

# RIVEREAST News Bulletin

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Last Thursday, former UConn star Shabazz Napier spent the evening at RHAM High School with area kids shooting hoops, signing autographs and talking about his career and recent acquisition by the Miami Heat.

## Shabazz Napier Comes to Town

by Geeta Schrayter

Last week, a basketball star came to RHAM High School to shoot hoops with area kids, and while the kids expressed excitement and awe at his presence, former UConn Huskies ace and newly-minted Miami Heat point guard Shabazz Napier said he was just as excited to be with them – and they reminded him why he loved the game.

Napier made his way to RHAM with All Sports Pro LLC, a company that, according to its website, partners with towns, recreation departments, parent associations and other organizations to “help provide a variety of specialized sports camps and multi-sport programs.”

The company works with NBA players “who are also outstanding role models” to help the participants learn not just the fundamentals of their sport, but life lessons as well.

Last Thursday, the RHAM gym was filled with students, the sound of basketballs hitting the floor, and hoots and hollers as they participated in a number of drills meant to improve their game – from working on their footwork to jumping rope, dribbling around cones and between their legs in figure eights.

The kids, who ranged in age from 8 to 16, also had the opportunity to shoot hoops with Napier, and they did so enthusiastically, crowding around him (along with some star-struck parents who wanted to get ample photos) and smiling happily as they aimed for the basket.

Napier, who graduated from UConn this past

May, hails from Roxbury, Mass. He explained during a question and answer session after the clinic he began playing basketball when he was four years old. The interest, he said, stemmed from watching his older brother play.

He added he started playing organized basketball at the local YMCA at five and a half.

“My mother put me in the Roxbury YMCA – she snuck me in; you were supposed to be 6 [years old],” he laughed.

Yet despite his early beginning, Napier explained to the kids he didn’t take basketball seriously until he was in middle school, “nor did I take it *really* serious until I was a sophomore in high school.”

It was then that Napier participated in the Amateur Athletic Union, which is a non-profit, volunteer sports organization “dedicated exclusively to the promotion and development of amateur sports and physical fitness programs,” according to the website [aausports.org](http://aausports.org). Among other things, AAU “provides opportunities to participate in outstanding sporting events,” and it’s AAU Napier partially attributed to getting him where he is today.

Participating in AAU, he said, “that’s kind of what got me on to this stage.”

He added during sophomore year he went to an AAU invitational, and UConn’s recently-retired coach Jim Calhoun attended one of the games.

See Shabazz Napier Page 2

## Paul Challenging Orange in Tuesday Primary

by Melissa Roberto

It’s a race that’s generated a lot of *Rivereast* letters to the editor in recent weeks, and after next Tuesday, it’ll all be over.

The Aug. 12 Democratic primary will determine whether incumbent Linda Orange or newcomer Jason Paul will be listed on the November ballot for the 48th District state Representative seat.

Each Democratic challenger said the past few months have consisted of knocking on the doors of constituents in the 48th District, which includes portions of Colchester, Lebanon, Windham and Mansfield. Paul announced in February his intention to run for the seat, and in May, he secured enough votes at the Democratic convention to be placed on the ballot for the primary.

In April, Orange, the endorsed candidate, announced she isn’t ready to give up the seat she’s held for 18 years. Though Orange has run in – and won – nine consecutive elections, next week will bring her first primary. Asked if having a Democratic competitor has been a challenge, the incumbent replied, “No. It is a de-

mocracy.”

Whichever Democrat comes out on top in the Aug. 12 primary will face Republican Evan Evans on Election Day. Evans is a Colchester resident who filed to run for the 48th District seat after Republican Joe Broder pulled out of the running. Earlier this year, Evans had been seeking a nomination to run for the U.S. Congress seat to represent the 2nd Congressional District; he lost his bid to fellow Republican Lori Hopkins-Cavanagh, who will face incumbent Congressman Joe Courtney in the fall.

So, while the primary is a first for both Paul and Orange, both seem confident in their campaigning efforts.

“It’s been going very well,” Paul said. “It’s going to be a close race.”

Orange said she feels her campaign has gone “great.”

“I’ve done a lot of work over the past three months campaigning and meeting people, which is the best part of the job: to meet with people.”

Paul has lived in Colchester since last Octo-

See Primary Page 2



State Rep. Linda Orange, left, is being opposed by Jason Paul in a primary next week to determine the Democratic nominee for state representative for the 48th Assembly District.

**Shabazz Napier cont. from Front Page**

"I knew when I saw him," Napier shared. "In my head I thought he was the best coach, even when I was a sophomore."

Although Napier had been playing well during the invitational, he was nervous at the sight of Calhoun.

"I tried to say [to myself], 'Play good.' I'm nervous, I'm saying, 'Just play basketball, just play basketball, just play basketball,'" he stated. "I go to the midline, I go to shoot a three[pointer] and I air balled. I missed."

But despite the miss, and despite thinking he'd blown his shot with UConn as a result, that wasn't the case.

Napier explained Calhoun "saw something in me I didn't see in myself that day."

And what Calhoun saw others got to see as well, when Napier went on to play for UConn. During his tenure at the school, Napier was part of two national championship wins, in 2011 and 2014. He made the Big East All-Rookie team after the 2011 championship, and after his junior year he was selected to the All-Big East team.

Napier was named the 2013-14 American Athletic Conference Player of the Year as well as the team's Most Outstanding Player. He also received the 2014 Bob Cousy Award as the nation's top point guard, and was inducted into the Huskies of Honor.

Napier finished his time at UConn with 1,959 points, 646 assists, 576 rebounds, 509 free throws, 260 three-point field goals and 251 steals; he played in a total of 143 games.

After graduating, he was drafted 24th overall by the Charlotte Hornets in this year's NBA draft. He was then traded to the Miami Heat, and during the question and answer session, the kids had quite a few questions regarding his new team.

These included, "How long is your contract?" to which Napier explained he has a two-year guarantee with another two-year team option, "so four years total."

"How much do you get to play?" another kid

asked, to which RHAM Coach Steve Emt replied after laughing, "We're not going to answer that one."

Napier was also asked what team he'd choose if he could be traded to any one he wanted, and his reply was fitting for someone recently under contract: "I'd say 'no team,'" he stated.

Along with the above, other questions roused laughter from the audience, like whether or not he has a girlfriend (he does), when he was getting his shoe sponsor (he said he had to work for it first), and how good his shot is going to be next year ("hopefully one of the best!" he replied).

But Napier was also asked some more serious questions, and gave those present some heartfelt answers and tips in response.

"What meant more – graduating college or the second championship?" he was asked.

"I would lie to you if I said graduation wasn't the most important," he replied. "That's something that my mother wanted me to do."

He went on to explain his mother, who he said was the most influential person in his life, always taught him to be better than her.

"That's hard because in my eyes, she's just perfect to me. [But] my mom was unable to go to college," he said, adding she told him never to put his eggs in one basket, and "school is the most important thing."

"No one can take that away from you at the end of the day. God forbid I break my leg," he explained, and his basketball career came to a sudden end. But if that were to happen, his education was something he'd still have.

"I promised her I'd stay in school and graduate," he shared.

Although Napier said he was excited about being drafted, he went on to share he was a family person, so going to Miami was "bittersweet."

"It's tough for me to know that I'm moving away from my mom, my family," he said. "It's kind of bittersweet. But I'm happy – I know I have family to support me."

And Napier said he eventually hoped to have



**During Shabazz Napier's recent visit to RHAM for a sports clinic, he spent time shooting around with the kids, offering up tips and tricks, and encouraging them with words such as, "You're thinking too much; just shoot!"**

a place in Boston.

"I may reside in Miami but hopefully I'll have a house in Boston one day; I never want to forget where I came from," he said.

And, staying true to those roots, when Napier was asked who his favorite team was growing up, he replied: "I'm from Boston – that's simple. It's only right for you to go with the Celtics. So I've been a big fan of the Celtics, the Patriots, the Red Sox [and] the Bruins," he smiled.

As the discussion continued, Napier was also asked whether he played basketball from the heart.

"I do," he stated. "I'm not tall, but one thing I have, and a lot of people know that, is heart."

Napier continued, "You got to give it all

you've got. That's showing your heart."

But Napier went on to say it was possible to get caught up in the business of the game and forget why it is he plays – but coming to events like the one at RHAM helped remind him.

"I'm fortunate to be in front of you" he told the kids, adding the game sometimes "gets all about business and you kind of forget, 'Oh, I used to enjoy basketball,' and I come down here and see you don't have a care and some of you kids look like I did playing growing up so it gives me perspective."

Napier concluded, "I know you guys appreciate me but I appreciate you as well."

**Primary cont. from Front Page**

ber. He is a graduate of Brandeis University, with a bachelor's degree in politics and is currently a partner in a consulting firm. He also received his jurist degree from the University of Connecticut School of Law in May.

Paul has been endorsed by Democracy for America, a progressive political action committee out of Vermont, former First Selectwoman of Colchester Linda Hodge, and CT Voters for Gun Safety.

Paul explained the pro gun safety organization rated Paul an 'A' for his stance on gun safety legislation while it granted Orange a 'D' rating. He said he believes this is because the two Democrats' "difference on that could not be clearer."

Paul was referring to Orange's past endorsement from the National Rifle Association (NRA), he said – an association he will "never" be friends with.

Furthermore, Paul shared his perspective on Orange's voting record involving gun legislation. He said Orange's vote against the 2013 "gun safety measure," Bill SB 1160, was a "big slap in the face."

Although Paul's pro gun safety stance isn't the only one he's passionate about. The Colchester resident shared goals he would focus on accomplishing if given the opportunity to represent the 48th District: tax reform, a "clean government," and "new ideas overall."

Paul said his vision of a "clean government" is getting rid of legislative mailings. "We shouldn't get glossy mailings saying 'legislative updates' that are campaign advertisements," he said. "Voters should pick their politicians; politicians shouldn't pick their voters."

Paul said he's also interested in bringing in new ideas that benefit the middle class. He also is interested in pushing for a change to how special education is funded.

"The [Colchester budget] referendums [that failed twice and narrowly passed on the third try] show over and over again that the middle class gets squeezed," Paul said. "The special

education part of the budget, which is why the [Colchester school] budget went up, is something the state should really take care of."

Paul said he's looking forward to Tuesday's vote because "there's potential for a change." Due to the change of makeup in the 48th District last year Paul said he believes residents of the new parts of the district "don't know who Orange is." (In January 2013 portions of Lebanon, Windham, and Mansfield were added; East Haddam went to the 34th District.)

Paul was the topic of a letter recently mailed to the *Rivereast* by seven Democratic town committee and Democratic State Central Committee leaders. They called on Paul to correct a mistake they said he'd made on multiple occasions, when he alleged Orange voted against a bill decriminalizing possession of small amounts of marijuana. The seven leaders called it a "reckless error" because Orange did, in fact, vote for it.

This week, Paul admitted he did make a "completely honest mistake," but added it's one he's already addressed publicly.

"I used Project Vote Smart, the number one legislative look-up in the country," he said. "They got this vote wrong. They made a mistake which I relied on."

Paul said he has since retracted the error on three separate occasions, including Project Vote Smart to take it down.

"I'm the one who got the Project Vote Smart [website] to change the ranking. It's correct now," Paul said. "If I didn't correct the error then they'd have a point, but I did."

And while the primary is just days away, Paul invites any constituent with a comment or question to reach out to him by giving him a call at 860-288-5307, email him at [paulforstater@gmail.com](mailto:paulforstater@paulforstater@gmail.com) or visit his website at [jasonpaul48.com](http://jasonpaul48.com).

"If you hear something that doesn't sit right with you, or if something has you confused, just email or call," Paul informed readers. "That is what I'm here for."

\* \* \*

As for Orange, she shared she's enjoyed her 10th campaign. She said it's consisted of going

door to door, making phone calls, and her favorite aspect, "the events."

"I always go to events whether it's an election year or non-election year because I enjoy people," Orange said.

The incumbent state representative said this year she's heard "some of the same issues" she has heard in the past, which mostly pertain to the economy.

"They're finding the same thing that I find: that our economy here in eastern Connecticut has not really picked up as we've heard on the news that our economy is picking up," Orange said. "In eastern Connecticut I feel it has not really had a jumpstart yet."

And so, Orange said, if her tenure is extended, "economy" will remain "a top priority."

In addition to that, jobs would be another focus, she said. "Jobs [are] always a top priority. Throughout my tenure I have worked very hard for working families."

Another goal Orange said she has focused on and will continue to strive for if re-elected is "making sure there is an educated workforce" in Connecticut.

"We have to stay updated in our technical schools because there are jobs out there that are not filled because we don't have trained people to fill them in manufacturing," Orange said. "Our technical school system is a very integral part of our economy and our labor force."

And although her competitor described it as Orange's potential weakness, the Democratic incumbent says last year's redistricting of the 48th District – the third she's endured since she assumed the seat – is something she has enjoyed because "I get to meet people."

"I've enjoyed representing the town of Mansfield," said Orange, "as well as working closely with Rep. Gregg Haddad [who represents the rest of Mansfield], as well as Windham, working closely with Susan Johnson [who represents the rest of that town], and learning the issues of the communities."

Orange has lived in Colchester for 37 years and raised a family there. She said she's appreciative for receiving "a lot of support."

"I've worked very hard throughout my tenure to get that support and people certainly recognize me as a hard worker and for the tough decisions I've made," the representative shared.

The Democratic town committees of Colchester, Lebanon, Mansfield and Windham

have all endorsed Orange, as well as 17 organizations/unions including The American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations, Connecticut Education Association, the State Police Union, and United Professional Fire Fighters Association.

In terms of what the seasoned state representative wants to accomplish in a 10th term, she said that, if re-elected, she has plans to place "more focus on mental health." Specifically, Orange said she has a plan to "introduce a bill so that we have parity for mental health and addiction services."

The need for mental health reform is the reason Orange said she voted against the 2013 bill – the vote for which she has been criticized by Paul.

"I have voted throughout my tenure for safer gun laws," Orange said. "This bill that has passed in the General Assembly was a bill of three parts. It seems to be known as 'the gun law' but it also had two other pieces all wrapped into one: school safety as well as mental health."

Orange explained the 2013 bill that passed stated "if you have mental health issues you cannot obtain a gun permit or if you already have it you cannot purchase ammunition whereas a substance abuser is accepted. There definitely needs to be parity there."

Orange continued she actually "feels the same way as my opponent does" about gun safety, yet "when you're sitting there watching a big bill that's being put together you're looking at all aspects of that bill. The mental health piece of that bill I fought very hard to change, and that did not happen."

Orange reminded people to "come out and vote" Tuesday, and encouraged voters to check out her Facebook page at [Facebook.com/RepresentativeOrange](https://www.facebook.com/RepresentativeOrange) or give her a call at 860-537-3936.

The Democrat primaries will be held on Tuesday, Aug. 12, and all three polling places will be open. Voters who reside in District 1 will vote at the Colchester Town Hall at 127 Norwich Ave., voters in District 2 and District 4 will vote at the Abundant Life Assemblies of God Church, located at 85 Skinner Rd., and voters who reside in District 3 will vote in the Bacon Academy Cafeteria at 611 Norwich Ave. The polls will be open from 6 a.m.-8 p.m. To learn your voting district, visit the registrars' section of the town website at [colchesterct.gov](http://colchesterct.gov).

# RHAM Students Work on Homes for Humanity

by Geeta Schrayter

Last month, a group of RHAM students took a week out of their summer vacation to become construction workers. That is, they headed to Pennsylvania where they joined with Habitat for Humanity to build homes in an ongoing effort to eradicate homelessness.

The group, which consisted of 15 students and four chaperones, drove five hours to Coatesville, Penn., where they worked on a number of houses from July 21-26.

RHAM chemistry teacher Rick Linden headed the trip, and explained the idea for such an excursion came about two years ago. It was at that time his son John, who graduated from RHAM this year and worked with Habitat for Humanity on the weekends in Willimantic, expressed an interest in doing something more extensive with the nonprofit.

Linden said his son did some research and found the program he was looking for; while primarily for college students, the program was open to high school students who were at least 16 years old, provided chaperones went with them.

"So we worked it out," Linden stated, and the first trip took place last year. The opportunity was opened up to members of the RHAM Leos Club, a youth volunteer organization that's part of the Hebron Lions Club, and Linden said, "We quickly filled the trip to capacity."

That initial trip, he furthered, "worked out really, really well a year ago and we decided to do it again."

This time around, the trip was opened up to the entire student population – and once again, the spots were quickly filled.

"Again we had no trouble filling it up. In fact, we had to turn away some who had gone last year," Linden explained. "So we had a different group of equally enthusiastic and hard-working kids."

In Pennsylvania, the group encountered the same Habitat for Humanity staff they had previously, who Linden said were "delightful to work with."

"It was another successful trip," he affirmed.

During the trip, the group worked throughout the day, relaxed in the evening, showered at a nearby YMCA, and slept in sleeping bags placed on mattresses on the floor of a church.

The work the students participated in varied, and included painting, plumbing, installing sheetrock and insulation, caulking and hauling gravel.

The training needed to complete each of the

tasks is provided on site, Linden explained, and the work is overseen by supervisors; none of the participants are expected to have construction experience, but at the end of the trip, that's something they leave with.

The trip, he said, is a "win-win-win."

"The kids learn construction skills they probably never possessed before," he stated. "And on the social side it's fun meeting new people and interacting during the work day and in the evenings – they grow as people too."

Linden continued, "It's just all good. Habitat for Humanity certainly wins in having the houses get further along, and they love our school. We've been two years running now and they say 'your kids are better than a lot of the college kids that come through.' They're really dedicated, and that says a lot about the RHAM community."

RHAM history teacher Pete Joseph has chaperoned the trip both years, and had similar praise for the experience.

"I've done the trip twice now, and both times it has been an incredibly rewarding experience," he stated.

Like Linden, Joseph said the trip benefited students in a number of ways. For instance, he explained they're helping families "achieve their dream of quality affordable housing."

"Both this year and last, our students had the opportunity to work alongside the homeowners, learning their stories and how owning a home will change their lives forever," he stated. "This is often an incredibly emotional experience – how many of us have moved someone to tears by painting a wall or helping caulk window seams?"

Joseph added the students also learn about themselves and all they're capable of.

"This year we had two young women who ran the plumbing lines for two houses," he said. "You could see their confidence increase with every room they finished, and they could proudly say that not only did they run the plumbing for the house, it passed the pressure test with no problems."

As with Linden and Joseph, the students who participated had positive things to say.

Hebron resident Katy Brown, who will be a senior in the fall, said she became interested in the trip because "I thought it would look good for college and to help others."

"It was fun," she said. "It was good getting to help others and become closer to the people who go to our school who were going on it."

Brown added she would "definitely" recom-



Last month a group of 15 RHAM students traveled to Pennsylvania to spend a week of their summer vacation working with Habitat for Humanity. Included in the group, who worked on six houses painting, plumbing, installing sheet rock and insulation among other things, were Emma Coffey (left) and Nikki Gostanian.

mend other students participate in the trip, and Sarah Ott, who will also be a senior come fall, felt similarly.

"I kind of wish that I did it last year and would have gotten the opportunity to do it this year too," said the Hebron resident. "I would definitely recommend it – it's a lot of fun and a great way to get community service hours."

Although Ott said she wasn't exactly sure what she was getting into, "I had a lot of fun."

"I didn't really know what to expect, but we kept really busy on the jobsite and the people that I worked with were really fun and I had a good time," she said.

Fellow classmate Jason DePersia also said it was a "great experience."

"I learned a lot on the construction site and off it. It was good," he stated, adding, "If I had the opportunity to do it again I would probably be the first one to sign up – I loved it."

For Joseph, another aspect that rendered the experience meaningful was the fact he grew up

in Pennsylvania, and went to college 45 minutes from Coatesville.

"I had known that Coatesville was one of the poorest cities in Pennsylvania's wealthiest county," he explained. "I'm very proud that RHAM students are willing to give up a week of their summer, drive five hours away, and do physical labor to help complete strangers. There are a lot of people who like to criticize teenagers for being selfish, or unconcerned about others. The 30 students I've worked with over the past two summers have proven this to be untrue."

The students Joseph is referring to who participated this year included: Brown, DePersia, Ott, Emma Coffey, Alyssa Hansen, Nikki Gostanian, Will Jacques, Robby James, Ashleigh Jepson, Danny Kmetz, Mckenzie Maneggia, Julia Meadows, Delaney Rhoades, and Olivia Seidel. Joining them were chaperones Jeannie Kmetz and Laurie Vega-Boulay in addition to Joseph and Linden.

# Police to Enforce Speeding in Marlborough Through Grant

by Melissa Roberto

The Board of Selectmen in its meeting Tuesday night authorized First Selectwoman Cathi Gaudinski to submit the Highway Safety Grant application to the state Department of Transportation (DOT) to allow for an increase in speed enforcement in Marlborough.

The grant is administered through the Connecticut Highway Safety office, with money coming from the 2014 federal safety funds. It totals "almost" \$25,000, which would cover overtime, salary and benefits of local police and state troopers working additional hours to put a stop to speeding in town. The grant provides "100 percent reimbursement," the first selectwoman said. Additionally, the grant covers the \$3,300 expense of two laser radar devices.

The grant would begin as soon as the town receives notification that it is approved for the program; the program runs through Sept. 30. During that time, the selectwoman said there will not be warnings given for speeding.

"If you get stopped, there would be a ticket," Gaudinski informed, adding she is in support of this initiative.

"I can't tell you how many calls I receive about [speed] enforcement," she said. "I get requests for speed bumps, more stop signs."

Gaudinski said she "especially" is in support because she's hopeful the grant would go into effect right at the start of the school year.

"If we can get some funding for additional patrol especially around the start of school, the lake area, Cheney Road, [then] I'm for it," she said.

The board took unanimous action on authorizing Gaudinski to submit the grant application.

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Also on Tuesday, the board unanimously voted to allow Gaudinski to sign a commit to

fund letter pertaining to the town's expense of replacing the Fawn Brook Bridge. The action was taken following the news that the town has prequalified for federal funding through the Federal Local Bridge Program.

It was communicated to the town by the state Department of Transportation last May that Fawn Brook Bridge, located near the intersection of South Main Street and Kellogg Road, is in need of a replacement. DOT officials deemed the bridge deteriorated, with concrete underneath it starting to crumble. A temporary fix of the bridge was made last year, with the understanding it would need to be rebuilt in the next three to five years.

The estimated total of rebuilding the bridge is \$1.279 million. The grant allows for 80 percent of that cost, or \$1,023,000, to be paid for through the federal program; the remaining 20 percent, or \$255,800, would need to be funded by the town.

Gaudinski said the town's qualification for federal funding is "good news." The town has already set aside \$136,500 in its current fiscal year capital plan to pay for design costs. Gaudinski said she believes design plans would occur in this fiscal year, but as for the actual rebuilding of the project, that wouldn't occur until years ahead.

"This is not going to happen tomorrow or this year," Gaudinski informed. "It's a multi-year project."

The commit to fund letter will go to the DOT stating the town commits to funding the 20 percent. The next step of the process is a concept meeting between the town and DOT to discuss the "timeline and different requirements," Gaudinski explained.

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By a unanimous vote, the Board of Selectmen also voted to accept the town operations

2013-14 fiscal year year-end transfers, as recommended by Assistant Treasurer Hayley Wagner.

The year-end transfers total \$13,815. The vote is taken each year following the fiscal year's end. Per town charter, the selectmen are allowed to approve of transfers within the town operations budget for items under \$2,000 and not involving salaried accounts.

All other year-end transfers will need to be approved by the Board of Finance at its next meeting. The selectmen were shown a list of these remaining transfers to be voted on, and they total \$157,746.

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Also at Tuesday's meeting, Gaudinski gave a brief update on the status of the Phase III sewer expansion project.

The Phase III portion has been approved by both the Planning Commission and Water Pollution Control Authority, Gaudinski said. According to a timeline prepared by town attorney Joe Fasi, the Board of Selectmen and the town treasurer would need to take action for approval of the project on Sept. 2. Then, on Sept. 22, a special Board of Finance meeting will be held for the finance board to take action on the project.

Gaudinski said these dates are set in stone to meet state and town requirements.

"All [of the dates] backtrack from actual Election Day and requirements in the charter for town meetings and public hearings," Gaudinski said.

Due to the estimated cost of Phase III, which is \$3.5 million, the project would head to referendum on Election Day, Nov. 4, if approved by all necessary boards and commissions.

Gaudinski said there will also be a second public information meeting held on Wednesday, Aug. 27 for the public to attend. Accord-

ing to Gaudinski, she's received "nothing but positive comments" pertaining to the current work being done in Phase II.

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Lastly, the selectmen unanimously authorized Gaudinski to sign contract documents that would head to the Department of Public Health regarding the Town Center Public Water system.

The water system, which is proposed for the center of town, would be funded by a \$500,000 Small Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP) grant the town received from the state in 2013 and an additional \$50,000 that taxpayers approved at a town meeting in 2012.

Gaudinski confirmed in July that the town is moving forward to construct the town water system since Connecticut Water Company (CWC) pulled out as a partner earlier this year.

Gaudinski said Tuesday night's authorization allows for the paperwork to head to the Department of Public Health. She added the paperwork is needed in order to start the project. She said the DPH will have oversight of administering the town's eligible STEAP grant.

Following the submission of the paperwork, the town would go out to bid for a company to construct the water system.

Gaudinski also informed the board there has been no further correspondence received from CWC attorney Michael Donnelly. In July, Donnelly sent a letter to town attorney Mark Branse claiming the town owes CWC \$293,000 for preliminary drilling work the water company performed in town over the last two years. Branse responded on behalf of the town, alleging the company's claim was incorrect.

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The next regular Board of Selectmen meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, Aug. 19, at 7 p.m., at Town Hall.

# Local Eighth-Graders Take Home National Basketball Title

by **Melissa Roberto**

Heading to the National Travel Basketball Association (NTBA) national championship in South Carolina in June was exciting enough for the eighth grade Connecticut Storm girls' basketball team, but taking home the national title, players say, gave them even more reason to celebrate.

The eighth grade premier team consisted of 10 players, three of whom reside in a couple of the *Rivereast* towns, and who have set sights on playing at their respective high schools next year.

The team was helmed by a father-and-daughter duo from Colchester. Connecticut Storm President Jennifer Labrie and Vice President Dale Robertson, coached the eighth grade team to victory this year. Labrie served as the head coach; Robertson, her dad, was the team's assistant coach. The two say they have coached the eighth grade team "for years" now, but highlighted this season as one of the most memorable yet.

Connecticut Storm is a non-profit parent-operated basketball organization with a goal of teaching players fundamentals and then preparing them for the high school level, Robertson said. The organization offers a spring league and a travel league consisting of players in the fifth- to 11th-grades beginning at the end of March and running through June. Connecticut Storm also offers fall clinics and an annual Mother's Day Classic consisting of participants from all over the East Coast.

The vice president added there's "a place at Connecticut Storm for every player to fit if they want to play basketball."

Labrie originally grew up in Maine, where she played basketball for her father, who started an Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) club there. The team would travel at times to Connecticut where Labrie competed against Connecticut Storm teams. Ultimately, Labrie's marriage brought her to Connecticut, and she didn't hesitate to get involved with Connecticut Storm. The longtime coach also works as a fourth-grade teacher at Jack Jackter Intermediate School.

"I coached for eight years with the Storm and took over when [former president] Larry Miller retired a couple years ago," Labrie said, adding her dad moved to Connecticut from Hawaii and began coaching there as well. "My dad became vice president this year. We have a long history with the Storm."

Under the father-daughter coaching duo, this year's eighth grade premier travel team finished with a season record of 26-9. Six of those victories occurred at the national championship held in Myrtle Beach and North Myrtle Beach in South Carolina, where Labrie said the girls went up against competition from North and South Carolina, Virginia and Washington, D.C.

"The competition was phenomenal," Labrie said, adding it was the first time a Connecticut Storm team had enrolled in the tournament. "We could have attempted AAU Nationals in Florida but we wanted to go somewhere where these kids could get some more exposure."

And when the team took the court at the national tournament, Labrie said, "I do think a lot of those teams were looking at us from Connecticut saying 'Whoa, where did this group come from?'"

And that's most likely due to the team's determination that they displayed not only at nationals but also at tournaments earlier in the year. Labrie said the team won a fall tournament called the Hall of Fame Classic, where the girls played on the Basketball Hall of Fame court in Springfield, Mass. The next big win occurred at the Connecticut AAU girls' state tournament in April.

"It's been an awesome ride with this group," said Labrie. "From beginning to end, it was just an incredible season. Every single game they worked so hard and it ended up paying off for this national tournament."

With many highlights to choose from, Labrie said the eighth graders definitely kept the crowd on its toes during the national travel tournament. The girls won the first three games, which placed them into the gold medal bracket. From there, the games got intense, Labrie said.

In fact, Labrie said "one of the most exciting games I have ever been a part of" was the double-overtime semifinals game that advanced the Connecticut Storm team to the championship game. The girls were up against the Virginia State champions, and, thanks to two baskets shot "at the buzzer," the Storm advanced to the championship by one point.

The championship game, played against the Lady Royals team from North Carolina, was also close, Labrie said.

"It was a close game with clutch free throws by Lia Baroncini, Cora Sawyer [of Stonington] and Samantha Chapps [of Old Saybrook] at the end to seal the deal with a 47-43 victory," Labrie said in a press release.

According to Robertson, the travel team has set some Connecticut Storm records.

"We've won some state titles but the best we ever finished in a national tournament was fifth place," Robertson recalled. "This was by far the highest any Storm team as finished at a so-called national tournament."

Labrie said to her knowledge she believes winning states and nationals in the same year is also a first for a Connecticut Storm team.

Robertson pointed out the best part of watching the team take the lead was "just seeing the happiness on the players' faces and the parents and their relatives."

"It was a huge, huge accomplishment," the assistant coach furthered. "It was very gratify-



**Ten area eighth-graders made up the Connecticut Storm eighth grade premier team. The team were AAU state champions and came out on top as the national champions at the National Travel Basketball Association (NTBA) national championship in South Carolina in June.**

ing to Jen and I as coaches."

And perhaps even more so for the players. Anna Barry, 14, of Andover said being on the Connecticut Storm team has helped her "improve on my basketball skills," particularly, "my post moves and my foul shots."

Barry said winning the NTBA champion title was a "really exciting" moment. "I don't think anyone thought we could," she added, pointing out that she will try out for the RHAM High School basketball team this fall.

Fourteen-year-old Marlborough resident Anelia Piel said she plans to try out for the Mercy High School basketball team this year. Her favorite part of the national tournament was the team bonding.

"We had a lot of tournaments and our team bonded a lot during the season," Piel said. "It was really exciting for all of us. We had fun not only playing basketball, but we had fun going to the beach, too."

Baroncini, 14, also of Marlborough, said the eighth grade team has been playing together for two years now.

"We have a really tight bond and play really well together," Baroncini said.

Baroncini also plans to try out at RHAM High School, and she credited the great skills

of this year's team to Labrie and Robertson's coaching styles.

"I definitely improved on my skills. I think everyone on my team has grown in the past year more than I've seen anyone grow," Baroncini said, adding Labrie is "an amazing coach and pushes us to do our best."

Labrie concluded she's "extremely proud" of the team. She said their success came from a willingness to learn.

"They showed up to every practice and every game and approached it as a learning moment," she said.

And, Labrie added, the girls' parents also contributed to their success. "Parents play a key role as their athletes develop. These parents were so positive and supportive throughout the whole season. I really think that made a difference on how the girls responded to each other and responded to us as coaches."

Asked if the eighth grade team raised the bar for future Storm teams, Labrie said with a laugh, "I would say so."

"They will now be considered the national team and they'll have to hold up to that moving forward," Labrie laughed.

To find out more about the Connecticut Storm and its offerings, log on to [ctstorm.com](http://ctstorm.com).

# Andover Selectmen Express 5K Concerns

by Geeta Schrayter

The Hop River 5K is just one day away, but concerns about it continued to be raised at Wednesday's meeting of the Board of Selectmen.

At their meeting last month, the selectmen had said the race organizers, The First Mile Fitness, had advertised that last year's inaugural race was to benefit the Andover Food Pantry, but no money had been received.

However, on Wednesday, First Selectman Bob Burbank said there had been "some misinformation given."

Burbank explained he went back and reviewed information and learned that the race actually wasn't supposed to benefit the food pantry after all.

First Mile Co-Founder Rich Baber "had never [held] the race before and he didn't know how many people would come out for that race, he wasn't aware of the food pantry, so there was no thought at that time by anybody that [donating to the food pantry] would be part of the event," Burbank said.

But Burbank continued, after a successful first race with over 60 runners, Baber said "he'd like to give something back this year" and so, "the food pantry was mentioned this year in the flyer."

Last week, Baber had shared similar information about the race.

"We did in fact have a 5K last year in Andover," he said. "However, we did not advertise it as a charity run – we didn't have any local charity partners."

Baber added, "We just had it because basi-

cally, there's a club out there [The 169 Society] who wanted a race in every town in Connecticut."

That club, he explained, came to the First Mile Fitness to help organize the races.

While there wasn't an overwhelming number of participants in last year's race, Baber said "we liked doing the race [in Andover] – it's a nice venue, and the town seemed to think it was a positive event," and so another was planned for this year.

And this time around, "we said we wanted to do it again and were looking to partner with a local charity" he said.

And eventually, it was the food pantry that was selected. Baber said he wasn't sure what the exact donation would be at this point, but The First Mile was going to provide a \$100 donation, and participants were being asked to bring non-perishable items to donate to the pantry.

"I'm not really sure why they [the Board of Selectmen] felt compelled to make this the topic of conversation," Baber stated. "But we operate with the highest level of integrity. We put on 30 plus events a year, many in conjunction with a charity – no one's ever complained about us before."

Yet even after the charity issue was cleared up, concern continued to be expressed at Wednesday's meeting about the safety of the event.

In a July 29 letter sent to the selectmen, Andover Republican Town Committee Chairman Ted Sakelarakis wrote his committee was

planning its own 5K, in conjunction with this year's pig roast fundraiser to benefit the food pantry. He mentioned the Hop River 5K and said there was concern over the use of town roads for the event, as the 10K that's also going on crosses three town roads: Shoddy Mill, Wales, and Burnap Brook.

Sakelarakis wrote, "With no traffic controls in place and the runners traveling fast across these roads with no warnings to drivers, the potential for an accident with a car and one of these runners will be exceptionally high."

He added, "Our goal in 2015 is to promote a high quality and safe fundraiser while making a sizeable donation to the food pantry. We ask that the promoter of these races [The First Mile] be held to the same standard."

At the meeting, resident Jeff Murray added on to those points, and said that, as a runner, he was concerned with the event crossing town roads.

"Somebody who runs is going to expect to have a road closure, fire police, or someone of authority experienced in road traffic monitoring the roads," he told the selectmen. "I really think you should really look at this. This is a major liability problem. I didn't hear anything about anyone stopping traffic. Why are you letting anyone run this race? I don't want to see anyone get hurt."

Murray went on to say the town had known about the race for two months, and "haven't done anything – it's an issue."

Burbank had said earlier in the meeting the race takes place on the state-owned Hop River

Trail, so the town didn't have the authority to cancel the event; he said the town could work to make policies for future races that took place in town, but there was nothing to be done about the current race.

"We can't backtrack and change something at the last minute that has already been in place: you can only look out for future events," he stated.

The selectmen did say two people would be stationed at each of the crossings to assist with the event. However, this wasn't good enough for selectwomen Cathy Desrosiers and Julia Haverl who felt some action should be taken related to safety before the race occurs tomorrow.

"I am not proud we haven't done anything, that we didn't comprehend. ... Of course we should have done something," said Haverl. "We've got to come up with a plan."

As a result, Desrosiers motioned for a special meeting which was approved and was to take place this morning at 9 a.m., after press time.

Although Baber couldn't be reached in time to comment on Wednesday's meeting, he had said last week he was hoping for a nice event.

"We anticipate doing very well with this," he said, and mentioned he had an email from the town giving the race their blessing.

The race, he furthered, "brings a lot of people from out of town. We didn't get a single runner from Andover last year; all the people were from out of town. I think from the town's perspective it should be a positive event."

# Andover Librarians Celebrate 15 Years

by Geeta Schrayter

For the past 15 years, there have been two familiar faces at the Andover Public Library: director Amy Orloski and children's librarian Cathy Campen. Last week, the two took a break from greeting patrons and answering their questions to sit among the book collection and talk about their time at the library, which Campen called "a hidden gem in the center of town."

Orloski, who lives in Canterbury, shared she'd been working part-time in the libraries at Eastern Connecticut State University in Willimantic and Three Rivers Community College in Norwich when she saw the opening in Andover.

"I applied and interviewed and I was hired," she stated.

Orloski began working in November 1998; she explained Campen was her first hire, who started just a month later.

Campen, who lives in town, shared she brought her visiting sister-in-law to see the library one day and happened upon Orloski and one of the clerks at the time discussing how they were going to fill a position that had opened up.

"My sister-in-law kind of elbowed me and said, 'You could do that,' because I had told her I was kind of bored being home all the time," Campen explained. "So I applied that night and they said 'why don't you come in,' and so they started me out slowly, and here I am."

Both women shared since they began, the library had seen quite a few changes. The basement, for example, was renovated and turned into the children's area and the location of various library programs.

"I think the downstairs section is the biggest change," Orloski stated. "That went through a capital improvement project through the town – our library board [of directors] was very good at getting the funds in place to do that."

In addition, she said "the Internet has really changed everything."

When the two first started, the Internet was used mainly by the staff. Now, Campen furthered, "We actually have Wi-Fi available 24/7. People come into the parking lot to use it if their computers are down or they're passing by."

Furthermore, while the library used to boast VHS tapes to rent, they now offer DVDs; there are plastic cards instead of paper cards now, too; and an Andover History section.

Although the library isn't the largest one around, both librarians asserted it's got plenty

to offer.

"For a little library we have a great selection," Campen stated.

Orloski confirmed, "We stuff a lot into a little space."

Along with the books and DVDs, the library also has museum and beach passes that offer free or reduced admission, a monthly book group and various programs and activities; the library has held nail art and T-shirt designing programs, teddy bear tea parties, indoor camping complete with a pitched tent and faux fire, clay sculpting, reptile exhibits and more.

And it's those programs Campen, who Orloski called the "craftiest" and has a degree in art education, said she'd like to see continue moving forward.

"I'd like to see that continue and I'd like to see us continue to be a main part of the community," she stated.

Orloski had similar thoughts.

"I'd love to see people continue to support the library and use the library," she said, adding, "Don't dismiss the library just because it looks small or it doesn't look like it has anything. We like to think we're as big as the world really, because of the Internet – it may sound cliché but we're not confined just by the size of the library."

The two explained interlibrary loans help make that true – if a particular book can't be found at the Andover Library, they can look for it at a library elsewhere in the state and have it mailed to town.

"Interlibrary loan has really picked up and been beneficial to our patrons," Campen stated.

And if you don't want to wait for Andover to get it, you can travel out of town to libraries in larger communities like Manchester or Glastonbury to find what you're looking for.

"A lot of people don't know your town library card is good at any public library in the state of Connecticut," Orloski said.

But speaking on what's available in Andover's library, Campen asserted, "We do have a lot. We're sort of that hidden gem in the center of town."

She added she loved that the Andover Public Library "is still that little Small Town America library. We know pretty much everybody that comes in and vice versa."

Orloski furthered, "And because we're small we're able to do things our own way. We can be creative with our thoughts and programs and figure out what will hopefully work for our area."



**Library Director Amy Orloski (right) and Children's Librarian Cathy Campen are currently in the midst of their 15th year with the Andover Public Library – a place with small town feel that they said offered much more than its size might suggest.**

And it's that love of the library and understanding the community that Friends of the Library President Janice Bazzani said was one of the positive attributes of both women.

"I think the most important thing I could say about Amy and Cathy is they are just champions of a small-town library," she stated. "They know our residents; they are extremely responsive and supportive of our community's needs."

Speaking on their 15 years with the library Bazzani furthered, "That just really demonstrates their commitment to Andover."

Julie Victoria, Friends of the Library vice president and secretary of the library's board of directors, had similar praise for the two.

"The library, I think, has really blossomed under Amy's reign as librarian," she said. "And Cathy has brought in so much imagination and creative programming for the kids, that it's really been a blessing; both of them have really been a blessing."

Friends member and past president Dianne Grenier added her own thoughts on the two,

sharing, "Andover is so fortunate to have those two ladies working at our library and have made our library into what it is today."

Grenier continued, "It's a small library, but it's big on service, and we owe that to Amy and Cathy and the rest of the staff at the library."

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Also celebrating milestone years at the library are Lorraine Westerberg and Anne Merry who have been a part of the library's staff for the last 10 years; joining them on the staff are Kathy Prentice and Pam Peterson.

"Along with Cathy and Amy," Bazzani said, "the rest of the library staff is just fabulous as well and committed to the purpose of the library, which is to serve the people on so many levels."

The Andover Public Library is located at 355 Route 6. For information on the library and upcoming events and happenings, visit their Facebook page at [facebook.com/AndoverPublicLibrary.CT](https://www.facebook.com/AndoverPublicLibrary.CT).

# Richards Facing Salvatore in Portland Primary

by Geeta Schrayter

A longtime Portland resident and a longtime Cromwell resident will go head-to-head next week to determine who will be the Democrat facing incumbent state Rep. Christie Carpino, R-32nd District, in this November's election.

Portland Deputy First Selectwoman Kathy Richards, the Democrats' endorsed candidate, is facing Cromwell Police Chief Anthony J. Salvatore in the primary, which will take place Tuesday, Aug. 12. Each is looking to unseat Carpino, who is seeking her second term in the state general assembly.

The 32nd District represents Portland and Cromwell.

Richards, who was endorsed at the combined Democratic Convention May 20, has lived in Portland for 48 years; she's been married to her husband Bill for 38 years, and together they raised two daughters in town. They now have six grandchildren, with two more on the way – and they all reside in Portland.

Richards has been deputy first selectwoman for the past two and a half years; it's a title which means she received the most votes out of any of the candidates for Board of Selectmen in the 2011 election after First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield. Richards has been on the board for a total of 10 and a half years, prior to which she spent two years on the Board of Education.

In addition to her public service, Richards runs the local branch of Henkels & McCoy Inc., with her husband, a privately owned utility contractor that employs 80 people locally but 5,500 people nationwide. And it's both her business and her involvement in the town that Richards said equips her to be state representative for the 32nd District.

"I feel the fact that I have been elected many times to the Board of Selectmen [equips me]" she said. "Also, the fact that I do run a small business; I understand what it's like for people to run small businesses, and people need jobs in this town."

Richards went on to say she considered increasing local jobs and small business in the



**Kathy Richards**

area one of the biggest issues, along with increasing Education Cost Sharing dollars.

"Right now it [the cost of education] is on the homeowners, so I think it's important we get some additional ECS," she explained. "Also I'd like the state to support training for people for jobs that are available in the state."

That, she said, would help people stay here "and earn a good living in the state of Connecticut."

In a recent press release, Richards wrote, "I want to work on improving opportunities for young people in the state of Connecticut. We need to train graduates for the jobs that exist in our state."

Richards went on to write that, if elected, she would like to "improve the infrastructure, fix our downtown business areas and work on the development of our riverfront."

When discussing why people should vote for her, Richards said she wanted the residents to

know she'd listen to them and bring their concerns to the state.

"I think that's important, that you are able to listen to the people and understand what they need to improve their lives," she said.

Richards added she decided to run for state representative because "I thought it was time that the Democrats had a voice up in Hartford. We haven't been successful the past two times, so for the last four years there's been no Democrat up there. So I thought it was time we tried again."

Like Richards, Salvatore thought he'd be an asset due to his experience. Salvatore has lived in Cromwell for the past 40 years with his wife Sharon, where they raised a son and daughter. He has been part of the police department for the same length of time, with 23 of those years as police chief.

Salvatore also mentioned his efforts advocating for the Connecticut Police Chiefs Association at the state capitol since 1995.

"I know my way around the [state capitol] building, I know a lot of the people up there – senators, representatives, people on both sides of the aisle – so I felt I would be an asset to the 32nd District by throwing my hat in the ring," he stated.

Salvatore furthered, "I know the system up there. I've been around it for almost 20 years. I know how the system works, I've testified on bills, I've been approached and given my opinions on pieces of legislation – I can hit the ground running."

Like Richards, Salvatore considered assisting with small businesses a big issue.

"I believe they're the backbones of our community and we need to do more to keep them viable and in business; both towns need small to medium sized businesses."

In addition, Salvatore said he wanted to make sure state funding continued to be received by the two towns – and if possible, expanded.

"And I think we need to do more for our youth, our seniors and veterans," he said.

Salvatore, who served three years in the Navy



**Anthony J. Salvatore**

and had a tour of duty flying in combat vehicles in Vietnam, explained he wanted veterans to receive more support and more opportunities to apply some of their military training to civilian jobs.

In addition, he said seniors should have more assistance with health issues and housing, while school environments "should be not only a learning institution but a fun place to go."

Salvatore concluded, "I think things could be done better in the district; I think I can represent both towns better."

In the end, however, it will be up to the Democrats in Portland and Cromwell – not the candidates themselves – who will determine which individual they think can best represent the towns.

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The primary takes place next Tuesday, Aug. 12. Voting in Portland will take place at Portland Senior Center, from 6 a.m.-8 p.m.

## DOT Says Portland Bridge Replacement Project On Schedule

by Melissa Roberto

State Department of Transportation (DOT) officials affirmed this week the bridge replacement project that has closed a portion of Route 17A in Portland is "on schedule," meaning the bridge should reopen in October.

The bridge reconstruction began May 7. It was originally found to be in "poor condition" and in need of a complete replacement, DOT spokesman Kevin Nursick said Tuesday.

"The original structure passed its useful lifespan," Nursick furthered. "There was an inadequate hydraulic opening so it didn't pass water underneath it as effectively as it could."

Thus, the new bridge will be a "completely new structure," meaning "nothing" from the old one will be saved, Nursick said. The project costs \$2.175 million and is being funded by the

state because Route 17A is a state-owned road. The DOT awarded the project to Brunalli Construction Company on March 5.

Portland First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield this week said "a number of people" in town have been asking about the status of the project. The *RiverEast* reported back in May that while the bridge is anticipated to reopen on Oct. 1, the project in full is scheduled to be completed Nov. 19. Nursick confirmed those dates have not changed.

"The road will be completely open as it always was planned," he said. "Everything is moving forward well. Oct. 1 [the bridge] will be carrying traffic again."

Nursick said the month and a half following the reopening of the bridge will require "fine

detail work" before the project is fully completed.

The road closure has created a detour, with drivers entering Portland from the Arrigoni Bridge being redirected onto Route 66, then to Route 17 to drive north toward Glastonbury.

However, the Route 17A closure isn't the only road closure in Portland, Nursick said. He said there has been a simultaneous paving project "just over two miles" up the road from the bridge replacement project. The paving project begins at the intersection of routes 17 and 17A and continues up to the intersection of routes 17 and 66 where Dairy Queen stands.

Nursick called the roadwork "a milling-resurfacing project."

"It is a typical, annual-type maintenance

paving project," he continued. "We do about 200-250 miles of roadway every single year in the state on state roads. This year we're doing above the norm, about 265 miles of milling and paving."

Nursick said the milling-and-paving project has caused alternating traffic on that portion of Route 17. However, on Tuesday, the transportation spokesman said the project was anticipated to be completed sometime this week. He said that while it has caused delays, paving projects like Portland's are necessary.

"These are the projects that are necessary to maintain our infrastructure," Nursick said. "There are inconveniences associated with them and that goes with the territory. There's no way of eliminating that."

## Former Hebron Schools Chief Charged with Larceny

by Geeta Schrayter

Former Hebron Superintendent of Schools Ellie Cruz was arrested Thursday morning and charged with first-degree larceny – a felony – following an investigation into her alleged misuse of the school system's finances.

Shortly after Cruz left Hebron to take over as the superintendent of schools in Plymouth in December 2012, the Board of Education discovered she had allegedly used the district's credit card to make a number of unauthorized purchases including groceries, gas and items at jewelry shops, boutiques, online retailers, and restaurants.

The card these charges occurred on had a \$50,000 limit and was acquired without the knowledge of the Board of Education; around \$15,000 in questionable expenses were dis-

covered, stemming from Cruz's final year in town.

According to an Aug. 7 press release from State Police, a complaint was received from Hebron town officials "reporting possible misappropriat[ion] of town funds" related to the board's discovery. As a result, state police detectives conducted "a lengthy criminal investigation that uncovered facts and information in this case."

In response, a warrant was issued for her arrest, and Cruz turned herself in to the state police Troop K barracks in Colchester yesterday morning; she was processed, formally charged, and released on a \$6,286.26 bond. Cruz is scheduled to appear in court Tuesday, Aug. 26.

## East Hampton Resident Charged in Stabbing

A local woman was arrested last week on charges that she stabbed a woman several weeks earlier, East Hampton Police said.

Penny Lee White, 50, of 64 Main St., Apt. 1N, was arrested July 27 and charged with first-degree assault, disorderly conduct and interfering with a police officer, police said.

Police Chief Sean Cox said officers responded to a disturbance last week in the downtown area, in the evening hours. Upon

arriving, Cox said, officers interviewed the two parties involved. Cox said officers observed several old puncture wounds on one of the parties, and, after a brief discussion, a woman alleged that she had been stabbed in the leg several weeks earlier by White.

White was arrested on the aforementioned charges, and was due in court Monday, July 28.

# New Portland Business Aims to Bring ‘Quality Massage Therapy’

by Geeta Schrayter

There’s a new massage therapy business coming to town, one where the owner is hoping to offer massage that’s “back to what it should be.”

Portland resident Ryan Reed, who has lived in town his entire life, explained after he graduated from the Connecticut Center for Massage Therapy two years ago he began working in the corporate massage world.

But there, he said, the focus wasn’t where it should be.

“They are so far off base about what massage is supposed to be; they’re all about numbers, all about quotas,” he explained. “So I want to get away from all that and get back to what it should be.”

And that’s why he’s opening Heart in Hand, LLC, a place looking to offer “quality massage therapy for the health and wellbeing of all.”

Reed shared he first became interested in the massage field as a result of personal injury and injuries in his family and “just seeing the benefits of massage and then experiencing them firsthand.”

He continued, “It was actually a chiropractor who introduced me to massage; I had back problems for years, and off and on I’d see a chiropractor.”

It was the chiropractor who then paired up with a massage therapist to try and assist Reed.

“Between what he was doing for me and what the massage therapist was doing for me, it was incredible,” said Reed, who was an electrician – which he quipped certainly didn’t help his back – before heading to massage school.

And the idea to have his own place was one that struck while he was still learning the ropes. While he was in massage school, Reed explained, some of its graduates returned to talk about the different places they’d worked.

“And pretty much the most rewarding for them was to have their own [massage place] set up – they could do things their way,” he explained. “There are obviously legal and moral things you have to follow but they could sched-

ule how they wanted, they could do their own thing.”

That was something that appealed to Reed, and led him to work his way through the process of starting his own business, which, he admitted, was frustrating at times.

First, he explained, he had to become licensed with the state and get the necessary insurance. Then he had to find a location.

Originally, Reed said he’d planned to offer massage out of his house, but that proved to be too arduous. And so, he went through a six-to-seven month period “trying to find something that was compatible,” and eventually settled on the second floor of the building at 553 Cobalt Rd., which also houses a dentist.

Once there was a home for the business, opening day was delayed when it was discovered the air conditioning didn’t work.

“I was supposed to open last month but the AC wasn’t working at all so I couldn’t take anyone, because it was like 90 degrees up here,” Reed explained, adding, “It’s been one thing after another.”

But Reed hasn’t been alone in his venture. He said he’s had the support of his ex-wife, Laurel Lovely, as well as his daughter Izabella, 12, who said Monday she helped paint, vacuum and put up blinds.

His daughter’s support was further exhibited when, in a moment of spontaneity, she went up to Reed, wrapped her arms around him and whispered, “It’s finally happening!”

And indeed, despite the frustrations, it finally is: Heart in Hand is slated to open Monday, Aug. 11, with an open house scheduled for tomorrow, Aug. 9, from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. At the open house, attendees can learn about the benefits of massage therapy, receive a free 10 minute chair massage and enjoy refreshments.

At Heart in Hand, Reed will primarily offer therapeutic massage, which he said “is deeper tissue, deeper pressure.”

“I will do sports massage and just Swedish relaxation massage, but the deep tissue is primarily what I do,” he explained.



**Tomorrow, Heart in Hand LLC, a new massage therapy business run by Portland resident Ryan Reed, will host an open house from 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. There, individuals can learn about the benefits of massage, receive a free chair massage and enjoy refreshments; the business officially opens Monday, Aug. 11 and is located at 553 Cobalt Rd.**

And massage is something he said anyone can benefit from.

“It helps with stress reduction, it helps with circulation, it helps with mobility,” he said, reiterating, “I’m getting away from the whole corporate scene. Everybody right now is pushing 15-minute massages – get them in, get them out – and that’s not what it’s about.”

Reed explained he’d be offering hour sessions and hour and a half ones, after which he wouldn’t rush his clients, but address any con-

cerns and provide tips and tools such as applicable stretches.

Reed furthered people should come “for stiffness, for stress [or] if they’re noticing a lack in their range of motion.”

He concluded, “I’m really hoping people will give me a chance. That’s all I need – a chance to show them that I can actually improve their way of life.”

For more information on Heart in Hand, call 860-462-6474.

## East Hampton Police News

7/16: Michael Robinson, 34, of 14 White Sands Rd., Moodus, was issued a summons for misuse of a marker plate, operating under suspension and operating an unregistered and uninsured motor vehicle, East Hampton Police said.

7/20: Yogeshkumar Dhyani, 50, of 527 West Thames St., Norwich, and Christopher Taylor, 39, of 20 Lowell Rd., were involved in a two-car motor vehicle accident on Route 66 near the Main Street intersection. Dhyani was issued

a summons for operating a motor vehicle without insurance, police said.

7/25: David Gaudino, 55, of 84 Meadow Brook Court, West Haven, was arrested for violation of a protective order, police said.

7/25: Jennifer L. Marcaurel, 38, of 344 Dr. Foote Rd., turned herself pursuant to an outstanding arrest warrant, police said, and was Marcaurel was charged with fifth-degree larceny.

## Portland Police News

7/28: Crystal Lopez-Davis, 34, of 617 Main St., Middletown, was charged with sixth-degree larceny, Portland Police said.

8/1: Kerrin Petrowsky, 41, of 25 Debi Circle, Colchester, was charged with evading responsibility and failure to drive in proper lane, police said.

## Marlborough Police News

8/1: State Police said Mary Jane Evans, 67, of 29 Vicki Ln., was arrested for DUI, failure to drive in the proper lane and narcotics kept only in original container.

8/2: State Police said Chant Sengvanhpheng, 47, of 1214 Stanley St., Apt. 203, New Britain, was arrested for DUI and speeding.

## Colchester Police News

7/28: State Police said Ryan Franceschi, 27, of 279 Buckley Rd., Salem, was arrested and charged with failure to verify address.

7/28: Colchester Police said Jeffrey Cubeta, 39, of 1023 Mott Hill Rd., South Glastonbury, was arrested for speeding, DUI and improper turn.

7/29: State Police said Marshall Allen, 26, of 30 Banner Rd., Moodus, turned himself into Troop K for the charges of third-degree larceny and sixth-degree larceny.

7/30: Colchester Police said that at 6:11 p.m. a Colchester resident reported that persons unknown used his personal information to open a CL&P account and over the course of six months used \$281.47 worth of electricity. This

case is currently under investigation.

7/31: State Police said Andrew Leuze, 49, of 145 Beehive Hill Rd., Salem, was arrested for disorderly conduct and second-degree strangulation.

7/31: Colchester Police are investigating a physical assault that occurred at a residence on Chestnut Hill Road on June 26. Police said this case is currently an open investigation.

8/2: State Police said Caresse Wood, 22, of 9 Jones St., Hebron, was arrested for second-degree failure to appear.

8/2: State Police said Nicolette Lin Martin, 22, of 44 Parkside Dr., was arrested for DUI and improper turn.

# Obituaries

## Marlborough

### Norma Alexanderson

Norma Louise Alexanderson, 91, passed away peacefully at home with her family Saturday, July 19. Norma was born May 24, 1923, to the late Howard Nelson Palmer and Hazel Louise Cooper Palmer of Brooklyn, N.Y.

Norma was preceded in death by her husband, James Michael Alexanderson, whom she married July 7, 1946; her brother, Walter Jay Palmer; and her infant son, Michael Alexanderson.

In her teen years, Norma was an outstanding softball player, known to her fellow players and family as "Pee Wee." After her retirement, she became an avid golfer and enjoyed playing bridge. She also enjoyed traveling with her friends, especially her close friend Evelyn.

Norma is survived by her son, Walter Howard Alexanderson and his wife Susan, of Augusta, Ga.; daughters Suzanne (Alexanderson) Karrenberg and her husband Walter of Marlborough; Marilou (Alexanderson) Christian and her husband Tom of North Bellmore, N.Y.; four granddaughters, Jill C. Karrenberg of Niantic; Jaimelynn (Karrenberg) Drake and her husband Daniel of Marlborough; Tracy (Alexanderson) Robins of Augusta, Ga.; Jennifer (Christian) Butt and her husband Joseph; and 10 great-grandchildren: Elisabeth Wise of Brooklyn, N.Y., Kathryn Wise, Margaret Wise, Alexandra Wise and Harley James Perreno of Niantic; Alexandria Robins, McKayla Robins and Will Robins of Augusta, Ga.; Alexander James Drake and Jackson Daniel Drake of Marlborough.

Norma was laid to rest alongside her beloved husband, James, at Calverton National Cemetery in Calverton, Long Island, New York on Monday, July 28, with her family present.

## Portland

### Marion Linnea Anderson

Marion Linnea Anderson, 93, of Portland, wife of the late Raymond W. Anderson, passed away Thursday, July 31. She was the daughter of the late Algot and Esther (Carlson) Johnson.



Born July 20, 1921, in Middletown, she was a lifelong Portland resident and worked as a medical assistant for several doctors offices in Portland. She was an active member of Zion Lutheran Church, the quilters of the church, the American Legion Auxilliary, the Portland Historical Society, the Protector of Animals, the Portland Senior Citizens, Meals on Wheels, the Norden Lodge, the AARP Brownstone Chapter 2826 and she was also honored with the Paley Volunteer of the Year Award. Marion served as an inspiration to so many people of all ages.

Her indomitable spirit coupled with an infectious sense of humor, an inquisitive mind, a poetic approach to all celebrations, a giving and loving nature, and a Swedish American sensibility brought joy to all who met her. She will be missed.

She leaves her daughter, Lois Anderson, several nieces and nephews, and her beloved dog, Maddy.

She was predeceased by her sisters, Ruth Grover and Evelyn Johnson, and by her companion, Allen Carlson.

Memorial services were held Saturday, Aug. 2, at 11 a.m., at Zion Lutheran Church, 183 Williams St., Portland. Burial will be private.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Middlesex Hospital Hospice 28 Crescent St Middletown, CT 06457.

To send an online expression of sympathy, visit [portlandmemorialfh.net](http://portlandmemorialfh.net).

## Colchester

### Mary Anne Therrien

Mary Anne Therrien, 51, of Colchester, passed peacefully Thursday, July 31, at her home.

Mary Anne was born in New Britain to Patrick and Frances Phaup on Feb. 10, 1963. She graduated from Woodrow Wilson High School in 1981. During her 25-year administrative career, she supported several lawyers, engineers and school administrators. Most notably, she touched numerous students' lives at Bacon Academy in Colchester.

In her free time, she shared, designed and framed many cross-stitch pieces throughout the years. Her expertise and love for cross-stitch won her "second prize" at the 2013 Hebron Harvest Fair. In addition, she was a creative jewelry designer and shared her one-of-a-kind designs with her friends and local stores. Mary Anne loved the beach and listening to the serenity of the ocean's waves. She always mentioned, "It was like Heaven...so peaceful".

Mary Anne's fun-loving, kind, caring spirit will be deeply missed by all. She will always be remembered and cherished for the lives and hearts of those she touched and her laugh was one of a kind. Mary Anne's cats, especially Rocky and Shelby, were her therapy. We loved her each and every day and now we will miss her each and every day.

The memorial liturgy will be celebrated at Saint Andrew Church, 128 Norwich Avenue, Colchester, on Saturday, Aug. 9, at 11 a.m. There are no calling hours and burial will be private.

The family wishes to thank all of those who shared special moments with her over the past two years as she bravely fought her unexpected illness.

In lieu of flowers, donations in her memory may be made to the Wounded Warriors Project, P.O. Box 758517, Topeka, KS 66675 or to the Winn Feline Foundation, 355 Cornell St., Wyckoff, NJ 07481.

Care of arrangements has been entrusted to the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home of Colchester. For online condolences, visit [auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com](http://auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com).

## Colchester

### Rita Napoli

Rita (Ferrante) Napoli, 88, of Colchester and formerly of Westchester County, N.Y., widow of the late Joseph Napoli, passed away peacefully Sunday, Aug. 3, at her son's home in Lebanon.

Born May 2, 1926, in Sepino, Campobasso, Italy, she was one of the 13 children of the late Ralph and Severina Ferrante. An avid reader, Mrs. Napoli had worked as a condenser for Reader's Digest for many years before her retirement.

She leaves two children, James and wife, Maria of Lebanon and Amy Napoli of Hollywood Hills, Ariz.; and three grandchildren, Kristina Napoli and David and Justin Faulkner; and many beloved great-grandchildren.

Graveside services were observed Wednesday, Aug. 6, at Gate of Heaven Cemetery, 10 West Stevens Ave., Hawthorne, NY. There were no calling hours.

In lieu of flowers, donations in her memory may be made to Masonicare Home Hospice, 339 Flanders Road, Ste. 215, East Lyme 06333.

Care of arrangements has been entrusted to the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home of Colchester. For online condolences, visit [auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com](http://auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com).

## Hebron

### Diane Marie Fitzpatrick

Diane Marie Fitzpatrick, 76, of Hebron, formerly of Marlborough, beloved wife of John Fitzpatrick, died Sunday, Aug. 3, at Windham Hospital. Born March 23, 1938 in Hartford she was the daughter of the late Richard and Bertha (Sobanski) Wagner.

She was a communicant of St. John Fisher Church in Marlborough, where she was a former organist. Diane was also a member of the Marlborough Moose Lodge for many years.

Besides her husband, she is survived by her four sons, John Fitzpatrick of Willimantic, Richard Fitzpatrick of Hebron, Steven Fitzpatrick and his wife Melissa of Moodus, Scott Fitzpatrick and his wife Sally of Hebron; two daughters, Diane Stefanovicz and her husband Marty of Manchester, Laura Donovan and her husband Dennis of Willimantic; 16 grandchildren, Jonathan, Christopher, Alicia, Danielle, Robert, Sean, Shannon, Matthew, Shawna, Marie, Nicole, Michael, Isabella, Alexis, James, Michael; and her two great-grandchildren, Christian and Aubrey.

Friends called at the Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton, Wednesday, Aug. 6. A funeral service was held that morning in the funeral home, followed by burial in Marlboro Cemetery.

To leave online condolences, visit [spencerfuneralhomeinc.com](http://spencerfuneralhomeinc.com).

## Portland

### Florence Terlecki

Florence "Bunny" Terlecki, 68, of Portland, beloved wife of Stanley Terlecki, passed away peacefully Sunday, Aug. 3, at Middlesex Hospital, with her husband at her side. She was the daughter of the late Paul and Anna (Carta) Stelmack.



Bunny graduated from Portland High School in 1964 and just two years later, at the age of 19, she married her husband, Stan, who she loved for the next 49 years. In 1973, she became a proud mother and spent the next 12 years as a caring and nurturing stay-at-home mom. When she reentered the workforce she was employed for lengthy periods at both Elmcrest Hospital and New England Homecare in various administrative capacities.

Bunny enjoyed the simple pleasures in life that included bike riding, hiking, attending craft fairs, fishing and gardening. She loved her back yard and nature. She enjoyed watching Boston sports teams, especially the Red Sox, and even grew into a football fan these past two seasons. She was an animal lover and cherished each of her beloved dogs over her lifetime. Above all, her greatest pleasure in life was spending time with her family and watching her grandson grow up for the past nine years.

Besides her husband, she leaves her son, Glenn Terlecki, his wife, Eileen and grandson, Vincent of Hebron. She was predeceased by her brother, Peter C. Stelmack and her sister, Lenore A. Stelmack. She will be greatly missed by all who knew her.

The Terlecki family would like to thank the staff at Middlesex Hospital for their quality of care and compassion.

Relatives and friends called Thursday, Aug. 7, at Portland Memorial Funeral Home, 231 Main St., Portland, with a Mass that morning at the Church of St. Mary, 51 Freestone Ave., Portland. Burial was in the Swedish Cemetery, Portland.

Memorial contributions may be made in Bunny's memory to a charity of the donor's choice.

To send an online expression of sympathy, visit [portlandmemorialfh.net](http://portlandmemorialfh.net).

## East Hampton

### Donald Louis Pettengill

Donald Louis Pettengill, 76, of East Hampton, passed with his family around him Sunday, Aug. 3, after a brief illness. Donald was born in New London Sept. 22, 1937, to the late Louis O. and Dorothy (Dean) Pettengill.



He leaves his wife of 55 years, Ellen (Nordstrom) Pettengill. Donald also leaves his sister, Christine Etlinger of Killingworth; his four children and their spouses, JoAnn and Christopher Johnson of Canterbury, Suzanne and Michael Milano of Cary, N.C., Louis C. and Susan Pettengill of Middletown, and Dorianne and Rick Wolf of East Hampton; eight grandchildren, Stefanie, Natalie, Rachel, Erika, Anna, Casey, Aric, and Alea; and two great-grandchildren, Oliver and Lucy.

Donald was predeceased by his brother, Edward, and his grandson, Samuel.

Donald was a graduate of East Hampton High School and a lifelong resident of East Hampton. After working as a heavy equipment and crane operator for over 40 years, Donald retired from the International Union of Operating Engineers, Local 478 in 1999. Since then, he and Ellen traveled frequently to places like Turkey, Italy, Greece, and Australia as well as many locations around America. Donald had a passion for farming as he raised beef cattle and harvested hay for many years. He was a past member of the Marlborough Moose Lodge and the Elks Lodge in Middletown. He served as a director of Haddam Neck Fair for several years.

Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton, has been entrusted with arrangements. Calling hours were Thursday, Aug. 7. A funeral service will be held today, Aug. 8, at 11 a.m., in the funeral home.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Smilow Cancer Hospital at Yale-New Haven Suite A, 1450 Chapel St., New Haven, CT 06511.

To leave online condolences, visit [spencerfuneralhomeinc.com](http://spencerfuneralhomeinc.com).

## Colchester

### Henry Zoile Cormier Jr.

Henry Zoile Cormier Jr., 70, of Colchester, and formerly of East Hartford entered into eternal rest Thursday, July 31, with his loving family by his side. He was born in Bucksport, Maine, May 20, 1944, son of the late Henry and Norma (Tozier) Cormier. Henry was a truck driver and worked for many local trucking companies.

Henry is survived by his soulmate Barbara and their devoted children, Gary Cormier and his partner Ralph of Massachusetts, Richard Cormier and his wife Ava of East Hartford, Michael Cormier and his wife Rachael of South Carolina and Wendy Turley of Norwich; his brothers, Kenneth Cormier and his wife Jennifer of Maine and David Cormier and his wife Kathy of Windham; his sisters, Judy Targett of Maine and Susan Cormier of Colchester. He is also survived by his adored grandchildren, Richard Cormier, Justin Cormier, Hannah Turley, Troy Cormier and Tyler Cormier, as well as many nieces, nephews and cousins.

The funeral service was held Thursday, Aug. 7, at the D'Esopo East Hartford Memorial Chapel 30 Carter St., East Hartford. The family received relatives and friends prior to the service on Thursday.

Memorial donations may be made to the Middlesex Hospice and Palliative Care, Middlesex Hospital, Office of Philanthropy, 28 Crescent St., Middletown, CT 06457, or donate online at [middlesexhospital.org](http://middlesexhospital.org).

For online expressions of sympathy, visit [desopo.com](http://desopo.com).

## Colchester

### Gary M. Little

Gary M. Little, 74, of Colchester, beloved husband of Carmelina (Rotondi) Little, died peacefully Thursday, July 31, surrounded by his loving family. He was born in Ada, Okla., son of the late Samuel Elvin and Juanita (Daniels) Little. He was a veteran serving with the U.S. Navy.

Prior to his retirement, Gary worked as team leader at Stanley Judd and Parker Hannifin Corporation. He was a member of the A.C. Gilbert Society and enjoyed collecting antique toys and cars. Gary's greatest pastime was spending time with his beloved family, especially his children, grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Besides his wife Carmelina, he is survived by his son John M. Little of Durham, daughters Kimberly Richards of East Haddam, Cheryl Dwumfour of Meriden, nine grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

He was predeceased by his brother, Patrick E. Little, and sister, Susan.

Graveside services with military honors were held Tuesday, Aug. 5, at the State Veterans Cemetery, Bow Lane, Middletown. Friends called at Biega Funeral Home, 3 Silver St., Middletown, on Monday, Aug. 4.

Those who wish may send memorial contributions to the American Lung Association of Connecticut, 45 Ash St., East Hartford, CT 06108.

To share memories or express condolences online, visit [biegafuneralhome.com](http://biegafuneralhome.com).

## East Hampton

### Christopher S. Dows

On Wednesday, April 16, Christopher Shane Dows (Chris or Kit) passed away in Ocala, Fla. He was born Oct. 18, 1971, in Middletown. He spent his early years as a resident of East Hampton. Christopher was a graduate of East Hampton High School.



Christopher was the son of Kirkley and Billie Dows. He predeceased his sister Kimberley (Dows) Lanou and a brother Kirkley S. Dows. He is survived by his three children, Melanie, Jordan and Christopher Robert Dows.

Over the years, Christopher wore many hats. He worked at Gillette Castle State Park, Diamond Pizza, Jessica's Garden, V. Lanou & Co. Paving, and Dublin's Restaurant, just to name a few. He made friends wherever he went. His love of the outdoors brought him to a job in Pittsfield, Ill., where he worked as a hunting guide for Pikeland Outfitters. He was an avid hunter and fisherman.

Christopher leaves behind many nieces, nephews, aunts, uncles, and devoted friends behind. Christopher was a loving person with a sweet spirit. He was a caregiver for many years to his longtime companion "Miss Anne".

Christopher, you will be missed by us all, in a life that was way too short! We love you!

The family will be having a memorial celebration of his life at the home of Keith and Kimberley Lanou. It will be Saturday, Aug. 23, at 29 Waterhole Rd. in East Hampton, at 1 p.m.

Friends and family are welcome to come and share their memories of Christopher. RSVPs would be extremely appreciated; call Kim at 860-267-9235.



# Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

First off, let me remind everyone that, if you've got a primary coming up in your town next Tuesday, it's important to vote.

Mid-August is, frankly, a lousy time to hold an election, with so many people on vacation. And those who aren't may not feel like slumping into a hot school gymnasium to fill out a ballot. The turnout numbers are almost always low. Which makes it all the more important to, well, turn out.

Because the overall number of votes is so low, your vote for, say, state representative or state senator could mean so much more than it will even in November. For example, in 2012, the Democratic primary for the 116th state Assembly District – which covers West Haven and a portion of New Haven – was decided by a mere 11 votes. So for those who believe their vote doesn't count – believe me, it does.

As I've written here before, I was a registered Independent right up until 2008, when I switched my affiliation to Democrat to vote for Hillary Clinton in the presidential primary that February. While my switching-of-affiliation was done with a national race in mind – and while my pick ultimately didn't win anyway (though don't worry, as you readers well know, I warmed up to Barack Obama rather quickly) – I'm glad I did it. If primaries of a smaller scale pop up in Manchester – or if there's a Democratic primary for governor – I can cast my ballot, and add my voice.

In the *Rivereast* towns, we've got a couple of Democratic primaries: Jason Paul is facing incumbent state Rep. Linda Orange in a primary for the 48th Assembly District, which covers parts of Colchester, Lebanon, Mansfield and Windham; and over in the 32nd Assembly District, which covers Portland and Cromwell, Kathy Richards of Portland is squaring off against Tony Salvatore of Cromwell to win the right to face incumbent Republican state Rep. Christie Carpino in the fall.

So, even though you may be thinking more about beaches than ballot boxes next Tuesday, don't forget to vote – especially if you live in Colchester or Portland. Someone's political future just may depend on it.

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A rather strange story showed up in the *Hartford Courant* Tuesday. A father and son from New Britain were accused of police of stealing more than 150 ears of corn from a field on Elm Street in Wethersfield.

Efrain Pacheco, 60, and Carlos Pacheco, 32, were each charged with sixth-degree larceny, the *Courant* reported.

Police told the *Courant* that a little after 6 a.m. last Thursday, July 31, they received a complaint that men were taking corn from the field. Police said the men attempted to flee, but were captured by officers.

Police confiscated a bag containing 153 ears of freshly-picked corn, the *Courant* reported. The corn was valued at 65 cents an ear, so the bag's contents had a total value of \$99.45, police said.

It's unclear whether alleged thieves planned to sell or eat the corn, police said.

Wethersfield Police Lt. Andrew Power told the *Courant* the police department sometimes receives complaints about corn being stolen from fields. But, he said, this is the first time in his 22 years on the force that he can recall police actually catching people doing it.

The Pachecos were released on \$500 bonds, and are due in court Aug. 14.

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Some interesting news from Marlborough floated across my desk this week. The Marlborough Business Association and the Glastonbury, East Hartford, South Windsor and Tolland County chambers of commerce are exploring the idea of joining forces as one big unit.

According to the MBA, a committee has been formed to “investigate the potential benefits of creating a new and more effective regional organization” that would encompass the association and the four chambers.

It'll be interesting to keep an eye on this, and see what the committee determines. Regionalization of various town departments is talked about from time to time as a means of saving money – but this is the first time I've heard it bandied about among private groups like the various chambers of commerce.

The hope would be, as the MBA puts it, for a regional chamber of commerce to be a “premier business organization fostering member, community and economic growth in the region,” and the investigation by the newly-formed committee is designed to determine exactly that.

A chamber of commerce (or, in Marlborough's case, business association) can be a great way for small businesses to come together, network with one another, expand their customer base and develop new ideas. Since small businesses are so vital to communities, I say the stronger a chamber of commerce is, the better.

Any members of the MBA who wishes to offer any input about a possible regionalization should contact Jessica Olander at 860-978-2918 or [Jessica@mba-ct.org](mailto:Jessica@mba-ct.org).

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Lastly, I've got a bit of personnel business to pass along. Portland/East Hampton reporter Elizabeth Bowling has moved on; last week was her final issue. Elizabeth was here for about a year and two months, and during that time, just did a terrific job. There were several important issues in her towns during the time she was here – issues that required a lot of complex reporting – and she handled them all with aplomb.

And Elizabeth really seemed to enjoy her work too. She got to know the people in the towns, and seemed really interested in what was going on. She brought a level of energy to the job you don't always see. I often received compliments from readers about her stories – which, as an editor, you love to hear. And those compliments were for good reason. Elizabeth's stories were a joy to read, and often required little in the way of editing. She was fair and very thorough in her reporting – and, as another plus, was always eager to help out around the office whenever the need arose.

She also got along well with everyone in the office, and could often be seen conversing with, well, everyone – from other reporters to sales representatives to layout staff to even the guys in the back who run the press.

So I think I speak for everyone at the *Rivereast* when I say we were sad to see her go, and we wish her nothing but the best in her future endeavors.

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See you next week.