by taking the total school budget and dividing it by the number of students in the district — a method Superintendent of Schools Jeffrey Mathieu quickly dispelled.

"There's a lot of costs that go into that. It's a formula that's done by the state," the superintendent said. "You cannot take the budget and divide by the number of students."

Additionally, Mills said he's concerned with the "large increase" the budget has seen over the years.

"I'm challenging whether the school department is really being transparent with the voters of this town or is it being hidden like what's happening all throughout the government today?"

Citizen Jim Kelly agreed the budgets have "gone up drastically." He said his concern is that "we're operating the same way we were when we had a rapidly growing school system and that is not the case. This is not something that has happened overnight. This has been happening year by year and it's going to continue to happen."

Don Kennedy, who happens to be on the Board of Education, stood and asked the crowd, "Are you happy with the education the kids are getting?"

Citizen Merja Lehtinen responded "No."

"It breaks my heart to see student after student after student going to mediocre colleges," she said, adding she doesn't believe the school district focuses on excellence. "I really believe that we have to take the money and put it aside and say 'What is affordable for our community?' Clearly this is not affordable."

Lehtinen furthered the town needs to get back to "being frugal."

However, others like Rose shared they are pleased with the school district. He said he'd like to have more money go into the school budget to "give the teachers a place where they want to teach as well."

"I respect the fact that nobody likes paying their taxes but I think that an education costs some money. I think we've gotten more than our money's worth out of the Colchester school system," Rose continued. "I have two kids in the system. I have many friends with kids in the system. We are very pleased with many aspects and believe it's succeeding despite the budget that has been given. I want to give more resources to the teachers, the staff."

Virginia Streppa, mother of four, with two having graduated from Bacon and two still enrolled at the high school, also defended the school district.

"All of our employees are very, very special," she said. "My children have gone to very good colleges. They've gotten money from college because of the programs they've been in. They've also been able to accelerate because

of the programs [in Colchester]."

Board of Education Chairman Ron Goldstein explained why the budget is rising but student enrollment is declining. One of the biggest drivers, he said, is special education costs and the transportation associated with them. Another is magnet school tuition.

"Parents in Colchester can choose to send their students to magnet schools and we have to pay tuition to many of those schools," Goldstein explained. "The cost with that over the past three years has tripled."

The chairman further explained "normal things we all have experienced" are continuing to rise within the school budget. Goldstein explained those include health insurance and benefits, utilities, transportation costs as well as something that hasn't been done in recent years within the school budget — "capital funding."

"Our buildings need some attention," Goldstein said, noting \$300,000 is included in the budget proposal for capital. "This community wants us to make a priority of our buildings."

Deadline Still Tuesday

Next Monday is Memorial Day, and the *Rivereast* offices will be closed. However, the copy deadline for next week's issue is still Tuesday at noon. All letters to the editor and news releases must be submitted by that time.

No exceptions will be made.

Poetry Fundraiser cont. from Front Page

let alone a writer,” he said, though he noted he had always been creative and involved in the arts. “I never considered myself a poet but I had to write and this is what came out.”

When he said he “had to write,” he meant it. He explained that he had hypergraphia, which is essentially the opposite of writer’s block. He said the day after he was diagnosed he just *had* to write.

He self-published his book in January 2013 and all proceeds from his book sales go to the Michael J. Fox Foundation (MJFF).

He currently has another collection of poetry in the works that he hopes to have published in the future.

* * *

Weatherwax grew up in Boston but settled in East Hampton in 1999. Prior to moving to Belltown, Weatherwax lived in Glastonbury and Hartford.

He was diagnosed with early-onset Parkinson’s disease 15 years ago, when he was only 38, he said. Prior to his diagnosis, he said, he knew nothing about the disease.

Weatherwax explained there is no medical test for Parkinson’s disease. Rather, it is diagnosed clinically.

He said he came to terms with his condition nearly immediately. Weatherwax recalled the night following his diagnosis was particularly restless, but the next day he knew he had to accept his illness.

“For me, acceptance is really important,” he said. “I’ve accepted it.”

Weatherwax said he was very active in the early years of his diagnosis because he knew he needed to prepare himself and his family for the future.

He started his own digital marketing consultant business, Global Strategies, in 2003, knowing he’d have to stop working in only a handful of years. He worked tirelessly for five years before selling his business in 2008. He is still a 10 percent owner, but isn’t involved in running the business.

“In 2007, I had Deep Brain Stimulation (DBS) surgery,” Weatherwax said. “They drill two holes in your head and insert electrodes to help alleviate the symptoms of Parkinson’s disease.”

Weatherwax provided the following words to young people who are diagnosed with early-onset Parkinson’s disease: “Practice radical acceptance of the condition and work real closely with your neurologist so you can continue to have a full life for as long as possible.”

Like many chronic illnesses, Parkinson’s disease affects an entire family, not just the person who is diagnosed.

“It’s been a challenge, certainly, for my wife and for my son and for me,” he said. “I don’t know what I would do without them.”

His wife, Josa, is an artist. She makes paintings, stained glass and mixed media art. Some of her pieces will be auctioned off in tonight’s silent auction.

Other pieces up for auction were created by members of Josa’s artist group, Parallel Visions, which is made up of artists from eastern Connecticut, including *Rivereast* towns East Hampton and Colchester.

Also up for auction will be drawings by Weatherwax’s 10-year-old son Tyler, as well as framed and matted photos, taken by Weatherwax himself, of balanced rock sculptures.

Rather than going through with an originally-planned raffle, Weatherwax affirmed a number of poetry collections from local poets will be for sale at tonight’s event. There will be 45 books of poems from 21 different poets.

Tonight’s event is at South Congregational Church in Glastonbury. Though Weatherwax is a practicing Buddhist, his wife and son are members of South Church, and when

Weatherwax doesn’t have any events for his own religion on Sundays, he goes with them to church in Glastonbury.

“It’s a great group of people there,” he said of the South Church congregation.

In fact, Weatherwax affirmed, a member of South Church will provide the buffet tonight, which will include a variety of “small bites,” like soups, crusty breads, pastries and salad.

* * *

As of Monday, the attendance for Poets for Parkinson’s was about 75 people. Weatherwax said Monday he was about halfway to his fundraising goal of \$4,000. However he said he anticipated that by tonight, his event will have raised just under \$6,000.

Weatherwax confirmed that 100 percent of the proceeds from tonight will go to the MJFF, which he called “an incredible organization.”

He said he chose to fundraise for the MJFF rather than any other foundation to benefit Parkinson’s research because of its approach. He explained that the organization found the “weak points” and areas where efforts were being duplicated in Parkinson’s research.

Plus, he said of his foundation choice, “Michael J. Fox is a great figurehead. He brings a lot to the table.”

The well-known actor launched MJFF in 2000. According to its website, michaeljfox.org, the organization works to fund research to find better treatments and a cure for Parkinson’s disease. It has funded more than \$450 million to speed a cure for Parkinson’s disease since its founding. The MJFF said it is the largest non-profit fundraiser of Parkinson’s drug development in the world.

In addition to finding a cure, the MJFF seeks to ensure the development of improved therapies for those living with Parkinson’s, according to the website.

“I have a vested interest in seeing a cure,” Weatherwax said.

That’s why he is registered for “Team Fox.” According to a news release from Weatherwax, “Team Fox started in 2006 as the community fundraising division of The Michael J. Fox Foundation. Currently, Team Fox has over 1,500 active members.”

According to michaeljfox.org/get-involved/teamfox.php, Team Fox members have raised more than \$27 million for Parkinson’s research, and Weatherwax is looking forward to adding to those contributions.

Most Team Fox fundraisers are based on athletics events like road races, Weatherwax explained. “So this is a different approach,” he said of his poetry reading.

“If you love poetry, it’ll be a great event,” Weatherwax said in an effort to lure in more attendees to tonight’s event. “The poetry isn’t all about the illness of Parkinson’s disease. But if you know someone with Parkinson’s disease, or anyone with chronic illness, it’s my hope that the words of *Renegade Pinky* register with people.”

In terms of the future of Poets for Parkinson’s, Weatherwax said, “It’s my hope that it continues.”

“Poets like to have their words heard,” he furthered. “So we were talking about making this an annual event that the Meeting House Poets host [to fundraise for the MJFF].”

* * *

Poets for Parkinson’s is tonight, May 23, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at South Church, 949 Main St., Glastonbury. Tickets can be purchased online at brainbug.com or www2.michaeljfox.org/goto/poets for \$40. Additional donations will be accepted at the door.

Weatherwax’s book, *Renegade Pinky*, is available on amazon.com.

For more information on Team Fox, visit teamfox.org or facebook.com/teamfox.

*From the Editor’s Desk***Observations & Ruminations**

by Mike Thompson

’Tis the season – or ’twas, I suppose, since most of them seemed to happen last weekend – for big names giving college commencement speeches.

My Marist College graduating class, the Class of 2001, netted itself a fairly big get for its commencement speech: Marist alum Bill O’Reilly, who, even back then, had already made quite the name for himself with his Fox News talk show.

I didn’t actually see O’Reilly speak. The night before graduation, I tripped and shattered my ankle – sometimes it’s all about how you fall, folks – and was told at the hospital that I needed an operation or I’d never walk again. (Note: Being told “or you’ll never walk again” is more than a little scary.) As much as I wanted to attend my graduation, my desire to walk again was a little stronger, so, after a nice round of self-pitying tears, I gave the doctor a Jean-Luc Picard-style “engage,” and away they went with the operation.

Anyway, I missed O’Reilly’s address (which, even though I was already left-leaning in those days, I still wanted to see, as I am and always have been a sucker for celebrities), although I was told later by some of my classmates the speech wasn’t very good and, besides, it was like 95 degrees out and everyone just wanted it to be over. But I’m reminded of O’Reilly’s appearance every May, when colleges and universities across the nation invite various high-profile names to deliver an address.

Here in Connecticut, such guests included Katie Couric at Trinity’s commencement, Secretary of State John Kerry at Yale’s, Joe Torre at the University of Hartford, and Mr. Grant himself, Ed Asner, at Southern Connecticut State University’s graduation ceremonies.

Also among the celebrity speakers: Portland’s own Erin Brady, the reigning Miss USA, who spoke at Central Connecticut State University’s commencement. According to the *Hartford Courant*, Brady, a member of the CCSU Class of 2010, encouraged those gathered at the XL Center last Saturday to chase their dreams – and never give up.

“Greater risk equals greater rewards,” Brady said. “In regards to your future, take risks early and often in your career. Whether you succeed or fail, taking risks allows you to be positioned to learn and soak up any and all information.”

Without risk-taking, Brady said, she wouldn’t be where she is today.

“I decided to take a chance on something totally outside of my comfort zone,” she told the students. “I fought for my own personal struggles of social anxiety and went for it.”

It was sound advice. It’s important to take chances – as Brady can attest, you never know just where they’ll lead.

* * *

Speaking of college graduations, I’m sure many of you by now know the story of Danielle Shea, 22, of Quincy, Mass., who made national headlines when she called in not one but two bomb threats as Quinnipiac University’s graduation was about to get underway last Saturday.

Shea had received thousands of dollars from her mother, intended for her college

education. Instead, it turns out Shea hadn’t been enrolled at Quinnipiac for a year, and had been living off-campus. Nevertheless, Shea purchased a cap and gown and her relatives came down to Hamden for the graduation. According to the Associated Press, Shea’s mother tried to obtain a ticket for a ramp where relatives could take photographs of the graduates, but the registrar’s office told her Shea was not enrolled.

Overhearing the conversation, Shea stepped away and placed the first of two calls to the university’s public safety department. In the call, made about 20 minutes before the graduation ceremony’s 6 p.m. start time, Shea said there was a “bomb in the library,” police told the AP. (The graduation was to take place on the quad outside the library.) Twenty minutes later, police said, Shea called again, warning that “several bombs are on campus,” and added, “You haven’t cleared out graduation. That’s not a good idea.”

This time, the graduation – which was for the 388 students in the College of Arts and Sciences, one of three Quinnipiac commencement ceremonies that day – was moved to a second location, at an indoor athletic arena. The graduation wound up kicking off an hour and a half after it was supposed to, at 7:30 p.m.

Police and school security traced the call to Shea, and officers located her at the arena. They pulled her aside, and arrested her, charging her with first-degree threatening and falsely reporting an incident. Released on \$10,000 bond, Shea is due back in court May 30.

I feel badly for the students. If the weather allows, graduation ceremonies should always be held outdoors, and this one got moved inside an arena for no other reason beyond a woman who panicked when realizing her mom was mere moments away from finding out thousands of dollars meant for college hadn’t gone there at all. Also, in this day and age, being told the graduation was being delayed and moved because of a “security threat” had to have been at least a little stressful and scary for a lot of people.

At the same time, though, I can’t help but feel a little bit bad for Shea. Obviously, what she did was pretty terrible all around – not just calling in the bomb threats but taking her mother’s thousands that were intended for education and using it for who-knows-what – but there’s got to be more to the story. She was a former Dean’s List student who, judging by media reports, seemed to like her university. So why did she drop out? (Quinnipiac said she was last enrolled as a student in the spring of 2013 – when interestingly, she only had sophomore standing, so she was a year behind the class she was allegedly a member of.)

Again, what Shea did was inexcusable, but there’s also still a lot of questions left to be answered. Sure, what happened Sunday made for a bizarre story, one that got reported by media outlets across the country, but I’m curious as to just what happened. Like I said, there’s got to be a reason.

* * *

See you next week.

Light Turnout in Andover, But Budget Passes

by Geeta Schrayter

The proposed Andover budget for 2014-15 was approved Tuesday, at a referendum that saw sparse attendance.

Out of 2,109 registered voters, just 218, or 10.3 percent, cast their vote – but that number was actually an increase over the year prior, when only 173 people took to the polls.

Of those who voted, 175 were in favor of the proposed \$10.65 million budget, while 42 were against the spending package (Assistant Town Clerk Mikki Busch explained this week one individual who showed up to vote submitted a blank ballot, which is why 218 voters are listed as coming out, while there were only 217 votes).

The approved number totals \$10,651,362.45 and includes \$4,269,044 for Andover Elementary School and \$3,949,770 for Andover's portion of the RHAM budget, which is based on the number of students from town who attend the schools and decreased \$11,905.

"I was pleased to see the budget passed first go-around," First Selectman Bob Burbank said Wednesday. "I think they're easier to pass when there's no tax increase – or in this case, a slight tax reduction."

The budget is a \$27,320.93, or .26 percent, decrease over the current year and will result in a mill rate decrease of .05 to 30.72. The mill rate is used to calculate a resident's taxes, and for a house valued at \$200,000 this would mean a \$10 tax decrease from \$6,154 to \$6,144.

"We were able to have a slight increase [on the town side] thanks to the elementary school

that went down a little bit on their budget," Burbank continued.

The town education budget is approximately \$65,000 less than the current \$4.3 million budget. Superintendent of Schools Andrew Maneggia explained when he presented the budget in January that the 2014-15 budget remains relatively the same, with a few increases spread throughout the accounts. However, he furthered there were also some significant decreases.

These include a \$13,228 decrease in salaries due to a reduction of two teaching positions in response to declining enrollment; a \$38,374 decrease in the insurance account, which was a result of a lower insurance increase and changes to insurance plans; and a \$23,999 decrease due to one less student outplacement.

The town budget includes a \$5,433 decrease in capital expenditures; a \$3,870 decrease in interest expense; and a \$1,559.08 decrease in the amount for AHM Youth and Family Services.

Some increases are also included, such as an additional \$12,000 for snow removal, which replaces money cut in previous years' budgets; an additional \$6,865.83 for the Public Works Department, which includes union raises, funds for tree removal and vehicle maintenance; and \$6,154.32 for the Town Office Building account, for the replacement of some older computers.

Due to the decreases in the education bud-

gets, Burbank furthered the town was able to include some of the above increases.

"We were able to put a little bit more toward the highway," he stated. "The snow budget was over expended this year so we had to add a substantial amount of money to pay for sand and salt – and so that was probably the largest increase that we had for the town."

In addition, Burbank explained, "we had to replace some of the town's computers because they run on [the operating system Microsoft] XP or older and of course, they're not supported anymore."

Also included in next year's budget are wages for various employees. A 3 percent raise for elected personnel was included as a result of the vote at the May 7 town meeting that approved the increase; a three percent wage increase for non-elected employees is also part of the overall number, as is a two percent raise for unionized employees.

Further increases include an additional \$4,977 for maintenance and gas for the senior vans and more money for the drivers, as well as an additional \$3,096.44 for the Planning and Zoning Commission budget which includes wage increases, and \$1,380 to update wiring at the Old Town Hall.

The 2014-15 budget also contains funding for three capital requests: \$50,000 for the purchase of a minivan with a wheelchair/walker accessible ramp; \$33,145 for the second of a five-year annual lease to purchase dump truck;

and \$16,306 for 16 voice amplifiers and radio interface units for the fire department.

This week, Board of Finance Chairwoman Georgette Conrad said she was "very happy that the budget passed but I'm disappointed that there weren't more people who voted."

Vice First Selectman Jay Linddy felt similarly.

"You always want to see more than 218 people come out and vote," he stated. "The people – they're satisfied that this is the third year we didn't go up on the mill rate, but you just wish more people would come out."

Although Linddy furthered, "It's like that in every town," he still felt "it's a little disappointing when only about 200 come out to vote."

But he continued, "The Board of Finance did a great job, the Board of Selectmen did a great job, and that's the reason why it was 80 percent 'yes,' 20 percent 'no.'"

Speaking about whether or not the approved budget would adequately meet town needs in the upcoming year, Burbank stated, "we spend a lot of time reviewing the budget before it's presented to the Board of Finance and we go through it line by line and we look at the previous year's expenditures and then we anticipate what future costs will be in certain areas like fuel and stuff like that."

He concluded, "We always make it work."

The approved budget will come into affect at the start of the 2014-15 fiscal year, July 1.

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Enhanced Search Engine Coming to Area Libraries

by Melissa Roberto

We're living in a world where technology advances every day, and libraries in three of the six *River east* towns have recently made efforts to keep up with it – which is why they're excited to announce a new computer system coming soon to each location that will make finding items an easier process for patrons.

Through Integrated Interfaces Inc. – or what library directors refer to as "Triple I" – a new library search system called Encore is anticipated to hit Richmond Memorial Library in Marlborough, Cragin Memorial Library in Colchester and Portland Library, on Monday, June 2.

Kate Byroade, library director in Colchester, explained Encore is a computer system featuring a new catalog that is "more intuitive." She continued it's a system that is similar to what Internet users are familiar with when using search engines like Google and Amazon to find a product.

Byroade explained if a patron is looking for a "hot title" and begins to search for it in Encore, "when you get to a certain number of letters it's just going to pop right up for you as a response."

"That's a really nice thing," she said. "You go to Amazon and it reads your mind. This new system will be like that."

The three libraries on the east side of the river are a small portion of the 30 libraries in the greater Hartford area that are adopting the new system. The 30 libraries make up the consortium "Library Connection." Byroade explained the current system in place has been used by the consortium since 2001 and directors were growing concerned that it "has not stayed fresh and up to date."

These concerns led to the formation of a library task force consisting of eight library directors from Library Connection. Byroade was among the eight and explained the search for a new system began in the fall of 2012 with a RFP (request for proposal) process.

"In the end we were down to two systems," Byroade explained. "One was actually our current [system], and the other was this new system from Triple I."

And it seems each library in the area is ready and eager for the switch.

"This one has been up and coming for some time," Portland Library director Jan Nocek said of Encore. "There will be 24/7 access and it can be used from a computer or mobile device at any time."

The new computer system will also recommend books, or other library products to users based on their searches.

In a press release, Richmond Memorial Library director Nancy Wood said she's "always been disappointed in the online catalog we use now. ... Twenty years ago, we still were using card catalogs; now we have a whole generation of users who don't even know what a card catalog is and, thanks to great products like Encore, information is easier than ever to find."

Similar to the system currently in place, Encore will be used to find all of the physical materials a library within Library Connection holds. The difference, Byroade explained, is that patrons will find it "easier to navigate."

"I think people will really enjoy the new interface a lot too," she said.

Among the features, individuals will be able to borrow e-books from library connection's shared e-book collection, as well as other services already in place, such as emailed due date reminders, online renewal and the ability to reserve items from home, a press release states.

Additionally, Encore can be accessed at any time night or day, Nocek explained. The system will not only be accessible through computers but mobile devices, computers, laptops and tablets, too.

As opposed to the current system, Byroade said Encore will format itself appropriately for a smaller mobile screen.

"That's a really nice benefit to another minor irritation," she said.

Another solution Encore brings to the libraries is one Byroade said is "behind the scenes."

"Our current system won't put out the statistics staff need in [Microsoft] Excel format so we tend to have to transcribe the numbers," Byroade said. "So there's one big improvement on the staff side."

Additionally, the switch to Encore will actually result in cost savings for the consortium. This is because the computer system will switch to a cloud configuration rather than the existing need of purchasing a new server every five years.

"In the end, over time it ends up being a considerable savings," Byroade said.

With Encore's arrival mere weeks away, the directors said they'll be busy in the weeks ahead continuing training on how to use it.

"We just hope that everyone will be excited by it," Byroade said. "And we hope people understand it will take a couple weeks for people

on staff to be 100 percent. We've got smart, good people working for us and it'll be the first time for everybody."

Nocek highlighted what the goal is in the new process.

"We want people to be able to get the most

out of their libraries that they support," she said.

And, starting June 2, folks in Colchester, Marlborough and Portland can take a look at Encore, through their libraries' websites, or at the libraries themselves.

Mulligan Endorsed For 55th House District Seat at Republican Convention

Gayle J. Mulligan of 59 Sentinel Woods Dr., is officially the Republican candidate to represent the 55th District in the state General Assembly, after being unanimously endorsed at the district's Republican convention, held May 14 at Hebron Town Hall.



Gayle Mulligan

Mulligan, the chairwoman of the Hebron Board of Selectmen, will face Democrat Joe La Bella in November's election. The district, which represents Andover, Bolton, Hebron and Marlborough, has been represented by Pamela Z. Sawyer for the past 22 years; Sawyer is not seeking re-election, and has personally endorsed Gayle.

As of two weeks ago, Mulligan met the requirements to apply for the Citizens' Election Program by collecting more than 150 in-district small donations and a total of \$5,000 – and she will apply for it this week.

Mulligan said her top priorities will be sensible spending, lower taxation and the promotion of legislation that will keep jobs in our state. She said she believes small business owners need a voice in Hartford, local governments must run efficiently without the constant interference and complications of unfunded mandates, and that small towns have unique challenges as compared to the larger towns and cities.

"My candidacy is about you; your families, your businesses, and your communities," Mulligan told those gathered at the convention last week. "I want to work for you, to fight to bring common sense back

to Hartford.

"As a selectman, I have been an advocate for eastern Connecticut through my passion for work in the areas of tax containment, education, economic development, environmental protection and community character preservation," she continued. "As your state representative, I will continue to advocate for our small towns. I will continue to be the voice of reason, will demand accountability, and work in a bi-partisan fashion to make sound, fiscally responsible decisions that are for the betterment of our district and for the state."

A longtime resident of Connecticut, Mulligan has lived in Hebron since 1996 with her husband and two children. She has served as a volunteer in her community. Gayle started off helping at the Hebron Center Nursery School Co-Op where her two children attended. She then got involved with the Hebron PTA, acting as co-president for two years.

An active soccer player herself, she coached youth soccer and was a member of the Hebron Soccer Board of Directors and served as Executive Director through 2012. Gayle was appointed as the Republican Deputy Registrar in 2004. She was first elected to public office in 2005 on the Hebron Zoning Board of Appeals. In 2007, Gayle was elected to the Hebron Board of Selectmen. She was voted the board's vice chairman in 2007 and its chairman in 2013. She is also a member of Gilead Congregational Church, a Justice of the Peace and works part-time at the Hebron Quick Lube.

To learn more about Mulligan or to support her campaign, find her on Facebook at [facebook.com/MulliganforStateRep](https://www.facebook.com/MulliganforStateRep), visit her website at mulliganforstatere.wix.com/mulliganforstaterep or email her at mulliganforstaterep@gmail.com.

Team Lorenzo Not Going Down Without a Fight in East Hampton

by **Jacqueline Sembor, National MS Society**

When East Hampton resident Dick Schroth met his little brother through the Big Brothers Big Sisters program he knew how important an extra bit of support can be to a child facing adversity. He couldn't have known, however, what that support might mean 20 years down the road.

"When I met Lorenzo, I knew that he was a good kid but he really made a mark on me," shared Schroth, who had three teenagers of his own, Alison, Jon and Brian. "He was quick to become a part of the family and we loved having him around."

Lorenzo Rogala-Noland was a high school student, only two years older than Schroth's own daughter. He played on his high school basketball team, ran track and was an all-around outgoing boy. As he grew closer to the family, Rogala-Noland even moved into the Schroth home.

"It was a bad situation for me at home, but Dick and his family were always there for me," remembered Rogala-Noland.

So, in 2000, when Rogala-Noland shared that he had been diagnosed with a potentially debilitating disease, the Schroth family was devastated.

"Looking back I can see that I had been battling symptoms all throughout my high school years," said Rogala-Noland, now a resident of Middletown. "Whenever I mentioned that my legs were numb or tingling, people would say, 'it's shin splints, you're an athlete, you'll be fine.' I knew that wasn't the case, but I couldn't find a doctor to take me seriously until I met a neurologist when I was 18 years old. It took almost two years to find out that it was multiple sclerosis."

More than 6,000 Connecticut residents are affected by multiple sclerosis, an autoimmune disease affecting the central nervous system. The cause is unknown and there is currently no cure for MS. Symptoms can include, among other things, numbness in the limbs, difficulties with vision and speech, stiffness, loss of mobility and, in some more severe cases, total paralysis. The progress, severity and specific symptoms of MS in any one person cannot be predicted.

"There were two years before my diagnosis when I didn't see any of the Schroths," said Rogala-Noland, now 34. "I didn't know what

was wrong with me and I pulled away from everyone. Once I knew what MS was, that it wasn't contagious, I got back in touch. Dick's wife, Linda, is a doctor and knew a bit more about it than I did."

Together, the team asked many questions, found some answers, and ultimately kept moving forward. But the Schroths knew they had to find a way to help, and the Team Lorenzo Bike MS fundraising team was born.

"I've always had a bike but I wouldn't call myself an avid cyclist," said Schroth, now president of his own company, Schroth Systems Consulting, Inc. "When I learned of the National MS Society's Bike MS event I knew it was something we could try together. But it's really been Lorenzo who keeps me motivated."

Team Lorenzo has participated in every June Bike MS event, in Windsor, since the team was established in 2006. With a core of family and friends, including Schroth's wife and three children, now in their 30s, the team usually rides with about 20 participants, and the miles covered vary from year to year.

"I started out doing the 25-mile route with Lorenzo," remembered Schroth, who recently underwent shoulder surgery, but won't let that keep him off of a bike. "There were a couple of times I completed the century ride, but I usually completed the 50-mile route. This year I have to be careful because of my shoulder, but I'm still going out for the 25. Even if I have to go a bit slower and use one hand, I'm riding."

Rogala-Noland has continued to ride too, despite his MS and the various symptoms it brings to his life. He began in 2006 with the 25-mile route and eventually switched to the 10. Now a father of a 5-year-old, Corey, he plans to do the two-mile course with his son.

"Without my big brother, I probably would have given up a long time ago," said Rogala-Noland, who has experienced numbness, tingling, balance and bladder issues, temporary loss of sight, smell and taste, among other things, due to his MS. "Dick is the reason why I keep fighting. He has always been the one to push me and keep me inspired. As long as he has expectations of me, I'm going to push myself to meet them."

The 2014 Praxair Bike MS Ride, presented by Louis Dreyfus Commodities, will be held Sunday, June 1, in Windsor and Sunday, June 8, in Westport. Finish line festivities include a



East Hampton resident Dick Schroth's "little brother" Lorenzo Rogala-Noland, 34, was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis in 2000. Schroth and a group of family and friends now ride annually as Team Lorenzo during the Praxair Bike MS Ride, which will take place twice next month, in Windsor and Westport.

barbeque lunch, live entertainment, local vendors offering product samples, free massage therapy and more.

Last year, Bike MS attracted more than 800 cyclists and raised more than \$578,000. This year, the chapter hopes to raise \$595,000. Team Lorenzo has set a \$5,000 fundraising goal.

"I usually send an email reminding my friends that Bike MS is around the corner, so if anyone would like to support the team, they can do so," said Schroth, who has led Team Lorenzo in raising more than \$40,000 since its inception in 2006. "It's a pretty low-key push to fundraise, but each year we raise around \$5,000."

Funds raised by the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, Connecticut Chapter, through events such as Bike MS, go toward ongoing

scientific research to find better treatments and a cure, as well as help to provide vital programs and services offered by the chapter to those in the state living with multiple sclerosis.

WTNH-TV News 8 anchor Darren Kramer will serve as the grand marshal of Bike MS. Community partners include WTNH-TV News 8, WRCH-FM Lite 100.5 and The Fox 95.9-FM.

"I enjoy the ride as an event to get out and reconnect with my family and friends," said Schroth. "But I also get a good feeling knowing that I am doing something to take an active role in helping out a good cause."

For more information on the 2014 Praxair Bike MS, presented by Louis Dreyfus Commodities, visit bikeMSct.org. To donate to Team Lorenzo, visit tinyurl.com/TeamLorenzo2014.

Belldown Awarded \$500K State Grant

by **Elizabeth Bowling**

East Hampton was recently awarded a \$500,000 grant from the state of Connecticut, to go toward the implementation of Phase II of the Watrous Street Redevelopment Project.

Each year, the state awards select towns with Small Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP) grants. STEAP grants are annual opportunities for towns to receive state funding for a variety of projects that would boost local economy.

A town can receive up to \$500,000 in funding and 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.

This year, the Town Council opted to only apply for one grant, for the full \$500,000 maxi-

mum.

The funding was awarded and will go toward improvements to 13 Watrous St., which Belldown's state representative called a "long-time liability."

According to a news release sent on behalf of state Rep. Melissa Ziobron earlier this week, "The project promotes economic development and removes a public health threat by remediating a brownfield at the Summit Thread Powerhouse and turning it into a public parking area."

Town Manager Mike Maniscalco elaborated on what exactly will be funded by the grant.

The funding will go toward "environmental remediation," Maniscalco affirmed.

He explained the purpose of the completed Phase I was to "identify hazards" and "remove some of those hazards."

Those "hazards," such as coal and other fuels in the ground, are a result of the power plant that used to exist on that property. It was a power plant for the thread company that used to be across the street at 13 Summit St., Maniscalco said.

Regarding the STEAP grant funding for Phase II he said, "This should remove a good portion of what's left [of the hazards]."

He added there will probably be a Phase III, and maybe a Phase IV to the project.

Ultimately the property is to be paved over and turned into a municipal parking lot, Maniscalco explained.

"It's very exciting. It's very good news for our community," he concluded of being awarded the STEAP grant. "As a community left with significant brownfields, it's really going to help the redevelopment of our Village

Center."

Ziobron sang a similar tune.

"By increasing parking in the Village Center we will stimulate growth for our small businesses and attract more customers," she said. "This grant will strengthen our business center here in East Hampton and I am confident that this will be an invaluable investment."

Town Council Chairwoman Barbara Moore said she, too, was pleased Belldown received the grant.

"I was very pleased to hear the news that East Hampton has been awarded \$500,000 toward our commitment to continue cleaning up the brownfields areas in our Village Center," she wrote in an email Tuesday. "I thank the members of the Brownsfield Commission for continuing to search for more ways to accomplish this goal."

Phase III of Marlborough Sewer Project in the Works

by **Melissa Roberto**

A third phase of the town's sewer expansion project is in the works, according to a discussion held by the Board of Selectmen Tuesday.

The phase is estimated at \$3.5 million, though the cost is expected to be paid for by the state.

The Water Pollution Control Authority has been discussing a third phase since last fall. According to meeting minutes posted on the town website, the WPCA selected what area of the town Phase III would complete, and by a vote of 4-1, the commission voted to move it forward to the board of selectmen for consideration.

The one WPCA member opposed to a third phase was Bill Lardi, who, according to meeting minutes, said "he cannot support any of the alternatives or moving forward to another phase when there are too many issues from the previous phases that he feels have not been addressed to his satisfaction."

The first phase of the sewer project was marked by delays and then lawsuits against the town. The second phase, approved at a town meeting last June, has gone more quietly, and is currently under construction. Phase II begins with a sewer line at the southern intersection of Cheney Road and Park Road, and will also hook up Beverly Lane and five houses on North Main Street. Phase II also includes a second portion of the project to be funded not by the town, but by the Marlborough Health Care Center. The center was described last year to be in "dire need" of a sewer system by public officials and its portion would include the installation of a sewer line on Stage Harbor Road.

Town Planner Peter Hughes attended

Tuesday's selectmen meeting and shared just which portions of the town Phase III would include. He said the project would complete the lake watershed.

"We would go from 156 North Main St., where we stopped [in Phase II] moving down to the intersection of Lake Road. We will do Lake Road and Coleman Lane. Those three streets would complete the lake front properties," Hughes said.

The planner added that two properties on Washington Road would be hooked up to a system, as well as "the rest of Walker Lane." Then the project would move to "the end of Pettengill Road." Following that, Lafayette Road would be completed, in addition to "anywhere between 2,100 to 2,800 feet" of Roberts Road, Hughes said.

The town had previously made two applications to the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection to receive clean water funding to put towards the sewer expansion project; \$1.1 million of funding was set aside for phase II, and on Tuesday, Hughes told board members that the town is currently on a list to receive \$3.5 million for Phase III – a list that Hughes said should be finalized by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) "in the next week or two."

While the funding would come from DEEP, First Selectwoman Cathi Gaudinski said the \$3.5 million total pushes the project "to the threshold of a referendum." She said the referendum would be November's election, because the \$3.5 million "pushes to a threshold of a referendum." She said the vote on the project

would tie into the November elections coming up.

"It's a very prescribed process in terms of timelines and authorizations," she told fellow selectmen Dick Shea and Denis Soucy. "This will be, as a Board of Selectmen, our first referendum in terms of bonding and the approval process."

The town's bond counsel, Joseph Fasi, prepared a timeline the town would need to abide to in order to bring the project to a referendum vote in November. It involves votes from the WPCA, boards of selectmen and finance, and includes a public hearing and town meeting.

No action was taken Tuesday, and Gaudinski confirmed the discussion was placed on the agenda so the other members of the board would be updated about "where the WPCA is on this and our next steps."

* * *

Also at Tuesday's meeting, Gaudinski updated the board on the town center public water system.

Last July, the town had applied for and received a \$500,000 Small Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP) grant, to be utilized for the expansion of the town's public water system to include all properties in the Marlborough Village Center.

The town had entered into an agreement with Connecticut Water Company, who was responsible for the engineering, design and site work of the project. However, on Tuesday, Gaudinski informed the board that while the project is continuing forward, Connecticut Water pulled out of the project.

"They've withdrawn because it doesn't fit in with their business plan at this time," Gaudinski said.

The first selectwoman furthered the water company had completed 80 percent of the design plans, and that they would be electronically transferred over to the town engineers for completion.

Additionally, Gaudinski shared, Hughes "has been meeting with the Department of Public Health and we've been having conversation to keep the project moving forward, and Connecticut Water Company has been assisting us in that."

Hughes told the selectmen he believes the design of the project will be completed in June, and following that, it would go out to bid in late July or August for fall 2015 construction.

"And we'll have it completed before Thanksgiving," Hughes said.

The \$500,000 STEAP grant will go toward the cost of construction, and an additional \$50,000 of town funds will go towards the engineering and design costs, which was approved at a town meeting in 2012.

Gaudinski stressed the significance of the project moving forward.

"It's still a necessity to have a public water system in the town center for business expansion. That hasn't changed," she told the selectmen.

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The next Board of Selectmen meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, June 3, at 7 p.m., at Town Hall.

Petroni Resigns from Marlborough Finance Board

by **Melissa Roberto**

Beth Petroni has resigned from the Board of Finance, in the middle of her ninth year on the board, in order to focus on her health.

Petroni, who has called Marlborough home for the last 18 years, lives in town with her husband Victor and two of her three sons, Nicholas, 25, Michael, 24, and Joseph, 14. Petroni will soon head to Houston, Texas, to undergo an alternative form of treatment for the pancreatic cancer she has battled since her diagnosis in February 2012.

The seasoned volunteer was first appointed to a vacant seat on the Board of Finance in February 2006. She was elected to a full term in 2007, and again in 2011. Her current term runs through November 2015.

Petroni's commitment to the town was also exemplified during her involvement on the Democratic Town Committee, which she also recently resigned from.

"I've been involved with the DTC since I moved in 18 years ago," Petroni reflected upon this week.

Petroni said she also spent "many years" serving on the Board of Directors for the Marlborough Elementary Childcare Association, and for two years served as its president. The dedicated citizen is also a past president of the Marlborough Women's Club, a club of which she is still a member of.

However, Petroni's health decline has put a halt to serving in the capacity she would like to, she said.

Petroni was first diagnosed with cancer in 2012, and has remained strong the last two years, having undergone what she described as "very heavy-duty therapy and radiation" to battle her illness. The fighter explained what led her to resign from the boards she's been so

fond of participating in.

"At this point I've really utilized all of the conventional therapies that the doctors use for pancreatic cancer," Petroni shared. "My doctor recommended I start looking at clinical trials."

Since 2012, Petroni has been seeing a doctor at the Smilow Cancer Hospital at Yale-New Haven, where she said she's received "unbelievable medical care." However, a scan in the beginning of March showed small progression in the tumor within her pancreas, she explained. That prompted Petroni's doctor to recommend looking at various immunotherapy trials in the country, which are new developments in the cancer world, Petroni said.

Petroni said she "tried to hit all the large research institutions to find a spot in one of these trials," adding a spot on a trial is "hard to get."

Petroni researched trials at the Yale Smilow Hospital, as well as Harvard's Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, and The University of Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer Center in Houston. Petroni managed to get a spot on a clinical trial in Houston, and she's "holding on to it."

"It's very cutting-edge and I was very proud to get one of the six pancreatic slots," Petroni said this week.

The trial is designed to work to help Petroni's immune system recognize the cancer and fight it off. "What I'm taking is an antibody to take that mask down," she explained, "so that my own immune system can start fighting the cancer."

Petroni shared how "blessed" she is to be given the opportunity to continue fighting on. "I'm just extremely blessed to have all the tools I need," she said.

And one of those tools, Petroni said, is the support she's received from loved ones and friends in her hometown.

"Without them I wouldn't have been able to

get this far," she said of family and friends in the community.

In addition to resigning from her positions in town, the Texas trials also meant Petroni had to take a medical leave from her job as the information technology director for the state Department of Children and Families.

"I loved my job," she said. "It was the hardest thing to do."

And while her daily enjoyments of volunteering and working are being put aside, Petroni communicated her goals that will keep her busy.

"My number one goal is to find my older son a wife," she said with a laugh. "And to live everyday to the fullest and be with my family as much as I can."

"And to just enjoy my life," she added. "I love my work, I love my volunteering, but right now I have to focus on my trial."

Aside from obtaining a seat on the Houston trial, Petroni said she's also blessed to be able to get treatment in a city where her oldest son and her two brothers live. "I'm very blessed I have a support system there," she said.

Petroni said she will be getting treatment in Houston "every other week for a while." But she certainly has years of fond memories from home to reflect on while down south.

"I believe in community service. It's always been a part of my life. When I was 13 year old, I was on the corner handing out voter registration cards," Petroni explained. "It's always been important to stay as active as I could in that. It certainly helped me take on what challenges I had medically."

Petroni said her hope for the Board of Finance is to continue taking on a goal she believes she had from the beginning: "As opposed to just cutting and adding, to focus on what we believe were our core services that we truly

thought were important, and making sure we provide a certain level of safety and protection through our police."

And from there, the longtime finance member added, "Start to make decisions about what else it is that we can afford. I hope that Marlborough continues to look at the way it delivers services that way."

* * *

Following Petroni's resignation, the DTC endorsed Democrat Torin Lee-Lewis to fill the newly-created vacancy. The Board of Selectmen unanimously voted Lee-Lewis to the seat in its meeting Tuesday night. Petroni shared her support in Lee-Lewis continuing her term.

"I think Marlborough would be well-served by somebody as active and involved as Torin is, especially in the business community," she said, noting her successor owns a business in town, Oneida Holistic Health Center.

DTC Vice Chairman Joe La Bella – who formerly served alongside Petroni on the finance board – commented on Petroni's departure.

"I think it's a big loss to lose that from the Board of Finance," he said of Petroni's commitment. "I had the pleasure of serving with her and I consider her an asset to the town. I learned a lot from her serving on the board. We all wish her and her family the best in this battle. I, as many people in town, would be willing to help her in any way we can."

DTC Chairwoman Lauren Cragg also said Petroni will be missed on the board.

"I was honored and fortunate to have served with Beth Petroni on the Board of Finance," Cragg said. "Her insights and knowledge of the town's budgeting and finances will be missed by not only the board but the taxpayers whose hard earned dollars she ruthlessly defended."

Former Marlborough Selectmen Seeks State Rep Seat

by Geeta Schrayter

Former Marlborough selectman and Board of Finance member Joe La Bella is seeking the 55th House District Seat in November, and on Tuesday, he received the Democratic endorsement for the position.

La Bella will be facing Hebron selectwoman Gayle Mulligan, who was endorsed for the Republican nomination last week. The 22-year holder of the seat, Republican Pamela Sawyer, is not seeking re-election this fall.

La Bella, who has lived in Marlborough for almost 20 years, shared this week he began thinking of running about a month ago; however, he added, it wasn't until recently that he came to the conclusion he really wanted to go for it.

"Really over the last couple of weeks, it's come to focus that I really wanted to run and was really committed to it," La Bella stated, explaining there were a number of things that went into the decision.

These included thinking about his family, which includes wife Irene and twin sons Michael and James, as well as his work as an attorney; he's a solo practitioner at his office in Marlborough, which he opened last October. In addition, La Bella's wife runs her own consulting business.

"So there was a lot of talk about family and commitments," he said. "Then I thought, 'Do I believe I can make a difference?' and I believe I can, and can do a good job serving the district."

And it's a district La Bella is familiar with, having been "very involved in the community in the nearly 20 years we've been here."

Both La Bella and his wife were involved with the Marlborough Soccer Club when their sons were younger, and have been moderators for the Future Problem Solvers program at RHAM Middle School for the past few years. 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.

Regarding his qualifications for state representative, La Bella furthered he had "broad experience" at the local level, having spent nearly 10 years on the Board of Finance – including a one-year stint as board chair – from 1996 until 2006, when he made the switch to the Board of Selectmen.

"So I have a great deal of experience both on the fiscal side with the Board of Finance, and the government side with the Board of Selectmen," he stated. "So I think I have a good understanding of our local government. I also think I have the tools necessary to represent the district and to be an advocate for the residents of the 55th District out in Hartford."

La Bella remained on the Board of Selectmen in town until 2011, when he said he decided to distance himself from politics.

"I had some anticipation my career path was going to be changing and also, I had been in [politics] for close to 15 years, and was looking forward to taking some time off," he explained.

But now, La Bella – who is currently the vice chairman of the Marlborough Democratic Town Committee – said he's ready for a comeback.

"I'm anxious to get back in," he said. "I'm anxious to get involved. I'm anxious to take on some new challenges in the state legislature."

And some of those challenges revolved around preservation. La Bella stated the four towns in the district – Andover, Bolton, Hebron and Marlborough – "are all unique but there are some common characteristics."

"We're fairly rural communities," he furthered. "I'd like to work to preserve that and kind of that unique sense of place in each [town]."

In addition, La Bella said he wants to work to bring more business into the area as well as development that's "consistent with the nature

and character of the towns."

"That's one thing across all four towns we can really use," he explained. "Marlborough has struggled with it for a long time and so have the other towns in some ways."

Additionally, La Bella said he wants to work for "some of the most vulnerable members of our communities," who fell on "both ends of the spectrum" – students and seniors.

Regarding the latter, La Bella explained he understood some of the needs of the elderly firsthand because his father, who suffered from dementia, lived with the La Bellas for the last six years of his life.

"There are seniors who need our help, who have worked hard all their lives and really deserve our support," he stated.

"At the other end of that are our students. We have an obligation to educate these students for the 21st century," La Bella continued. "I'm an advocate for education."

La Bella shared when he and his wife first moved to Marlborough "knowing the tremendous community and sense of place" in town, they intended to possibly move elsewhere later on.

"When we had children we felt if we were ever going to move we'd want to before the boys started school," he stated. "So we looked around, and from our perspective, there was no better place to raise kids [than Marlborough]. We had a great experience at the schools – ours are wonderful in the town – and that's one of the things I'd really like to work for."

However, La Bella added in a press release announcing his run that he would advocate education while "remaining mindful always of the economic realities that we all face."

La Bella also shared an example of legislation he would support. Currently, he said, Connecticut Senate Bill 304, or, "An Act Maximizing Jobs for State Workers by Requiring Local Construction Hiring Reports by Recipients of



Joe La Bella

Economic Development Funds," is tabled for next session.

La Bella explained he was a fan of the bill. "The concept is that we're taking Connecticut tax dollars through the Department of Economic and Community Development and we're using it for projects that are appropriate and helping our communities. I think we should also be using that to hire Connecticut workers to do the work," he stated. "That's something I'd support."

Now that La Bella has received the Democratic nomination, he will now begin campaigning – all with the hopes of being elected, given the opportunity to support bills like the one above, and making a positive difference for the towns in the 55th District.

For more information, to ask questions or provide comments or suggestions, email joelabella2014@gmail.com.

Portland Awarded \$363K State Grant

by Elizabeth Bowling

Portland was awarded a \$363,000 grant Monday from the state to complete the Brownstone Avenue Extension Project.

Each year, the state awards select towns with Small Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP) grants intended to fund projects that would boost local economy.

A town can receive up to \$500,000 in funding and can apply for more than one grant, so long as the total amount the town applies for does not exceed \$500,000.

This year, Portland applied for a \$363,000 STEAP grant to conclude its Brownstone Avenue Extension Project, which it was awarded earlier this week.

First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield said she received the good news in a phone call Monday from the Office of Policy Management, which administers STEAP grants.

"We're thrilled to have this fourth grant," Bransfield said, "and look forward to its implementation."

The grant will cover the final phase of the

four-phase project. In the first three phases of the project, which were completed from 2008 to 2012: Brownstone Avenue was extended to the intersection of Middlesex Avenue; sidewalks were installed from Brownstone Avenue, along Middlesex Avenue to Main Street; a new paved parking lot was constructed; a wooden open-air pavilion and outdoor amphitheater stage, with electrical service, were constructed; and a new entrance gate was installed.

According to Portland's grant application, the first three phases of the project were completed through STEAP grant funds totaling \$726,170.

According to language in the grant application, the fourth phase calls for the enhancement of the riverfront parcel with amenities designed to accommodate visitors. Those enhancements include: the installation of water and sewer connections to the pavilion; the construction of a free-standing handicapped accessible co-ed restroom; a band shell cover over the amphitheater stage; a driveway to the pavilion and handicapped parking area; and outdoor ameni-

ties like landscaping, grills and picnic tables.

The town-owned, waterfront property is located along the Connecticut River, across the street from the town-owned National Historic Landmark Brownstone Quarries.

Those quarries are home to the Brownstone Exploration and Discovery Park, which last year saw 74,876 visitors compared to the 973 visitors it had in 2006 when it first opened.

"Due to the momentum created by this business, as well as the increased activity on the riverfront property, a continued increase in economic growth is fully expected," according to the application.

Regarding the history of the project, the riverfront parcel and the two adjacent historic brownstone quarries were purchased with local tax dollars in 1999 for \$1,050,000, the application stated.

It also stated, "The proposed development activities will take place in already disturbed areas of the site which are clear of vegetation and currently used for passive recreation and

parking."

The project is intended to turn the property into a "destination location" where community gatherings, festivals and economic development can occur," the grant application stated.

State Rep. Christie Carpino expressed her pleasure in the grant, too.

"This state grant is a massive boost for the town of Portland," she said in a news release. "This final phase of the Riverfront project will provide significant economic benefit to the small businesses that line Portland's Main Street."

The final project design should be completed in six months. From that point, it should be an additional nine months for construction.

That 15-month period is an estimate of the time it will take to complete the project, Bransfield said. The clock will start once the town gets official documentation of the grant.

The cost is broken down into: construction cost, \$272,000; engineering cost, \$55,000; and contingency, \$33,000.

Scaled-Back TownPlace Plans Discussed in Portland

by Elizabeth Bowling

The Board of Selectmen Wednesday heard from the owner of the Elmcrest property, who informed town officials that his plans for Portland TownPlace have changed since they were approved five years ago.

Fred Hassan, the owner of the Elmcrest property, also known as the Portland TownPlace project property, called his undertaking a “very ambitious project” when it first started.

“Since then, the world has changed,” he furthered. “The economic feasibility is different today than it was back then. So we’ll probably be coming in for a revised site plan and vision based on what we have in the works.”

By “in the works,” Hassan was referring to: his lease with a major pharmacy chain, which he said is contingent upon there being other developments on the property; his negotiations with a restaurant, “which we’re very well along with,” he said; and having residential apartments and retail space on the property.

Hassan said within the last three to four months, he and his team met with three to four “different groups” and are still trying to put something together.

The specifics of the project are “unknown” to him, Hassan said, because the development is “tenant-driven” rather than landlord-driven.

Hassan said one tenant’s condition is to get a previous curb cut on Main Street restored, so that’s something his team needs to get done.

“We have to be ready to proceed,” he said. “We can’t get into conduct risk.”

When later asked by board member Brian Flood what exactly “conduct risk” is, Hassan responded it’s generally when anyone acts in such a way that would cause delays.

One such delay could be if the Planning and Zoning Commission (PZC) does not approve modifications to the original plan, for example.

“We’re trying to keep the integrity of the property as it was laid out originally as a proposed mixed-use development including retail, office space and residential,” Hassan said. “But as we work through the process, even shopping patterns have moved away from the larger store concept and in our revised plan we are uncertain as to whether that sector would develop or whether the activity – as we’re trying to jumpstart this project – will attract what we had hoped to get there originally.”

Hassan told the board his original deadline to construct the project was July 9, 2014, but due to economic development conditions, the state granted a four-year extension. So now the

deadline is 2018.

However, any modification requests would still need to go through PZC. Flood asked if Hassan had any communication with Planning and Zoning, to which Hassan replied, “Not yet.”

PZC Chairman Bruce Tyler said the scaled-back plan Hassan presented Wednesday night was “a major modification of the approved project.”

The original 2009 proposal called for an approximately 14-acre development, composed of retail, bank and office, restaurant and residential space, as well as a grocery store.

Regarding the historical homes on the Elmcrest property, Hassan said, “I think they all just have to come down.”

Members of the public shuffled and murmured in their seats, one gasped, at what Hassan suggested.

But Tyler said the original plan did not allow the historical houses to be torn down.

First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield also noted the homes are nationally-recognized buildings so “they cannot just be demolished,” she said.

“Because they’re more than 75 years old,” she furthered, “they have to go through a review process through the historical society.”

She added the state also has concerns regarding the historically significant houses.

Hassan invited anyone interested in acquiring the homes and moving them to a spot where they can be preserved to come and do so.

“If anyone wants those buildings, come on and get them,” Hassan said. “Just give me an insurance certificate and they’re yours for no cost. Move them wherever you want to move them.”

In a concluding note, Hassan said, “I know the town is anxious to see this property develop. But I have to tell you, there’s no one more anxious than me. We spend a lot of money there every year on property taxes. We spend a lot of money there on maintenance. We spend a lot of money there on insurance.” He finished, “We’re here. We’re not going anywhere. We pay our taxes, we’re not behind.”

The floor then opened up for public remarks. The first Portland resident to take to the microphone was Elwin Guild, representing the Elmcrest Campus Advisory Committee.

Essentially, he said the development of the Elmcrest property should benefit the town, not just the owner. He said the development of that property should be in connection with the development of Main Street in general.

Guild added, “We are advocates for the commercial development of Elmcrest.”

Additional public comment focused on the historical houses on the Elmcrest property.

For example, Portland residents Ken Kupec and Ricky Morneau both testified that they’d like to see a balance between preservation and advancement.

Kupec, like Guild, said, “That [Elmcrest] property is critical and key to the preservation of Main Street because it really is part of Main Street.”

Hassan reminded those attending that meeting that he owns the property.

“I’m the one down there paying the property taxes,” he said.

* * *

Also on Wednesday, the Board of Selectmen approved changing the name of the Portland Senior Center to “The Waverly Center” with the tagline, “A Place for Seniors and Their Friends.”

The change came about after a dialogue between the selectmen and the Senior Advisory Committee.

One committee member, Ruth Maio, said the new name would eliminate the “dreaded ‘senior’ and the connotations of ‘feeble, frail constituents.’”

Maio furthered, “Re-branding is an important step toward remaining relevant, particularly among the baby boomers who are entering the later stages of life.”

She added that though the committee did not want the word “senior” in the title of the building, it did want to include a tagline with the word “senior” so as not to “discount the efforts” of the senior center’s founders.

“While honoring our past, we are always looking forward toward the future at the center,” Maio said. “Many of us will be long gone in 10 or 20 years, but we want the hub of activity to the aging citizens of Portland to remain vital, relevant, and attractive to those who come.”

Her committee also approved of a name change to “The Waverly SPA,” with “SPA” standing for “Senior Powered Activity.” However the board approved the initial suggestion of “The Waverly Center.”

The board also approved Zion Lutheran Church’s application for the 2014 Neighborhood Assistance Act Program.

Bransfield explained the program allows certain charities, including churches and non-profits, to acquire funds from for-profit companies

in order to do projects.

“The corporation gets a tax credit,” Bransfield said. “So it helps defray their taxes and at the same time they’re making a charitable contribution.”

Zion Lutheran Church successfully participated in the program last year, as well, Bransfield said.

* * *

Also at this week’s selectmen meeting, Jen Renk, Portland Library’s children’s librarian, discussed with the board a grant she recently applied for on behalf of the library in the amount of \$3,000.

The Every Child Ready to Read grant is available through the Connecticut State Library, Renk explained, and is a parent education initiative so children have the early literacy skills they need going into kindergarten.

The grant focuses on five practices to improve literacy: talking, singing, reading, writing and playing, Renk said.

The grant would allow the library to run workshops that teach parents skills to help their children with early literacy, she furthered. Additionally, the funding would go toward 10 “early literacy backpacks” that families could borrow to help their children learn. The backpacks would contain books, music and play materials, for example.

Finally the grant would fund a “Handwriting Without Tears” station in the library, which is a program that is used in kindergarten. It comes with building blocks, clay, paper and other materials for children to practice letter formation and writing, according to Renk.

“That’s an important skill that will progress into kindergarten using the same equipment,” she added.

A kindergarten entrance exam done in 2011-12 showed only 12.3 percent of incoming Portland kindergarteners were ready in terms of literacy skills, “so we obviously have some work to do,” Renk said.

Upon hearing that statistic, board member Kathy Richards said, “We always want to improve.”

Renk concluded the Every Child Ready to Read grant, if awarded, would run from July 2014 to June 2015. The Town of Portland has not yet been approved for the state grant, though Renk said she is hopeful.

* * *

The next regularly-scheduled Board of Selectmen meeting is Wednesday, June 4, at 7:30 p.m. at the Portland library.

2014 Portland Fireworks Canceled

by Elizabeth Bowling

According to the 2014 Portland Fireworks Display Plan, the fireworks display was scheduled for the 2014 Portland Fair and will be replaced by a replica of the 2011 Portland Fireworks Display. The fireworks display was scheduled for the 2014 Portland Fair and will be replaced by a replica of the 2011 Portland Fireworks Display. The fireworks display was scheduled for the 2014 Portland Fair and will be replaced by a replica of the 2011 Portland Fireworks Display.

While the fireworks are a no-go, the Oct. 1 deadline for the project should allow the Portland Fair to go on as planned on Columbus Day weekend, Oct. 10, 11 and 12, First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield said.

Sharon Hoy, a member of the Portland Fireworks Committee, said the committee looked into having the fireworks display during the Portland Fair, but that would not be possible because there wouldn’t be enough room for spectators.

“We did look at alternate locations in Portland,” she furthered. “However, they did not meet the requirements. They were too small.”

The fireworks display has only been canceled once before – in 2011, due to inclement weather.

Hoy said, “We’re disappointed that we can’t have the fireworks in 2014 due to the closing

of Route 17A and safety concerns. In order to have a fireworks display, it’s necessary to have two ways in and two ways out.”

Hoy affirmed that the Fireworks Committee will 70 bridge to hold fireworks according to approximately 500 feet of roadway reconstruction, as well

in order to meet the needs to cover our costs so we’re going to continue our fundraisers,” she said. “All monies will be held by the town in a specific fireworks account.”

One such fundraiser – a bake sale – will be held tomorrow, May 24, in front of Tri-Town Foods on Route 66 from 9:30 a.m. until all the baked goods are sold out. All proceeds from pie, cupcake, cookie and brownie sales will go directly to the Portland Fireworks.

According to the “Portland, CT Fireworks” Facebook page, “The entire budget of the fireworks comes from private citizens, local businesses and fundraisers we have during the year.”

Check donations to the 2015 Portland Fireworks should be made payable to Portland Fireworks, C/O Portland Police 265 Main Street, Portland, CT 06480. For more information, call 860-490-3128.

Portland School Board Appoints New Member

by Elizabeth Bowling

The Board of Education Tuesday unanimously appointed a new member. Republican Robert Taylor has taken over for the recently-resigned Betsy Smith, a fellow Republican.

According to Board of Education Chairman Chris Phelps, the Republican Town Committee recommended Taylor to the board, which is “typically how vacancies are filled.”

Taylor will remain on the board until the next municipal election, which is in November 2015. At such time, he will need to run for a two-year term, as Smith’s term would have concluded in November 2017.

According to Phelps, Smith resigned from the board effective April 22, due to time constraints. Phelps added that Smith had always planned for her time on the Board of Education to be temporary.

Phelps expressed in a phone call Wednesday that he was pleased to see the vacant seat filled because the board is currently in the process of finding a new superintendent of schools to take over for Sally Doyen, who is due to resign June 30.

“This is a busy time for the board with transitions – Dr. Doyen leaving and the search to bring in a new superintendent,” Phelps said.

“We’re glad to have [Taylor] on the board,” Phelps continued. “I’m looking forward to working with him.”

Taylor said in an email Thursday he is “feeling very good about the new position.”

“The board was very welcoming at my first meeting and it will be a great experience,” he wrote. “I feel confident that I can become a productive member of Portland’s Board of Education.”

* * *

Also Tuesday, the school board unanimously

approved a pair of fund transfers.

The first transfer was up to but no more than \$30,000 from the Board of Education account to the town maintenance account for future Board of Education needs.

Doyen explained, “We did this last year. We knew we were going to have some funding left after this year and we always need money in the maintenance fund.”

She said the school board uses the maintenance fund throughout the year for “all types of repairs, upgrades, all of our facilities.”

The second transfer was up to but no more than \$35,000 from the Board of Education account to the school lunch fund to cover anticipated operating losses.

Doyen updated the board on the Brownstone Intermediate School window project, which calls for the replacement of the windows at BIS on the Middlesex Avenue/fire station side of the building.

“The funding has been earmarked – \$240,000,” she said. “The abatement phase has gone out to bid so we’re now waiting on that.”

She added she’s still hopeful the project will be completed this summer as expected.

She concluded, “We are making progress.” Also Tuesday, the school board officially accepted its 2014-15 budget, as passed at town referendum last week. The budget is \$19,249,703.

* * *

The school board announced Tuesday the Portland High School soccer field will be closed starting June 19 and will reopen in August for PHS soccer.

The next regularly scheduled Portland Board of Education meeting is Tuesday, June 3, at 7 p.m. at the PHS library.

RHAM Honors ‘Community Serving Community’

by Geeta Schrayter

The RHAM Board of Education Monday honored several people for their help in a clean-up and repair project done at the high school last year.

“Collaboration among various distinct bodies is required daily to make sure we stay safe and successful” at the schools, said board vice chairman Kevin Williams. “Each and every one of you played an important role in that success.”

He continued, “We are truly grateful for your support and leadership” and said those who volunteered “represent the very finest of community serving community.”

The clean-up and repair efforts that took place at the school last summer were in response to concerns over the condition of school grounds and the various playing fields as well as a lack of sufficient school personnel to maintain them. A Field Improvement Committee was formed to address the issue, that eventually sought – and received – the support of state officials, various businesses, and individual volunteers who worked to improve the situation.

School board member Joe O’Connor introduced the honorees, explaining many people came out last year to help the clean-up and improvement efforts.

“I want to thank each and every one of you for your efforts in getting our school back on track, coming out and showing the support we really needed,” he said, adding there were a lot of individuals and businesses who deserved recognition.

The process of putting together a clean-up effort at the school last August was long, and some of it was “not pleasant,” O’Connor said, “but we’re all here to look back and reflect going forward how we’re going to continue to move this community forward and bring us a little bit more together.”

First, O’Connor recognized state senators Cathy Osten and Steve Cassano as well as State Rep. Pam Sawyer. Each, he said, had been “instrumental” in working to acquire the approval necessary to hold the clean-up days.

In addition, Osten and Sawyer volunteered both days.

“Both have given a tremendous amount of commitment and dedication and volunteer spirit to our organization,” he stated.

Sawyer also helped – along with resident Devon Garner and Hebron Lion and Tilcon employee Dave Robal – get in contact with Jim Colby, vice president of plant operation with Tilcon, who donated 110 tons of crushed stone dust to put toward the school’s efforts.

Brien Belavander of B & J Construction Company – who O’Connor stressed was a private contractor with no affiliation to RHAM – was also recognized for assisting the school. He was asked by his friend, Hebron resident and RHAM High School girls’ track assistant coach Mike Bendzinski, if he might be able to help put in a drainage system in the long jump pit so it would drain properly – something it

hadn’t been doing.

“He donated his time, equipment, and materials to restore the long jump pit,” O’Connor shared, which took about two weeks. “Thank you very much for your dedication and generosity to the RHAM program. We appreciate your time and effort.”

In response, Belavander said he was “stunned and overwhelmed” by the recognition.

“I was always told you have to give back a little bit somewhere along the line and it was my pleasure to do this for RHAM,” he stated.

Along with recruiting Belavander, Bendzinski also assisted by volunteering with his wife during the clean-up days and, O’Connor said, he has given to the RHAM community in numerous other ways over the years.

O’Connor also recognized Hebron residents, arborists and business owners Jason Yerke of Distinctive Tree Care and Greg Tew of Connecticut Landscape & Tree; Jim Bucoir, Hebron resident and owner of Complete Residential Services; Clayton Folsom, Andover resident and owner of Folsom Construction; Tim Mason, Hebron resident and owner of Mason Home Building; East Hampton resident Rick Wanat; and Hebron ACE Hardware owner Steve Hoffman.

Yerke, O’Connor explained, donated a crew to remove the invasive trees and shrubs that had grown around the campus and on the hills around the middle school, while Tew removed invasive trees and shrubs from around the high school, baseball fields and hills. Both men also donated equipment and volunteered.

“They did an outstanding job!” O’Connor stated, adding “it is important to recognize that the work that was completed by both Mr. Yerke and Mr. Tew could never have been completed by the current RHAM maintenance personnel due to the lack of equipment which was needed to complete this job.”

Bucoir and Folsom were also recognized for donating various equipment and personnel needed to work on the baseball fields, while Mason was recognized for providing special equipment needed to cut overgrown brush and weeds on the steep hillsides.

Wanat, meanwhile, was one of the equipment operators who graded the baseball fields, while Hoffman donated equipment, rakes, brooms and gloves.

Officials from each of the sending towns were also recognized Monday. O’Connor thanked Andover First Selectman Bob Burbank and Vice First Selectman Jay Lindy for their support; Hebron Town Manager Andrew Tierney, Board of Selectmen Chairwoman Gayle Mulligan, and the Public Works Department for their contributions and efforts which included hillside mowing, delivering topsoil and sweeping the parking lot after the clean-up; and Marlborough First Selectwoman Cathi Gaudinski and Public Works for the hillside mowing they conducted.

In addition to the above, O’Connor recog-



At Monday’s Board of Education meeting, recognition was given to individuals who volunteered during clean-up and repair efforts on school grounds last year. One of those recognized was Brien Belavander of B & J Construction Company, who installed a new drainage system for the long jump pit.

nized Hebron Youth Baseball President Steve Turco and Vinny Colonna for the concessions trailer and donated food and beverages they provided during the clean-up; RHAM Sports Boosters President Pam Fromme and the rest of the Sports Boosters for sponsoring the event; RHAM Maintenance staff Mike Ceresa, Dino and Curt; and the RHAM Board of Education members and RHAM administration.

Finally, O’Connor thanked the rest of the volunteers who participated.

“Thank you to all of the 220 volunteers who participated in the community clean-up as well as the committee members who spent countless hours and took time away from your families to meet and organize this wonderful support of community pride and cooperation,” he stated. “One team, one fight!”

During Monday’s meeting, O’Connor was asked to put a price tag on all the work that was donated. On Wednesday, he estimated that number at around \$135,000.

Before the start of Monday’s school board meeting, a district meeting was held to determine whether a supplemental appropriation should be made to the reserve fund for capital and non-recurring expenditures in the amount of \$58,841, and to authorize the approval of the expenditures from the fund.

The appropriation passed – though not without some complaint.

While there was little comment about the appropriation itself, Hebron selectman Dan

Larsen said that, while he supported the motion, he said he found out about the meeting last minute and there should have been more publicity.

Even though the school may have done everything to “meet the letter of the law, we’re trying to let people know what’s happening,” he said.

Larsen also recommended the board establish and present a capital improvement plan and fund to the voters, as is done in Hebron, “so they know what’s being voted on instead of coming to things such as this.”

Hebron selectman Jeff Watt felt similarly. While he too supported the motion, he said, “I do feel it’s important you go to referendum.”

Watt continued, “I’m disappointed this didn’t go at referendum time so the people who voted on the budget also had a say on how the money is used.”

The question “shall a supplemental appropriation to the reserve fund for capital and non-recurring expenditures in the amount of \$58,841 and to authorize expenditures from said reserve fund be approved?” was then posed to those present.

The results were 51 “yes,” with five “no,” and one abstention.

The money is to be used for repairs to the HVAC system in the Media Center.

The next RHAM Board of Education meeting is scheduled for Monday, June 16 at 6:30 p.m.

Strangers Offer Portland Child Ride

Portland Police are investigating an incident where a local child was offered a ride to their house by two strangers.

On Tuesday, May 20, at about 3:45 p.m., police said, a child, whom police simply described as under the age of 12, was offered a ride to their home from an unknown person, shortly after exiting the school bus. The bus, police said, had dropped the child off at the base of the driveway of the home; the driveway is a hill, police added.

The child described the vehicle as a newer-style, shiny, black-colored, four-door Ford pick-up truck, with Virginia license plates, police said. The pick-up was operated by a white male in his early 20s, with stocky build, brownish/red hair and a close-crop beard. There was a passenger in the vehicle, who was described as an Asian female in her early

20s, with a thin build and wearing a lime-green tank top.

According to police, the child said ‘no’ to the ride offer. The request was made a second time, and the child stated they had something to do, and began walking away, police said.

Police said there were no attempts made to pull the child into or toward the vehicle during the incident, and there were no threats made toward the child.

The bus company, Nichols Bus, was contacted, police said, but could not provide any information regarding the vehicle.

A state broadcast was sent to all police departments, police said. Anyone with information regarding the vehicle or its occupants is asked to call Portland Police at 860-342-6780.

East Hampton Man Dies in Hebron Crash

by Geeta Schrayter

An East Hampton resident died last week after a head-on collision in Hebron.

State Police said Thomas Bartlett, 65, of 35 Raymond Rd., East Hampton, was traveling westbound on Main Street, approximately 100 meters east of Stone House Road, last Thursday, May 15, when the crash took place.

At around 4:33 p.m., police said, a head-on collision occurred between Bartlett and Brooke Thyrring, 28, of 71 O’Connell Rd., Colchester, who was traveling eastbound.

Bartlett, who was wearing a seatbelt, suf-

fered fatal injuries, police stated.

Police said Thyrring, who was also wearing a seatbelt, sustained “significant injuries” and was transported to Marlborough Medical Center and then to Hartford Hospital.

She remained hospitalized as of Wednesday afternoon.

The accident is currently under investigation and any witnesses are asked to contact Trooper Philip Soucy at 860-465-5455 ext. 4015.

Colchester Students Seek Public Input at Next Week's Meeting

by **Melissa Roberto**

Colchester Board of Education student members Courtney Vitale and Mitchell Hallee are on a mission to bring healthier food options into Colchester schools and the greater community – and while the two have worked hard throughout the school year to explore options of doing so, they're now seeking the community's input.

The students' project, titled "Students for Real Food," is to be discussed at a Board of Education special meeting scheduled for next Saturday, May 31, at 9 a.m., in meeting Room 1 at Town Hall, of which members of the public are encouraged to attend.

The project aims to provide healthy meal options from local farmers through a "regional food hub," the students explained. In addition to schools utilizing the food hub, the students envision other organizations, such as hospitals, restaurants, prisons, etc. could also benefit from it. At a board of education meeting last week Hallee explained a food hub is a "physical warehouse separate from the schools where food is stored." It would run through a not-for-profit organization and would not spend taxpayer dollars.

"I think it's a great opportunity not only for Colchester but for all of Connecticut," said Hallee, adding Connecticut is "the only state" nationwide that does not have a food hub. "We're on the cutting edge of this movement. There are a lot of grants available."

The pair has been working on writing a

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) grant to seek funding for a regional food hub in the area. Though still a work in progress, the students pointed out at last week's meeting that the grants require the idea to be backed by the community.

"We want to gain community support for the food hub. It is needed for the grant," explained Vitale. "They want to see that we have a lot of public support and support from various people – congressmen, surrounding districts and farmers and also our community."

"Students for Real Food" is actually a project that came about following a petition that was delivered to the Board of Education last spring. The high school's community activism class requested that Colchester serve GMO-free and/or organic food alternatives in the school district's cafeterias. The petition was signed by 288 people, mostly high school students. Hallee and Vitale have taken on the task to represent those 288.

"We've been trying to take an unbiased approach," Hallee explained this week. "It's obviously important to so many students and parents that signed the petition. We think it's important to honor their request and make them feel safe and comfortable in the schools."

And it's apparent the students have worked hard to reach out to organizations in the community. In addition to presenting the idea to the local agriculture commission and the New London County Farm Bureau, Hallee communi-

cated to the board last week that it seems the town's Economic Development Commission and First Selectman Gregg Schuster are also behind the idea. Additionally, the junior said it seems other school districts in the region are interested in doing a joint program.

A joint program would mean that Colchester schools wouldn't be alone in the bidding process. Contracts and bid documents would be done alongside farmers and other communities, the students said.

Vitale said the students are hoping a food hub could be set up in Colchester.

"There's a lot of farms in this area and we're in a good spot to set up for other schools," she said.

The high school senior highlighted other benefits.

"This would bring jobs into the community and it would also keep money in the community," added Vitale, "so it's not like we're sending all our money to California. We're keeping it local."

In terms of next week's meeting, Hallee and Vitale said they hope they can establish a committee interested in taking on the regional hub project.

They concluded the consolidation process of bidding on, transporting, processing and storing the food inside a "single efficient operation" would allow for schools to "buy from local farms as easily as they buy from national

distributors."

"It would allow for us to buy from farmers that we know and can talk to, so we know exactly where we're getting our food from," Hallee said.

The students agreed they've "definitely" put a lot of work into the project, adding they've learned about the "process of politics."

"We've been making sure to involve everybody who has an interest in it," said Hallee.

At last week's board meeting, Vice Chairman Don Kennedy congratulated the pair. "The work you've done is just amazing," Kennedy said. "You should definitely be proud of yourselves."

This week Ron Goldstein said the entire board has been "extremely impressed" with the students' "efforts and leadership on this issue."

"They have created an awareness amongst their peers and in the entire community of the benefits of GMO-free options, and they have even broadened the issue to start discussions of a food hub," the chairman said.

Now, the students said it's up to the community to weigh in.

"In order to get money to make this happen we need to get a lot of people from the community to show that the community cares about this issue," Hallee said.

The special meeting will be held at Meeting Room 1 at Town Hall next Saturday, May 31, at 9 a.m.

Bacon Student Charged with Having Handgun

by **Melissa Roberto**

A Bacon Academy student was arrested May 14 for allegedly being in possession of a handgun at the high school, state police said.

According to a news release at the State Police Troop K barracks in Colchester, a 17-year-old male student was arrested and charged with carrying a pistol without a permit and possession of a firearm on school grounds.

The arrest was made by the Colchester Police and had followed an "extensive investigation" as noted in the police report. News about this incident was first communicated to Bacon Academy parents and guardians by Superintendent of Schools Jeffrey Mathieu, who had sent a letter home to parents May 14 notifying them that a weapons search had been conducted at the school earlier that day.

The letter explained that two students had approached school administration on May 9 and shared that they had seen a student in possession of a weapon at the school two weeks prior. Following these allegations, Mathieu shared in his letter that the police were notified.

"Immediately following those students' reports, administration notified police and began an internal school investigation," Mathieu wrote.

Colchester Police Sergeant Joseph Mercer said the investigation confirmed the juvenile had brought a handgun "inside the school." The sergeant furthered that he could not disclose the name of the arrested student because he is a juvenile.

Mercer furthered that "no threats were made" from the student.

"It doesn't appear he brought it in for any sort of malicious purpose at this time," Mercer said, adding the investigation is still ongoing.

Mercer furthered administration acted fast upon receiving the information from students.

"As soon as it was brought to their attention, the school was very swift in identifying the student and cooperating with our investigation and with keeping the safety of the student and staff population [a priority] throughout the whole investigation."

Mercer furthered administration had requested the weapons search that took place at the high school last Wednesday.

"Administration requested a thorough search of the school to make sure the gun wasn't hidden there," he said.

Mercer confirmed the search was conducted by Connecticut State Police personnel and canines, and said "no weapons" were found on school grounds during the search.

In his letter sent home last week, Mathieu explained that because the investigation is ongoing any further details would be provided by the police.

"As always, the well-being and safety of students and staff are our highest priority," Mathieu assured parents in the letter.

Mercer confirmed Wednesday that the weapon has not yet been recovered from the arrested juvenile. The incident remains under investigation.

East Hampton Police News

5/9: Marc F. Zgorski, 44, of 1 Clearwater Ln., was arrested pursuant to an active warrant, and was charged with violation of a protective order, disorderly conduct and second-degree harassment, East Hampton Police said.

5/11: Melissa Marie Rowe, 27, of 68 Childs Rd., was arrested and charged with shoplifting (sixth-degree larceny) and possession of narcotics.

5/12: Michael Bartolotta, 37, of 83 Midwood Farm Rd., was arrested pursuant to an outstanding court-issued arrest warrant and was charged with criminal possession of a firearm and possession of paraphernalia, police said.

5/14: Robert D. Saltus, 32, of 18 Middletown Ave., was issued a summons for operating a motor vehicle with a suspended license, police said.

Colchester Police News

5/14: State Police said Julian T. Warren, 25, of 39 Ives St., Waterbury, was charged and arrested with second-degree failure to appear, insurance coverage fails to meet minimum requirements, operating a motor vehicle with a suspended license, and failure to renew registration.

5/16: State Police said Robert W. Reynolds Jr., 52, of 20 Robin Rd., was charged with DUI.

5/16: State Police said Susan Berube, 51, of 137 South Main St., Apt. 3, Marlborough, was arrested and charged with second-degree forgery, conspiracy to commit second-degree forgery, attempt to commit second-degree forgery, fifth-degree larceny, conspiracy to commit fifth-degree larceny and attempt to commit fifth-degree larceny.

5/17: Colchester Police responded to a three-car accident on Route 354 at the intersection of Lake Hayward Road at approximately 8:25 a.m. Police said one of the vehicles involved was towing a boat. Police reported that one operator, Richard John Distefano, 78, of 304 Treborman Ct., Cary, N.C., and his passenger, Joanne Patricia Distefano, 75, of the same address, were transported by the Colchester Fire

Hebron Police News

5/17: State Police said Kasey Jean Plante, 38, of 59 Old Daniels Ln., was charged with DIU and failure to drive right.

5/18: State Police responded to a two-car accident at 5:41 p.m. on route 66 at the intersection of Loveland Road. Police said Debra Dee, 55, of 400 Martin Rd., Hebron, was traveling on Route 66 and slowed to turn left onto Loveland Road when Daniel Whalen, 37, of 4 Tunxis Dr., Columbia, collided into the rear-end of Dee's vehicle. Police said Whalen refused medial attention on scene and Dee was transported to Marlborough Clinic by the Hebron Fire Department for a laceration to her forehead.

Department to Marlborough Clinic for minor injuries.

5/17: Colchester Police responded to a non-active burglary on Westchester Road at approximately 11:50 a.m. Police said someone broke into a shed and stole items. Anyone with information about this incident is asked to contact Officer Jonathan Goss at 860-537-7270.

5/17: Colchester Police responded to the area of Norwich Avenue and South Main Street for a reported disturbance. An investigation resulted in the arrest of Cynthia McGowan, 38, of 29 Pierce Ln. for third-degree criminal mischief, possession of a controlled substance and possession of drug paraphernalia. Police reported two hours later McGowan was arrested for second-degree harassment.

5/17: State Police said Jeffrey A. McGillicuddy, 49, of 542 Middletown Rd., was arrested for DUI.

5/18: Colchester Police said Enock Walusimbi Kazibwe, 18, of 106 Buckley Hill Rd., was arrested for failure to drive right, stop sign violation, possession of drug paraphernalia and possession of less than a half ounce of marijuana.

Portland Police News

5/6: Arthur Frejszar, 20, of 54 Warwick St., Middletown, was charged with passing in a no-passing zone, operating unregistered motor vehicle and improper use of marker plates, Portland Police said.

5/9: Michael Cannata, 69, of 218 Main St., was charged with criminal mischief, police said.

5/12: Roger Lasky, 18, of 1328 Portland Cobalt Rd., was charged with second-degree breach of peace, police said.

5/12: Lauren Billings, 18, of 49 Fairview St. was charged with second-degree breach of peace, police said.

Colchester's New Fire Museum a 'Labor of Love'

by Melissa Roberto

It was a "labor of love" that went into the creation of the Colchester Hayward Fire Museum, of which a spirited crowd came out to support Sunday, May 18, the day of its unveiling.

The museum exists in the original 1855 firehouse, at 100 South Main St., which was restored by members of the Colchester Hayward Volunteer Fire Company destined to make it more than the vacant building it became after its doors closed in 1988.

"Thousands of hours of labor went into this from firefighters," Anthony Skut, member of 43 years, said. "But it's a labor of love. It is rewarding."

Skut, a general contractor by trade, acted as superintendent of the restoration. Though he said it took a whole crew of firefighters – who outside of the department work as plumbers, electricians and carpenters – to come together and make the museum what it is today. The department had even formed a Museum Committee, of nine members strong, responsible for the planning of the museum.

And on Sunday, attendees' jaws dropped as its doors opened. Within the two-bay fire house stands Colchester's first piece of fire fighting equipment, an 1854 Hunneman handpumper. Also on display is the department's second motorized piece of apparatus, a 1936 Federal fire engine.

Beyond the two eye-catching antiques, the old firehouse draws attention from its walls to its showcases that wrap around the inside. Historical pictures from late-1800s through the mid-1900s decorate the walls, in addition to framed written documents from the mid-1800s.

Within its showcases, the museum is home to early firefighting nozzles and appliances, from fire extinguishers, hand cranks and spot lights of old trucks, to helmets, hoses, badges and bells once used by Colchester's late heroes.

Upon the opening of the museum, fire company chaplain Ted Dole gave a word of dedication.

"We give you thanks for all those who labored hard in the past 160 years to provide fire protection for this town," Dole said. "We come together proudly to dedicate this museum to the town of Colchester, to those who have fought fires all the years before us and to the men and women and children who come to the history that is displayed."

The original firehouse operated as Fire Company 1 from 1855-1988. In 1988, the com-

pany was moved to Old Hartford Road. The old firehouse had been used for storage ever since. But four years ago, members recalled the town discussing the future occupancy of the building, which prompted the department to communicate its interest in taking over the building.

"We wrote to the building official Tim York saying we'd like to be considered as tenants in the old fire station," recalled David Martin, president of the fire company.

Two years later, the fire department entered into a long-term lease agreement with the town of Colchester for the company to obtain use of the building – and that's when the labor began. The town had already used grant money available through the federal government to conduct outside restoration.

"It was just kind of a façade of a fire house," explained Martin. "The inside was stripped to the studs. There was no power, no electricity, no water, and there was no sewer."

The inside work was left to the department. Now with ownership of the building, fire fighters worked relentlessly to get the materials needed. Skut explained the concrete was dug up, and insulation of the building along with sewer and electricity followed.

"We did \$100,000 dollars of work for \$40,000," said Skut, adding the department was able to get materials at a lesser cost.

Skut said that \$40,000 came from donations and fundraisers collected by the fire department over the years. The life member emphasized there was "no town money" put into the interior restoration phase. This money was raised by selling Christmas trees, holding breakfasts, selling coffee at the Hebron Harvest Fair, among others, said Skut.

Skut relayed how pleased he was with the outcome of the museum.

"I am jubilated," he said. "It's got character. It's got age."

And Sunday seemed to be just as much of a memorable day for the attendees as it was for the men and women who planned it. Shawn Schlieper of Norwich brought her two sons, Brandolf and Alex. Schlieper is the daughter of the past fire chief and life member, Gary Avery, who passed away in 2010.

Skut explained Avery was known as "the guy who would take on all of these big projects." Avery had actually spent three years restoring the 1936 Federal fire engine on display at the museum. Standing next to the 1936 fire apparatus, Schlieper shared it was "pretty amazing"



The restored 1936 Federal fire engine is just one of many antiques on display at the Colchester Hayward Fire Museum, which exists in the old 1855 firehouse on South Main Street. The museum was made created by members of the department and holds antiques dating back to the mid-1800s used by Colchester's very first firefighters.

to see all the history come together in one place.

"I consider this my dad's special fire truck," she said. "It has a home now which is pretty cool."

Art Standish, chairman of the museum committee, said he thinks it's "really, pretty beautiful."

"I'm really proud of the whole project," said Standish. "I've been in this department for 38 years and I used to respond out of this station. It's a good feeling to see it turned into something really nice."

And the fire company is confident the repurposed fire house will live on.

"I think our membership will carry it alive," said Skut.

As part of the requirements of the Colchester Historic District, the building is required to be open 12 days out of the year. Martin said the company is going to try to have it open once a month, and "whenever" there is activity on the green. The company is also open to booking private tours for youth groups and organizations.

Martin concluded the landmark gives back something to the whole town, not just the brave men and women who are honored inside.

"They're going to have another destination to add to their history," Martin said of Colchester citizens. "The town has so much history. This is just going to be another little addition to it all."

Obituaries

East Hampton

Thomas Albert Bartlett

Thomas Albert Bartlett, 65, of East Hampton, beloved husband of 40 years to Cheryl (Harris) Bartlett, died unexpectedly Thursday, May 15. Born March 27, 1949, in Fitchburg, Mass., he was the son of the late Ronald and Mildred (Giddings) Bartlett.

He was a 1967 graduate of Waterford High School and received his bachelor's degree from CCSU. He proudly served his country in the U.S. Navy during Vietnam and was a member of the American Legion Post in Marlborough. Thomas had worked at Pratt and Whitney for 25 years and was currently employed as a corrections officer for the state of Connecticut Corrections Department. He was an avid sports fan and rooted for the New York Yankees and the Green Bay Packers.

Besides his wife Cheryl, he is survived by his two daughters, Breanne Sanchez and her husband Phillip of Lebanon, Caitlyn Dorflinger and her husband Austin of Amston; a brother, Theodore Bartlett and his wife Leslie of Westerly, R.I.; and his three beloved grandchildren, Hunter, Sawyer and Makenna Sanchez.

He was predeceased by three brothers, James, John and Leslie.

Funeral services were held Wednesday, May 21, in the Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton. Burial was private. Friends called at the funeral home Tuesday, May 20.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the Sanchez Children's Education Fund, c/o Liberty Bank, 2 West High St., East Hampton, CT 06424.

To leave online condolences, visit spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

Marlborough

Robert F. Brodell

Robert F. Brodell, 79, of Marlborough, died Monday, May 12, at home with his wife by his side. He fought a valiant battle for 10 months with cancer. He was predeceased by his parents Frank Brodell and Helen (Woop) Brodell and his brother Ronald.



Bob grew up in Farmingdale, Long Island, N.Y., and graduated from the College of Engineering at New York University in 1958, which he attended on a full scholarship. He was also a member of Psi Upsilon Fraternity. His New York background made the Giants and the Yankees his favorite teams.

His career path led him to Pratt and Whitney. He designed a variety of engines for Pratt and was very proud of his many United States Patents of engine parts he created for them. At the time of his retirement, after 35 years, he was design chief for the Advanced Ducted Prop, which is now in production.

Bob was an avid sportsman, whether it was hunting, fishing, or boating. He was an expert marksman on the Colt Pistol Team. He loved hunting on a crisp autumn morning with his beloved lab Toby. He was a former member of the East Haddam Fishing and Game Club and was a life member and past president of the East Glastonbury Fish and Game Club.

Bob loved saltwater fishing and fly-fishing in lakes and streams. He also loved cruising on his trawler Bodacious and served as Fleet Captain, Vice, and Rear Commodore, and Commodore of the Hamburg Cove Yacht Club.

Bob had a keen eye for design. He built his own log cabin home in Guilford, Vt., and designed his home in Marlborough along with the gardens and a pond. He created additions to houses for friends, but took the most pride designing and supervising the building of a balcony for the Marlborough Congregational Church. He was the "go-to man" for many church renovation projects. He also served on the Board of Deacons.

He leaves his cherished wife of 35 years, Cheryl, his wonderful and loving daughter Karen Stanek, her husband Michael, who was like a son to him and his pride and joy and soon to be Eagle Scout, grandson Christopher Stanek, all of Libertyville, Ill. He also leaves his son Scott Brodell of Sarasota, Fla. He will be missed by many other relatives and dear friends.

A celebration of his life and Memorial Service will be held at 11 a.m. Saturday, May 24, at the Marlborough Congregational Church. Burial will be at the convenience of the family.

Memorial donations may be made in Bob's memory to The Marlborough Congregational Church, P.O. Box 57, Marlborough, CT 06447 or to the East Glastonbury Fish and Game Club, P.O. Box 84, Glastonbury, CT 06033.

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

Colchester

Paula Jean Netto

Paula Jean (Aselton) Netto, 58, wife of Darrell Netto, passed into eternal rest Friday, May 16, at Middlesex Hospital in Middletown. Born Aug. 31, 1955, in Portsmouth, Va., to Beatrice Aselton and the late Gordon Aselton, Paula was a lifelong Connecticut resident who had resided in Colchester since 2003.



An avid reader and swimmer, savvy bargain shopper, zealous Scrabble player, experienced world traveler, and lover of life, Paula visited five continents, hiked Machu Picchu, and loved walking the world's beaches collecting sea shells, beach glass, and shark teeth.

After graduating South Windsor High School, Paula earned her bachelor's degree summa cum laude from Saint Joseph College and her master's in social work from Fordham University.

Always a mother first, Paula worked for Price Waterhouse, Klingberg Family Center, and was the first social worker at Marlborough Elementary School, developing the entire program herself. In recognition for her Peer Mediation and Playground Peacekeeper program, Paula was recognized with a CAS award from the Connecticut Association of Schools in 2009.

A beloved friend and mentor, Paula will be deeply and forever missed by her husband, mother, and her children; Michael Dunshee of Manchester, Jeffrey Dunshee of Colchester, and Elizabeth Dunshee of Colchester. Paula is also survived by her sisters Pamela, Patricia, and Penny Aselton, her mother's husband Tom Wilenski, numerous relatives, friends, and colleagues.

Calling hours will be at First Congregational Church of South Windsor, 992 Main St., Tuesday, May 27, from 4:30-7 p.m.

In lieu of flowers donations can be made in Paula Netto's name to Middlesex Hospital Hospice and Palliative Care Unit, Office of Philanthropy, 28 Crescent St., Middletown, CT 06457 or Stand Up To Cancer at File 1224, 1801 W. Olympic Blvd., Pasadena, CA 91199-1224 or via StandUpToCancer.org.

Hebron

Fred Robson

Fred Robson, Ph.D., 77, died Saturday, May 10, in Hartford Hospital, after a short illness.

At the time of his death, he was president and CEO of RPM Sustainable Technologies Inc., a start-up company that develops and sells processes and equipment for bio-diesel production.

Robson was the husband of the late Cynthia Palabay Robson, who died in 2010. They had been married for 50 years. Born June 8, 1936, in East Liverpool, Ohio, Robson was raised in Homestead, Fla. He earned a B. Eng. in aeronautical and nuclear engineering at the University of Florida in 1959, and a Ph.D. in mechanical engineering at the University of Connecticut in 1966.

A longtime resident of Hebron, Connecticut, Robson started his career at Pratt & Whitney Aircraft in 1959. In 1966, he moved to what is now known as United Technologies Research Center where he retired as manager of Industrial Power Systems in 1994.

He then founded kraftWork Systems, Inc., a consulting firm for advanced energy systems, and worked as a consultant from 1994 until 2011, when he co-founded RPM Sustainable Technologies.

Robson was an avid reader who enjoyed everything from the classics to mysteries to books from the *New York Times* bestseller list. He cherished his trips to the library. Robson was an automobile enthusiast who owned Italian and British sports cars. He served as an engineer or crew chief for various auto racing teams. His sons consider his love of cars and racing a priceless legacy.

Robson is survived by his son, Christopher Robson, daughter-in-law Kerrin and granddaughters Savannah of Hebron and Charlotte of Berea, Ohio; son Mark Robson, daughter-in-law Amy, and grandsons Burke and Carter of Ridgefield; brother David Robson and sister-in-law Pat Carey of University Heights, Ohio; and sister-in-law Rosita Benson and brother-in-law Lee Benson of Somers, N.Y.

A funeral was held at St. Peter's Episcopal Church in Hebron Thursday, May 22.

In lieu of flowers, please send a donation in Fred Robson's name to the Douglas Library, 22 Main St, Hebron, CT 06248

East Hampton

Gordon Jones Jr.

Gordon Jones Jr. of East Hampton, beloved husband of Melinda "Mimi" (Miller) Jones, passed away Saturday, May 17, after battling Parkinson's disease and cancer. Gordon was born Oct. 26, 1942, in Palatine, Ill., and was the son of the late Gordon Jones and Alma (Milligan) Jones.



Despite his Illinois roots, Gordon was a buckeye and was a 1960 graduate of Grandview Heights High School in Grandview Heights, Ohio. He went on to graduate from The Ohio State University in 1965. During the Vietnam War, Gordon was a naval officer serving aboard the *USS St. Paul* (CA-73) in San Diego, Calif. Following the war, he was bit by the insurance bug and went to work for Travelers in San Diego, Calif, Phoenix, Ariz., and ultimately Hartford.

Gordon enjoyed gardening, reading, music of all genres, sports (Ohio State and UConn!) and television shows about other people's antiques.

Gordon raised his family in East Hampton. He is survived by his wife Melinda (Mimi); daughter Kimberly Cordeiro and her husband Thom; son Stephen Jones and his wife Julie; two brothers, Dale Jones and his wife Carole of Ohio, Alan Jones of Florida; three sisters, Helen Blancher and her husband Edwin of California; Linda Boder of Florida; Peggy Quigley and her husband Harold of Florida; brother-in-law Craig Miller and his wife Karen of South Carolina; sister-in-law Cynthia Jane Adkins and her husband Mike of Ohio; and several nieces and nephews.

Gordon had special pride and love for his five grandchildren, Jenna, Mason and Lily Cordeiro, and Kyle and Sean Jones all of East Hampton. He was predeceased by his brother-in-law Richard Boder.

Gordon's family would like to thank the many exceptional, caring people on the Hospice Unit and at the Middlesex Hospital Cancer Center who cared for Gordon during the time of his illness.

A memorial service will be held at Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main Street, East Hampton on Saturday, May 24, at 11 a.m. Friends may call at the funeral home from 9:00AM until the time of the service. The burial will be private.

The family is encouraging donations in Gordon's memory to the Young People's Center for the Creative Arts (YPCCA), 10 Maryann Dr., East Hampton, CT 06424. YPCCA was special to Gordon and remains important to his family.

To leave online condolences, visit spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

Marlborough

Frank Alan Duncan Jr.

Frank Alan Duncan Jr., 76, of Granby, beloved husband for 56 years of Jacquelyn Eve (Morin) Duncan, passed away Sunday, May 18, at Hartford Hospital.

Born in Erie, Pa., Sept. 15, 1937, son of the late Frank Alan Duncan Sr. and Grace (Struck) Duncan, he was raised in West Dover, Vt., and had lived in West Springfield, Mass., Marlborough, and Boca Raton, Fla., before moving to Granby.

Frank retired as a general supervisor in the packaging and developing department at Pratt & Whitney Aircraft in East Hartford, after 35 years of service to the company. After his retirement, Frank and his wife Jacquelyn moved to Old Saybrook and then to Boca Raton, Fla., where they lived for 12 years.

Frank loved the ocean and relaxing at the beach with his family and friends. He loved being involved in his grandchildren's activities including go-kart racing, ice hockey, and track and field, so he and Jacquelyn moved back to Connecticut 11 years ago and settled in Granby.

Most of all, Frank will be remembered as a loving husband, an excellent father, and a wonderful grandfather and friend.

Besides his wife, he leaves two sons, Michael Duncan and his wife Pamela of Colchester and Frank Alan Duncan III of Windsor Locks; two daughters, Kimberly Nihill and her husband Michael of Southbury and Betheny Allen and her husband Richard of South Glastonbury; two brothers, Douglas Duncan and Clifford Duncan of Wilmington, Vt.; five grandchildren and three step-grandchildren, all of whom he cherished.

A funeral service will be held today, May 23, at 10 a.m., at the Hayes-Huling & Carmon Funeral Home, 364 Salmon Brook St., Granby. Burial will follow in Granby Cemetery, Granby. His family received friends Thursday, May 22, at the Hayes-Huling & Carmon Funeral Home, Granby.

Frank's family has requested that memorial donations be made to the American Lung Association, 45 Ash St., East Hartford, CT 06108.

For online condolences, visit carmonfuneralhome.com.

Colchester

Claire Louise Doeller

Claire Louise Doeller, 56, of Colchester, died Saturday, May 10, of ovarian cancer. She was born April 24, 1958, to David and Corinne Doeller in Baltimore, Md.

Claire graduated from Springfield College in Massachusetts with a degree in physical education, finding inspiration in her junior year at the Chelsea School of Human Movement in England. She began teaching in Maryland, where she organized Jump for Life marathons in the schools and directed bicycle trips for teenagers throughout New England. She loved the area and moved to Connecticut where she remained a successful and very popular physical education teacher of all grades throughout her career.

There she met Jerry Brisson in 1986, they married in 1990 and moved to Chaplin, where they raised their two daughters. During that time, Claire was a member of the Willimantic Food Co-Op, performed with the Windham Theater Guild, took yearly canoeing adventures with family and friends, played volleyball and golf, and was a friend of Bill's for four years. Her specialties were teaching movement exploration and directing fantastic Field Days for her beloved children at Lebanon Elementary School.

Claire was a kind, loving, active, and funny person who had many friends, both new and old. She was a very giving person who always thought of the other person. She maintained a level of healthy living that was instructional to her family and friends. She encouraged her girls to focus on their education and their health. About 1.5 years ago, Claire was dealt a nasty hand: a diagnosis of stage 4 ovarian cancer. For as long as possible, she handled that cruel disease with her unique combination of fierceness, practicality, wisdom, humor, sadness and, most of all, love for family and friends, which has been an inspiration to us all. She loved her family dearly and we will love her forever. She will be greatly missed.

Survivors include her daughters, Chelsea Brisson of Willimantic and Alicia Brisson of Pomfret; her sisters, Jeannette Doeller of Huntington Beach, Calif., and Aline Doeller of Edgewater, Md.; her mother, Corinne Doeller of Tempe, Ariz.; and her ex-husband, Jerry Brisson of Pomfret.

Please join us at Lebanon Elementary School on Wednesday, June 4, at 7 p.m., for a Celebration of Life service.

At Claire's request, please direct your gifts to the Teal Ribbon Ovarian Cancer Research Foundation. See more at trocrf.org.

Her family wants to express sincere appreciation to all the staff of Walter Backus Hospital of Norwich, especially Dr. Anca Bulgaru and the nurses on A2, for the excellent, kind and respectful care they gave to Claire during her stays. See more at backushospital.org.

Her family extends heartfelt thanks to the Center for Hospice Care whose nurses, aids and volunteers helped her and her family in her final months. See more at hospicesect.org.

Finally, her family is very grateful to Harrington Court Transitional Care in Colchester for the loving attention they gave to Claire in her difficult final days. See more at genesishcc.com.

In support of life, the body was donated to advance medicine through MedCure. See more at medcure.org.

Colchester

Jeannette Frances Uricchio

Jeannette Frances Uricchio, 72, of Colchester, passed away Monday, May 19, at Hartford Hospital. She was born Nov. 10, 1941, the daughter of the late George and Lillian (Beaudoin) Willert.

Ms. Uricchio was a hatchery worker for Arbor Acres in Glastonbury for many years before her retirement. She held a special love for her dog and the outdoors, as well as visiting with friends.

Survivors include three children, Karen Uricchio-Boesch and husband, Kenneth of Willington, Gary Uricchio of Willington and Julie Uricchio of Marlborough; a grandson whom she adored, Nicholas Lander; a sister, Marie Miller of Broad Brook; and numerous extended family members and friends.

She was predeceased by a brother, Joseph St. Martin.

Services will be announced at a later date. Care of arrangements has been entrusted to the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home of Colchester. For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

East Hampton

Phyllis Williams

Phyllis Williams, 93, a longtime resident of East Hampton, peacefully passed away Monday, May 19, at the Chestelm Health Care and Rehabilitation Center in Moodus.

She lived a long and rewarding life. Her family appreciates the kind and dedicated staff at Chestelm. They took excellent care of Mrs. Williams during her time at the facility – especially during her final days.

Mrs. Williams was born Helen Phyllis Sheehan to Timothy A. Sheehan and Marianne (Gratton) Sheehan in Windsor Locks on Nov. 27, 1920. She was the youngest of five children. Her brothers, Joseph, Timothy and Daniel, preceded her in death as did her sister Evelyn Cain. Also preceding her in death were her husband Jack, son Newton, and grandson Edward.

Phyllis graduated from Windsor Locks High School. She went on to attend St. Francis Hospital's School of Nursing, but discovered that this was not the career for her. In 1940 she married her husband, Edward John Williams, a U.S. Navy Seabee. During World War II, she contributed to the war effort by working at Pratt and Whitney Aircraft in East Hartford. Two of her children were born during the war, Judith in 1941 and her brother Newton the following year. Phyllis had her hands full, but fortunately, she had the support and help of her parents.

After the war the family moved to East Hampton, where Jack worked as a lineman for Connecticut Light and Power. In 1959 their third child, Pamela, was born – both a surprise and a blessing.

For a number of years Mrs. Williams was a homemaker. She enjoyed this time as a loving wife and caring mother. Additionally, she became an avid cook. Her family would vouch for her excellent cooking skills. Indeed, her husband would often buy back her creations for the many St. Patrick's Church bake sales she supported.

As her children became older, she pursued employment outside the home. Many East Hampton residents will remember her as a friendly, efficient teller, then loan officer and ultimately a manager of Liberty Bank's East Hampton branch.

Phyllis is survived by two daughters, Judith W. Schneider and Pamela W. Bernard. Also surviving are five granddaughters, Erika Foxen, Stacy Ray, Karen Williams, Moira Valentine and Kyra Bernard. Additionally, she will be missed by her grandson, Michael Bernard; five great-grandchildren; two great-great-grandchildren; and numerous nieces, nephews, cousins and friends. We are sure that Phyllis will live on in their memories.

She will be remembered for her independent spirit and her warmth, humor and quick wit. Her grandchildren especially will recall her delicious cookies and ever-filled, silver candy dish.

A Mass in memory of Mrs. Williams will be held at St. Patrick's Church, 47 West High St., East Hampton, Friday, May 30, at 11 a.m. Her remains will be interred at St. Patrick's Cemetery.

Colchester

Beatrice Feldman

Beatrice (Scott) Feldman, 93 years of age, of Groton, formerly of Colchester, died Friday, May 16. She was the widow of Hyman Feldman. Born in New York, N.Y., she was the daughter of the late Jacob and Celia (Banchuck) Scott. She was a member of Ahavath Achim Synagogue of Colchester.

She leaves her daughter, Harriet Shedroff and her husband Herbert of West Hartford; her son, Jeffrey W. Feldman and his wife Regina Gialanella of New London; and two grandchildren, Susan Wilkinson of Cromwell and Melissa Kirsch of New York. She also leaves her great-granddaughter, Emma Wilkinson, as well as her brother Attorney Melvin Scott, and several nieces and nephews.

Funeral services were held Sunday, May 18, at The Colchester Jewish Aid Cemetery, Gillette Lane, Colchester, with Rabbi Kenneth Alter officiating.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to the donor's choice.

Arrangements are entrusted to Weinstein Mortuary, Hartford. For more information, or to sign the guestbook for Beatrice, visit online at weinsteinmortuary.com/funerals.cfm.

Colchester

Daphne Ann Richter

Daphne Ann (Reynolds) Richter, 87, of Colchester and formerly of Westbrook, beloved wife of James, passed away Tuesday, May 20, at home after a long illness. Born Sept. 17, 1926 in York Township, Ontario, Canada, she was a daughter of the late Robert and Elizabeth (Harrington) Reynolds.

Mrs. Richter had worked as an optometry assistant for many years. In years past, she had been active with the Colchester seniors, as well as the AARP.

Graveside services were observed Thursday, May 22, at All Saints Cemetery, 700 Middletown Ave., North Haven. There were no calling hours.

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

Andover

Robert Paul Gustafson

Robert Paul Gustafson, 34, of Andover passed away unexpectedly at home Sunday May 18, after a long battle with addiction. Robert was born at Manchester Memorial Hospital Feb. 6, 1980, first son of Carol and Paul Gustafson.

He attended RHAM High School and went on to Institute of Audio Research in New York City. He loved music; it ran his soul and was truly his passion.

He always wanted to believe in the good of people and life in general. He was a man of his word. Always ready and willing to learn something new. Robert's niece Adriana was the joy of his world. He made everyone around him feel like the most important person in the world, but was faulted by not being able to do so for himself.

He is survived by his mother, Carol Gustafson of Andover; his sister, Ashley Gustafson of Rocky Hill; his niece, Adriana, and nephew, Anthoni; grandmothers, Barbara Gustafson of Ormond Beach, Fla., and Elaine Champlin of Ellington; and many aunts and uncles.

Robert was predeceased by his father, Paul Gustafson; grandfathers Arthur Gustafson and Merrill Champlin.

He had a special place in his heart for his lifelong friends Gary, Gennaro and the entire Clark family.

Compassion over judgment is how he would have liked everyone to see him. Because each person that has fallen victim to addiction was once someone to somebody.

Memorial calling hours were Thursday, May 22, at Holmes Funeral Home, 400 Main St., Manchester.

In lieu of flowers, to help fight addiction memorial donations may be made in his honor to Shatterproof, 101 Merritt 7 Corporate Park, 1st Floor, Norwalk, CT 06851.

For online condolences, visit holmes-watkinsfuneralhomes.com.

Colchester

Theodore Charles Denesha

Theodore "Ted" Charles Denesha, 70, formerly of Flanders Road, Niantic, died Saturday, May 17, at Liberty Apple Rehabilitation Center in Colchester. "He has slipped the surly bonds of the earth and touched the face of God."

He was born in New Bedford, Mass., Dec. 31, 1943, son of the late Richard and Alice (Balboni) Denesha. Ted served his country honorably in the U.S. Air Force in the 1960s and continued to serve in the Connecticut National Guard until retirement. Mr. Denesha was a veteran of Operation Desert Storm. He also worked for Pratt & Whitney and Millstone Power Station.

Mr. Denesha was a member of the Niantic Volunteer Fire Department, the VFW, and was a past president of the Niantic Lions Club, where he received the Melvin Jones Award, the Lions highest honor.

Ted is survived by his daughter, Tammy Denesha of New Britain; three brothers, Richard Denesha of Cupertino, Calif., Ernest Denesha of Bristol, and Robert Denesha of Norwich; and numerous nieces and nephews.

A memorial service will be held at a later date. Donations may be made in his memory to Friends of Fisher House Connecticut, P.O. Box 575, Bristol, CT 06010. This organization helps the families of veterans who are receiving services at a VA Hospital.

To share a condolence with the family, visit cumplings-gagnefh.com.

East Hampton

Lorraine Schooner Sampson

Lorraine Schooner Sampson, 83, of Middletown, passed at Middlesex Hospital Monday, April 28.

She is predeceased by her mother, Rose Beranek; her brother, Richard Schooner; and her grandson Patrick Labbadia. Lorraine is lovingly remembered by her children, Marcia (Wayne) Addy, Benjamin Bidwell III, Allison Bidwell and Brenden Bidwell; her grandchildren, Anthony Labbadia Jr., Meghan Addy and Khira Bidwell; and two great-granddaughters, Tessa and Ariana Labbadia.

Lorraine was born in Rocky Hill in 1930. She graduated with high honors from East Hampton High School in 1948. Lorraine worked as a business administrator for Ob-Gyn of Middletown.

The service of remembrance will be held at Lake View Cemetery, Lake View Rd. (Route 66), East Hampton, Saturday, May 24, at 11 a.m.

Lorraine's family would like to thank Middlesex Hospital Hospice for their loving care during her stay.

In lieu of flowers, contributions can be made to Middlesex Hospital Hospice Program.

Portland

Jane Bartoszewicz

Jane (Brower, Costa) Bartoszewicz, 84, of Portland, passed away Friday, May 16, at Middlesex Hospital after a brief illness. She passed away peacefully, aided greatly by the love and support of her family and many visiting friends. Jane was born Aug. 24, 1929, in Brooklyn, N.Y., the daughter of the late Hartman and Anna Brower (nee Dzakon).

In childhood, her family relocated frequently, living briefly in many cities throughout Connecticut and Massachusetts, including Hartford, Meriden and Middletown. After graduating high school in Gloucester, Mass., Jane married the late Mario Costa, subsequently moving back to Middletown and then later to Portland, where she has resided for the past 55 years.

In 1996, Jane retired from Petro Oil Company in East Hartford. Prior to that, she worked for many years on Main Street in Middletown, primarily as a bookkeeper at Shapiro's and the James H. Bunce Company.

Jane loved dolls, crafts, her cats, but mostly her children and grandchildren. She is survived by her two children, and three grandchildren: Mary Jane Costa of Fredericksburg, Va.; Michael and wife, Elizabeth Costa and their children Alexandra, Catherine and Michael of Tolland. She is also survived by her sister-in-law, Mary Torlai of Torrington; several nieces and nephews, and countless dear friends who supported her as her vision failed in later years. She will be especially missed by her dear friend Priscilla Gzybowski of Chester, who Jane lovingly referred to as her second daughter.

Along with her parents and husband, she was predeceased by her brother, Hartman Brower Jr.

Funeral services were held Thursday, May 22, at Doolittle Funeral Home, 14 Old Church St., Middletown. A private burial will take place at Mount Hebron Cemetery in Montclair, N.J., where Jane will join her parents, grandparents and great-grandparents in repose. Friends called Wednesday evening, May 21, at the funeral home.

In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made in Jane's memory to Macular Degeneration Research @ BrightFocus Foundation, 22512 Gateway Center Dr., Clarksburg, MD 20871 or brightfocus.org.

To share memories or send messages of condolence to the family, visit doolittlefuneral.com.

Portland

Robert Bastura

Robert Bastura, 66, of Portland, died Tuesday, May 20, at his home. He was born in Hartford, the son of the late Stanley Bastura Sr. and Jean (Kerop) Bastura.

Prior to his retirement, Robert worked as an auto mechanic. He was a longtime resident of Middletown. His interests included golfing, bowling and guitar.

Robert is survived by his brother, Stanley Bastura Jr. and his wife Susan of East Hampton; a sister, Nancy Rubino and her husband Michael of Meriden; his nieces, Kristin Bengtson-Belin and her husband Steve, and Kathryn Carrozza and her husband Michael; and his great-nephew, Max Bengtson-Belin. He also leaves an aunt and several cousins.

A private burial will be at the convenience of the family. There are no calling hours.

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

Portland

Nellie Roguski

Nellie (Marosz) Roguski, 102, of Middletown, wife of the late Chester S. Roguski, died Friday, May 16, at Portland Care and Rehabilitation Centre. She was born in Meriden, daughter of the late Frank and Katherine (Pisarz) Marosz.

Nellie is survived by her daughters, Shirley Prue and her husband Robert of Florida, Cynthia Benoit and her husband Dale of Portland, Joanne Borges and her husband Anthony of Florida; seven grandchildren, Mark, Kyle, Alicia, Kelly, Keith, Joel, Arron; and six great-grandchildren, Ryan, Kristen, Zoe, Willa, Alina and Kenzie.

Besides her husband, she was predeceased by her son Thomas Roguski; her sisters, Julia Anzulewicz, Helen Wysocki and Anna Banek; and brothers, Henry and Edward Marosz.

Funeral services will be held today, May 23, at 9:15 a.m., from Biega Funeral Home, 3 Silver St., Middletown, followed by a funeral liturgy at 10 a.m. at St. Mary of Czestochowa Church. Burial will be in Calvary Cemetery. Friends gathered Thursday, May 22, at Biega Funeral Home.

Memorial contributions may be made to St. Mary Church, 79 South Main St., Middletown, CT 06457.

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

Portland

Brian Gregory Walsh

After a courageous two-year battle with cancer, Brian Gregory "Greg" Walsh of Portland passed away peacefully Wednesday morning, May 14.

He is survived by his wife of 43 years, Joyce, and three siblings, Francis Walsh of Chesterfield, N.H., Regina Walsh of Moodus, Christopher Walsh of East Haddam; his godson Aaron of Marlboro, VT.; and niece Alexandra of Boston, Mass.

He was predeceased by his parents, Francis and Alice Walsh of Cobalt.

A lifelong Connecticut resident, Greg graduated Cromwell High School and attended Providence College and the University of Hartford before his career in real estate development and commercial property management. Greg came out of retirement to help his brother Chris establish The Vets-Cars Group to assist members of the military and veteran community.

Greg was nothing if not a rugged individualist. His intelligence, sharp wit, keen sense of irony and almost photographic memory were his most memorable traits. He was a voracious reader and avid bodybuilder. He selected his friends carefully and had few, but those whom he allowed to be close were fortunate and will never forget him.

Arrangements are being held by Biega Funeral Home in Middletown. There will be no calling hours.

Donations in Greg's memory may be made to The Folds of Honor Foundation, foldsofhonor.org.