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Individuals who donated to Camp Ingersoll to raise funds for camp scholarships completed their contribution by plunging into a small ice-free portion of Jobs Pond in Portland last weekend. Plungers were allowed to jump in feet first only as a safety precaution, and members of the Portland Volunteer Fire Department dive team were on hand to assist.

Polar Plunge Premieres at Camp Ingersoll

by John Tyczkowski

Last Saturday, neither the wind nor the below-freezing temperatures could deter more than 100 people from coming out to support Camp Ingersoll in Portland and help raise funds for children to attend camp during the summer.

And a major part of what that support entailed was, for 21 of those people, willingly jumping into the icy water of Jobs Pond.

"It's all for the kids, that's my mantra," Camp Director Tony Sharillo said, laughing. "I do not appreciate cold water, but this is going to be able to allow 20 kids to come to camp; it's all worth it, it's all for them."

Sharillo has been the director of Camp Ingersoll for five years, but has been working there since 1998.

"I was in high school, I needed a summer job, and camp sounded like fun. You get to be outside, play games and be around a lot of positive people," he shared. "I said, 'sign me up,' and once I realized the impact I had on kids, it was just something I wanted to keep on doing. I stayed with it."

And Sharillo said the plunge is crucial to the camp's mission of serving area children.

"We give out \$100,000 in financial aid each year, but we have a hard time raising those funds each year, to allocate just for camp," he added. "This is a way for us to help cover some of those costs, because we want to make sure every child has a chance to come to camp. That's our mission."

Middlesex YMCA President and CEO

Michele Rulnick, who also plunged, said the camp often sees around 600 children attend each two-week session in the summer, of which there are four, plus an extra week at the beginning and end of the season.

"They get to come out here and learn how to swim, there's a ropes course, archery. They're out in the woods building forts," she said. "They meet these great young counselors who are just great role models. And campers get to meet other campers. They get to socialize, to be kids and to learn how to work in a group."

Rulnick said she was nervous about her first time plunging, but she figured if an eight year old could handle a high ropes course, she could handle an icy plunge.

"It's very camp-like to overcome your fears and put yourself in a position like this," she said. "And we really change lives here. I'll take the plunge for that."

This year marks Camp Ingersoll's first annual Polar Plunge fundraiser, modeled on similar events at other YMCA camps around the state.

"[Other camps have] said how great it is for bringing people out, having fun and raising a good amount of money to send kids to camp," Ben Silliman, assistant camp director said. "It's a template that's been around for a bit that we really wanted to do something with."

Also, Silliman said the Polar Plunge was a great way to keep links to the community open

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Pam Sawyer Looks Back on Two Decades

by Geeta Schrayter

Pam Sawyer. The name is familiar to just about everyone in the *RiverEast* towns of Andover, Hebron and Marlborough. It's a name that's regularly brought up by town officials and citizens alike: someone who's turned to for information, assistance with individual issues or those of state and town, or simply a friendly chat.

It's a name that's been familiar for over two decades, during which time the Bolton resident served as state representative for the 55th District, which covers Andover, Hebron, Marlborough and Bolton. But now, her tenure's come to an end; Sawyer, who announced last April she wouldn't be seeking reelection, officially ended her final term earlier this month; the district's new representative, Hebron resident Gayle Mulligan, was sworn into office Jan. 7.

Less than a week later, Sawyer took a seat in the Bentley Memorial Library in Bolton to talk about the 22 years she sat in another seat – that of an elected official.

It's a journey that began after serving four terms on the Bolton Board of Education, with urging from some people she knew.

"I got a call and was asked if I would run for the state house," Sawyer explained. "I said 'no,'

then, four phone calls later, it was 'okay, okay.'"

But that humble beginning helped shape the way she conducted herself.

"I went into the state house without a burning issue or a chip on my shoulder," Sawyer said. "I wanted to serve. It was a call to duty type of thing and that set a tone for me for many years, because you go in with a freer thought process."

She explained people tend to get involved with politics for a number of reasons.

"Some people think of politics as a game – there's a gamesmanship to it. Some people enjoy the 'gotcha!' Some people live for the thrill of success," Sawyer stated, adding, "Often people get into politics because they're on a mission for a specific cause and I've not had that, I suspect, more than my deep-seated belief that one of the government's biggest missions is to provide education and job training – or support for it."

And over the years, Sawyer said some of the most rewarding changes she's seen have been related to education: "being able to work through funding issues and dilemmas to be able to create a new RHAM High School, rebuilding Bolton High School – and to see them done."

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Former state representative Pam Sawyer stands with Manchester resident Cheri Pelletier (left) and Andover resident Clyde Conrad during the 2012 dedication of the Hop River Trail Bridge in Andover – one of the many projects Sawyer worked on during her 22 year tenure.

Pam Sawyer cont. from Front Page

In addition, she said she was proud of “successfully getting three pieces of legislation done to create a Connecticut Aero Tech school for aviation mechanics at Brainard Airport.”



Other things Sawyer said she was happy with included the “local visuals” she gets to see all the time. These included the Hop River Trail Bridge in Andover, which Sawyer used to refer to as the phantom bridge.

“I jokingly say it took three governors, four first selectmen, five commissioners of DOT, three commissioners of DEEP and me to get that bridge built,” Sawyer smiled, adding it was a project that took “a lot of work” and included someone telling her a covered bridge couldn’t be built over a road.

To that, she said she replied, “Don’t tell me I can’t do anything!”

In addition, Sawyer said she also liked to see some of the changes that have occurred in the Main Street areas of her towns – and much of those changes were made possible with funds acquired through the Small Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP), which also happens to be something Sawyer started.

“In 2000, I had this idea to take a pot of money and set it aside for small towns,” she explained. “Up until then there was only the Urban Act, and big cities got it, with maybe a little town or two getting a few thousand to \$5,000 – a little money here and there.”

She furthered, “It seemed to me [that] with 100 of 169 towns being small, there was a great need for small pots of money to complete projects.”

As a result, the STEAP grants came into existence to help the smaller towns with the “small needs” Sawyer said they sometimes have. Over the years, these grants have been used for many things, including work on Main Street in Hebron and Marlborough.

“Main Street in Hebron was pretty rundown,” Sawyer stated, but with the help of STEAP grants, sidewalks were installed, and “small pumps of money” were made available to improve storefronts, the Old Town Hall and expand the library.

“And the face of the town got a facelift,” she said.

Sawyer added the same held true for Marlborough, where STEAP grants have also helped with the lack of sidewalks and been used to create a town green area and to bring water to the town center.

“It’s been very uplifting to actually have worked through and with generations of town mothers and fathers,” Sawyer said, adding “I think each town has a flavor.”

Speaking on what she’s enjoyed most during her tenure, Sawyer shared, “There’s always the next project that I wasn’t quite finished with. And I was raised with a work ethic that if you start something you have to finish it.”

However, Sawyer added there was one project she didn’t quite see to completion: Route 6.

“That’s been a 15-year battle trying to create a safer Route 6.”

She explained at first, the idea for an alternative road – the Route 6 Expressway – was contemplated, but eventually abandoned. Then the decision was made to widen Route 6.

“That involved taking people’s front lawns and messing up water systems so I had many constituent issues there,” Sawyer said, “but the

satisfaction is Route 6 went from being called ‘Suicide 6’ and the second worst road in the country, to only two deaths in four years, and one was a heart issue. So the road is much safer.”

She added however, that the transportation part of the project hasn’t been met, as the road is still congested going both ways during rush hour.

But, she stated, “I’ll take a moment of satisfaction with one out of two successes, that being safety.”

Other “successes” Sawyer said she had included getting the Safe Haven Law passed, which allows mothers to leave babies up to 30 days old with an employee at any hospital emergency room, without getting charged with a crime – rather than simply abandoning the babies.

She also mentioned her work to get Land O’Lakes to invest \$7 million in subsidiaries at KofKoff Egg Farms in Bozrah, where enough eggs are produced for both Connecticut and Rhode Island.

“Land O’Lakes did invest the money in Connecticut, so it gives me a thrill to know that I had a very small part in continuing an important food source for all of our residents, but particularly our neediest,” Sawyer stated.

Along with the above and “those times of great happiness when you realize that a bill you worked on passes and will do well for society,” Sawyer has plenty of other memories from her tenure she’ll carry with her. Among those were her recent – and final – trip with the State Agricultural Rural Leaders to Clearwater, Fla., where she went to an elephant conservation center and saw strawberries grown in sand. She also mentioned a time during talks on gun control when two men on the capital steps used a homemade guillotine to cut off one of the man’s trigger finger.

It was sewed back on at the hospital, but Sawyer said “I never really could understand clearly: Was he for gun control or against it?”

Sawyer also mentioned meeting Christopher Plummer in the elevator and talking with the late Paul Newman’s wife, Joanne Woodward.

Sawyer said she’d gone up to Woodward, who was in the capital to lobby for money for a playhouse, with former Marlborough first selectman Howard Dean.

Dean shared that a chair Paul Newman had sat in at Marlborough Pizza was sold at auction for \$250 for the library, to which Woodward replied, “Oh don’t tell him; he’ll get a swelled head!”

Woodward also shared a similar tale of how their son used to take Newman’s T-shirts when Newman was away and sit at the end of the driveway with a sign that said “Daddy’s T-Shirts, \$5” to earn money – and Newman would come home to no shirts.

“That was a very special story,” Sawyer said.

Sawyer also talked about the times she would go up to groups who were touring the capital and ask them if they’d like to step into the house chamber.

“I met people from all over the United States and Europe and had many wonderful discussions about the difference between our style of government and others.”

And it’s the people, Sawyer said, that she liked best about serving.

“The people are wonderful,” she stated. “The issues are fascinating. And the politics stink.”

To that regard, Sawyer shared some of the political aspects she didn’t like: “many people’s approach – particularly now – to spout off on issues before they do their homework makes it hard, and then there’s always that possibility someone will try and submarine a candidate, or punishing someone because they had a dif-

ferent thought process or one vote was cast that was not what they wanted.”

Sawyer also said the name-calling was hard – and yet in 22 years, she’s only been called a name once.

“A postcard came out that said I didn’t support children” she shared, because she hadn’t been in favor of a bill that said all schools should immediately switch to organic cleaners.

“Not phased in, not in a couple of years, not with state support to change the cleaners over,” Sawyer elaborated. In addition, she said the bill banned bleach, and she knew from an experience she had with black mold in Andover Elementary School that sent three children to the hospital that the possibility to use bleach needed to be available until there’s another agent that can do as good of a job.

Sawyer said she tried to negotiate some changes, but the bill went out as presented “and I voted as ‘no.’”

“It was [the] one time” she was called a name, Sawyer said, adding with a laugh, “But I remember it. Very clearly!”

Even so, one time isn’t much in the span of 22 years – and Sawyer said it was respect that helped her keep that number so low.

“Any other person that sits across from me probably has a problem that they’re dealing with,” Sawyer said. “It could be a high-ranking official; it could be someone who is in desperate need. It could be someone I don’t agree with on a single issue. But I respect them and I don’t hold it against them.”

Sawyer furthered, “I have a deep core belief in forgiveness as a tenet of my faith. So put those two pieces together of respect and forgiveness and I think you have a greater chance of success with political relationships.”

And “success” is certainly a word that could be applied to Sawyer’s time as state representative.

As for what she’ll do now, Sawyer said she had a “few things pending,” but she planned to take some time for art – and of course, she has two grandsons, who fondly call her “Pamma,” to occupy her time.

“So I’ve got a plan,” Sawyer smiled.



Outgoing camp director Tony Sharillo, left, and incoming camp director Ben Silliman took the final plunge of the day. They ceremonially swapped clothing types to show their new roles with the Y before they jumped. Sharillo will take on more of an indoor administrator role while Silliman will work more in the outdoors as camp director.

Polar Plunge cont. from Front Page

even during the winter months.

“Camp’s pretty dead in the winter, and a lot of people lose touch with it, but we want families to still know that we’re here, and that we can’t wait for the summer,” he said. “This is a great way to get the news out about camp, and to get people to participate with staff for a common cause.”

The Northern Middlesex County YMCA has been active in the area for nearly 130 years, and serves over 11,000 people annually.

Camp Ingersoll has been around since 1961 and maintains a summer staff of about 120. Children from several towns, including Portland, Haddam, Glastonbury, Cromwell, Middletown, Durham and Middlefield attend each summer.

According to a press release from the YMCA, Camp Ingersoll gives assistance to 150 children from economically disadvantaged families from around the area each year. The goal of the plunge was to raise enough money to fund 20 campers for the coming summer.

Preliminary totals indicated plungers raised over \$10,000, which would, in fact, be enough for about 20 children to attend and as of press time, donations were still coming in.

Additionally, there was another subtext to this year’s Plunge, as Sharillo was handing over the reigns to Silliman after nearly six years as director and close to two decades working at the camp.

Silliman started working at Camp Ingersoll in 2001 as a lifeguard. Around 15 years and several roles later, with a small break for three summers to volunteer in Kazakhstan and teach in China with the Peace Corps, he’s set to become its director.

“It was my first job, and it became my first passion,” he said. “It’s such a supportive and a positive environment, it’s not hard to see why people stay here so long.”

As a nod to their changing roles, Sharillo and Silliman, that last two plungers, changed their clothes to fit their new job roles before jumping into the water.

“I’ll be in the office all the time now, and he’ll be outside all the time,” Sharillo said, wearing khakis and a YMCA polo and pointing to Silliman, who changed into a camp t-shirt and shorts.

“He’s a great guy, he’ll be great as the new camp director,” Sharillo said before both plunged into the water.

Sharillo will be heading to the Valley Shore YMCA in Westbrook when Silliman starts as camp director Feb. 2.

Henry Coe, who has been involved with Camp Ingersoll’s summer programs for over four decades, and who served as the check-in person for the event, said he was impressed with the number of people who came.

“The number of people we have here today shows the great deal of community support we have for this camp,” he said. “I’m very happy to see it.”

Also, the organizers gave out three awards to the plungers present in the form of a toilet plunger-shaped, golden-colored trophy.

Linda Cline won “Best Costume” for her brightly-colored neon ruffled skirt, pink shirt and electric blue hair; Maegan Musanti and Kathleen Freimuth won “Best Team” for their ‘Christmas Miracle’-theme costumes; and Linda Heidorn won “Most Money Raised” for being the single largest fundraising plunger.

Plungers jumped in pairs of two unless they desired to jump solo. In either case, they were directed to jump in and then immediately move out of the water, towel off and change into warm, dry clothes to avoid injury.

Members from the Portland Fire Department, including members of the department’s dive team, were on hand to help in case plunging went awry, but there were no injuries or accidents at this year’s Polar Plunge.

For a full gallery of photos from the event, check out the Rivereast News Bulletin on Facebook at [Facebook.com/rivereastnewsbulletin](https://www.facebook.com/rivereastnewsbulletin).

Andover School Board Approves \$4.32 Million Budget

by Geeta Schrayter

The Board of Education last week unanimously approved Superintendent of Schools Andrew Maneggia's proposed 2015-16 school budget of \$4,320,821.

In a Jan. 14 memo from Maneggia, he explained the budget, which is a \$51,777 or 1.21 percent, increase over the current year, was created based on "input from staff, contractual obligations, services for students, operational expenses and program needs."

He added the 2015-16 budget was based on a number of assumptions and constraints. These included, that student enrollment was projected to continue declining, which resulted in one less teaching position; that there will be no unbudgeted expenditures or unforeseen financial obligations; federal and state grants will continue to be awarded; and the costs for heating oil, diesel and gasoline won't exceed the estimated usage.

Of the proposed budget, \$2,775,997 – the largest amount and a \$55,090 increase from the current budget – is for Object 100 items which include salaries, wages contractual obligations, degree changes and negotiated contracts.

The second largest account is for Object 200 items, made up of benefits and insurance. At \$781,215 the proposed amount is a \$22,268 increase over the present year, and includes a projected medical insurance increase of 9.97

percent.

"We're hoping that will go down but at this particular point in time it's too early to tell," Maneggia said this week. "That is the estimated highest increase it can possibly be."

Object 600 items, which includes instructional supplies, supplies for the nurses, heating oil, diesel, and gasoline is listed at \$308,594 – an increase of \$8,494 over the current year. The overall increase was explained in the budget packet as due to electricity, instructional supplies, printed materials and the technology plan.

Maneggia furthered the price of textbooks, paper "and everything else has gone up so that's really a maintenance type of budget there for instructional supplies."

He added costs have also increased for library books.

"We can't get as many books for the same amount of money as we previously did," he said.

Maneggia added electricity at the school was expected to increase substantially due to a rate increase. The account is listed as increasing \$6,500, to \$72,000.

Regarding technology, Maneggia explained, "We're getting to the point where we have to start replacing more computers and other things. What's happening is that the \$10,000 we now have in the budget does little more than buy the

subscriptions to the online services that are used in the school."

And so, that line item was increased to \$15,000.

Object 300 items, made up of contracted services, clocks in at \$143,410, for a \$17,161 increase over the present year. Maneggia explained that increase is due to services needed for a student that was outplaced but is now educated at the elementary school.

That student, he stated, "is maintained in a regular classroom but we need more paraprofessional time and some additional resources for him."

However Maneggia explained keeping the student in the school saved the district \$70,000 to which he said, "I'd take that any day."

Related, the Object 500 account decreases \$77,936 in the proposed budget, to \$210,500, and doesn't include funds for special education outplacement since that student is now serviced in-school.

Included in that amount are funds for magnet school tuition, the bus contract, telephone services, advertising, printing and binding.

Another increase comes in the Object 400 account, which includes roof repairs and contracted maintenance services, each of which Maneggia said is difficult to predict.

The account increases \$26,700 to \$91,500.

Remaining the same this year are the Object 700 and 800 accounts which include furniture and equipment for students and staff and professional dues; the accounts come in at \$3,700 and \$5,905 respectively.

This week, Board of Education Chairman Jay Lindy said he was "very pleased" with the budget, which he said the staff at the school, the administration and the board had all worked on.

"Everybody wants something more but we know what we need," he continued, "and we have to be very sensitive to taxpayers, but we also have a responsibility for educating our children."

"I think it is a very reasonable budget. It's a maintenance budget," Maneggia added. "There are some items in the budget which will allow us to make some improvements but by and large we've been very conservative in our request and we will be relying on grants to do the expansion of curriculum and so forth."

Maneggia concluded in his memo, "To the best of my knowledge, the proposed budget will provide all the necessary resources to maintain a quality educational program for our students, and allow the board to meet its financial obligations, and will comply with all state mandates and contractual obligation."

Andover Democrats Oust Buchardt Caucus

by Geeta Schrayter

At last week's Democratic caucus, Andover Democrats endorsed incumbent Julia Haverl and Democratic Town Committee Chairwoman Joan Foran for the Board of Selectmen – but opted not to endorse current selectwoman Elaine Buchardt.

At the caucus, held Jan. 14, Haverl collected 37 votes and Foran 35, while Buchardt netted 20.

Speaking on the outcome this week, Buchardt, who said she had "absolutely" planned to run again, shared she felt the lack of support at the caucus was something the new candidates – on both the Republican and Democrat slates – had wanted.

"The people who are running wanted me out," she said. "They were going for a clean sweep, they say, of the Board of Selectmen, but for some reason they kept Julia [Haverl] and then Cathy Desrosiers. So the only 'clean sweep' they were talking about was Bob [Burbank] and Jay [Lindy] and me."

(At the Republican Town Committee caucus held the day before, neither Burbank, the town's first selectman, nor Lindy, the vice first selectman, were endorsed.)

As to why she felt she was included in that group, Buchardt said it was because "I have supported Bob and Jay in the past. They wanted Bob and Jay out, and I would support them because I always try to work with whoever is on the board."

Buchardt has been on the board for the past nine years. In her campaign speech at last week's caucus, she shared she was seeking support from "fellow Democrats with no hidden agendas."

"I am a level-headed person who cares deeply about this town, tries to work with everyone and am always looking for solutions to any problems that arise," she said in her speech. "I

am not a one issue candidate."

Buchardt said she learned the night before she would have competition for the Democrats' nomination.

"It was a specific request by the first selectman candidate [Jeff Maguire] that I not be on the board," she said. "The [DTC] chair is running to keep me off the board."

On Thursday, Maguire didn't deny his preference for Foran and Haverl.

"I choose to support Joan Foran and Julia Haverl at the Democratic Town caucus because their positions and ideas more closely align with my own," he stated in an email. "I did express to selectman Buchardt prior to the caucus that I would be supporting Mrs. Foran and Mrs. Haverl, because her voting record on the [board] aligned too closely to that of First Selectman Burbank and selectman Lindy."

However, Foran said she "did not decide to go against her [Buchardt]."

She furthered, "My consideration for running had nothing to do with the other two candidates."

Rather, Foran said her decision to run was based on what she thought should be done as a selectperson.

"And that was, that anyone who would serve on the Board of Selectmen must clearly define and support the town charter and must clearly and appropriately respond to FOI requests," she stated. "They have to know the dynamics of our budget and the duties of the Board of Selectmen in regards to the budget. Again, it was my personal concern about town governance."

Foran added she wasn't happy with the way the current board interacts with the public.

"The manner in which town citizens were treated when they came before the Board of Selectmen – people were rudely dismissed," Foran said. "The information requested was not

provided. [There were] instances of lack of direction, and the lack of an accounting and purchasing procedure was not taken care of. These are all issues of public policy that were not adequately provided."

Foran concluded, "It's certainly not issues of personality. I said at the caucus we should celebrate everybody who serves on town committees, and I specifically meant that to Julia Haverl and Elaine Buchardt."

Buchardt, however, remained certain – and reiterated, "They just wanted me out and it's because over the years I supported Bob and Jay."

Buchardt – who did gain nomination for the Board of Assessment Appeals at last week's caucus – added she is still considering whether or not she wants to run in a primary in March.

As for Foran, speaking on her endorsement in general, she said, "I was very pleased and now I have the responsibility to move forth and serve in a very responsible and prudent manner."

* * *

Also happy with last week's results were Maguire and Haverl.

"Last week was a great week for the town of Andover," Maguire stated. "I could not be happier with the results of both the Democratic and Republican caucuses. I believe that both parties nominated a strong slate of candidates across the board. I believe that no matter who wins the election in May, this group will work together to change the political discourse in Andover town politics and will change how business gets done."

Maguire, who moved to town in 2001, said he has "a long-term vision of how we can all work together to make Andover an even better place to live."

Similarly happy with last week's caucus was Haverl, who said she felt "very good" about

being endorsed.

"I look forward to hopefully winning and being able to serve on the board for the next four years."

Haverl added under the current board, she felt she wasn't able to contribute as much as she would have liked.

"I think that my talents and my abilities were not utilized on this current board," she said, adding "I always felt like an outsider and not feeling like I was included."

Haverl continued, "Quite honestly, Bob and Jay and Elaine have a history of voting as a block, and they didn't really use either Cathy [Desrosiers] or myself to the full extent that they could have."

Haverl said she felt a change in board makeup would be beneficial.

"I think it will be good. I think both parties' endorsed candidates are truthfully in agreement as to the kinds of changes that should be made – basic management changes – and I think I could work very well with any of the other members that are running, no matter how it turns out."

* * *

Also endorsed during the caucus was town clerk Carol Lee, who is unaffiliated; Linda Armstrong, Dennis M. Foran and Daniel H. Warren for Board of Finance; Shannon O. Loudon and Danielle Maguire for Board of Education; Heidi M. Donnelly for the RHAM Board of Education; Buchardt and Emily Timreck for Board of Assessment Appeals; Eric Anderson and Scott Person for Planning and Zoning Commission; John Cochrane for Planning and Zoning Commission alternate; Dorothy Yeomens and Donald L. Keener for Zoning Board of Appeals; Wayne E. Thorpe for Zoning Board of Appeals alternate; Mark Williams for the Fire Commission.

RHAM Drug and Alcohol Survey Results Shared

by Geeta Schrayter

At Tuesday's Board of Education meeting, a presentation was given on the results of a drug and alcohol survey conducted at RHAM in conjunction with AHM Youth and Family Services and ERASE (East of the River Action for Substance Abuse Elimination). Students in grades seven through 12 completed the anonymous online survey in May 2014.

Bonnie Smith, executive director of ERASE, was present at the meeting to talk about the results. She shared 1,309 students completed the survey, but 33 of them, or 2.5 percent, were excluded due to discrepancies in responses.

"If a student says they do everything every day then that survey doesn't get included," she said, because the survey isn't likely to be true.

The survey asked students a number of questions regarding drugs, alcohol and mental health.

Among the questions, students were asked if they used alcohol, cigarettes, other tobacco products, marijuana or prescription drugs in the past 30 days.

Smith explained the most RHAM students said they'd used alcohol in the past month – 30.2 percent of students in grades nine through 12 and 3.4 percent of students in grades seven and eight – followed by marijuana, "binge drinking" (defined by ERASE as consuming four or more alcoholic drinks on one occasion) and prescription drugs.

Regarding the ease of access students felt they had to drugs and alcohol, Smith said "middle school students feel alcohol is the most

accessible followed by prescription drugs; for high school students it's alcohol followed by marijuana."

Smith also shared the perception of parents' disapproval of drugs and alcohol; in the middle school, she said, the perceived parent disapproval was highest for marijuana and prescription drug abuse and lowest for alcohol and cigarette use; in the high school, disapproval was said to be highest for prescription drug abuse and lowest for marijuana and alcohol use.

Overall, Smith said, "We want to increase parental disapproval, because it's been shown to decrease use."

The survey also asked about the perceived risk of using drugs, cigarettes and alcohol; it was found the perceived risk of marijuana use decreases in high school, and the risk of marijuana use was said to be lower than prescription drugs, alcohol and smoking in both schools.

A question was also asked regarding the use of electronic cigarettes, and it was found more high school students – about 30 percent – said they had tried an e-cigarette while just over 20 percent said they had tried other tobacco products.

"This is important to note because many students and adults don't realize there is nicotine in them," Smith said.

The amount of students who said they had participated in binge drinking was also analyzed. Smith shared the rates increased across the grades.

"By 12th grade, up to 25 percent of students

have binged in the past 30 days, and 53 percent have in their lifetime," she stated.

Other questions examined where students in both schools get alcohol: the number one source was friends, followed by other people, parents without their permission, siblings, and at a party with an adult.

Regarding where high school students said they consumed alcohol, the survey showed the majority drank at another person's house, followed by parties without an adult, at home, parties with an adult, and outdoors.

Related to mental health, the survey showed a percentage of students in both the middle and high school had experienced feelings of sadness or hopelessness that prevented them from doing their usual activities.

For example, 8.2 percent of 12th graders said they'd often experienced feelings of sadness or hopelessness, while 4.4 percent said they "always or almost always" experience said feelings.

The survey also found a percentage of students in each grade had considered attempting suicide within the past year.

Of the grades, the highest percentage came in the 11th grade; 5.1 percent said they often considered suicide. Among eighth-graders, 3.8 percent said they "always or almost always" considered attempting suicide.

Although Smith said the number of students in the higher grades who said they'd considered suicide was surprising, she added, "This is not unique to RHAM."

Even so, AHM Executive Director Joel Rosenberg said at the meeting, "I know we're here to talk about substance abuse, but I can't say loudly enough that depression and anxiety – we're paying very close attention to it."

He added, "I can assure you even before the results came out this has been on all of our radar; it's been alarming [that kids are talking about hurting themselves] and it's a great concern to a lot of people and we're taking it very seriously."

In response to questions from the board regarding whether or not there were people students could reach out to if they were involved with drugs or thinking about harming themselves, Rosenberg stated there was a full time AHM social worker in the school.

RHAM High School Principal Scott Leslie elaborated, "We have a fulltime social worker whose sole purpose is for outreach for these students, and just last week we added a part time social worker [paid for through a grant] who deals specifically with students involved with the Juvenile Review Board."

Speaking on the results of the survey as a whole, Smith stated, "While the data you see tonight may be upsetting, to put it in perspective, these are problems to be dealt with, but when you compare to the state and nation, you're doing okay. You're doing better. But we'd like to see no use of course."

"Everything in these results mirrors what we see as an organization," Rosenberg added. "It's an unfortunate reality."

RHAM Board Approves Addition of SRO

by Geeta Schrayter

The RHAM Board of Education Tuesday voted 6-2 to bring a school resource officer to the school at a cost of \$66,782.

Earlier in the meeting, RHAM High School Principal Scott Leslie gave a presentation on what the addition of an SRO might mean for the school.

"To bring it close to home," he said, "it certainly provides a sense of security for students and parents and I think above and beyond anything else, that sense of security is what the SRO brings."

Leslie said an SRO could also provide positive student engagement, a positive role model, positive mentorship, and would be another opportunity for a positive student and community connection.

An SRO, he stated, would also be a classroom resource and provide opportunities for career exploration.

What Leslie said the SRO would likely not be involved in student discipline. Leslie explained there had been SROs at the school in the past, through a program funded with grant money that has since dried up.

"The model that, as I indicated, we've used and proposed, is that an SRO is not necessarily involved with student discipline," Leslie said. "Right now we have our own responses based upon a wide variety of pieces."

These included Board of Education policies, district regulations, individual student needs and restorative justice.

"My recommendation is that we continue in that model as opposed to bringing more enforcement into an area that may not bring more benefits than what we're already doing," Leslie stated. "Having said that, if there's more serious student criminal activity, the SRO would be involved at the request of the administration."

After Leslie spoke, questions were posed by different board members.

Judy Benson-Clarke asked whether Leslie felt the board had enough information to move forward, to which Leslie replied, "I would encourage the board to ask 'Why an SRO?'" because there were many different avenues the school could go down – such as having greeters at the doors, or focusing on enhancing school climate in other ways.

Leslie also mentioned in conversations he'd already had with officers who come to the school for different events, they've mentioned "a lot of recommendations for things we should be doing."

"From a security angle," Leslie furthered, "this covers one piece of the pie."

Board member Rich Jacobson asked what security issues an SRO wouldn't solve, and Leslie mentioned anything that occurred after school hours or on weekends.

"Now, having said that," Leslie said, "we're in the fortunate position where there aren't activities where I'm thinking, 'Boy, if we had security here that would help.'"

He added, "We're very fortunate in that this is an addition to what we already have and we're fortunate to have a school climate most feel comfortable with."

Benson-Clarke added, "you'll never know what was deterred" with an SRO. "I like data and numbers and things, but some of these things are incredibly hard to quantify," she said.

Tom Tremont also added the addition of an SRO would be for the safety of everyone at the school – not just students.

But not everyone was sold on the idea. Amy D'Amaddio and Rich Jacobson voted against having an SRO.

This week, Jacobson explained he wasn't necessarily against having an SRO at the school, but he thought the board should have done more research.

"Basically I'm just not convinced that we did our homework on the bigger security picture," Jacobson stated. "It's not that I dislike the SRO; I just wanted to have more of a look at the larger picture before committing."

Now that the position has passed, he added, "I think it will be great to have one but it doesn't solve all the security problems."

As for D'Amaddio, she said she felt the money could be best used elsewhere.

"I think the money would be better spent filling the role of mental health treatments," she said. "I think that would be more bang for our buck."

D'Amaddio added that if the guidance department were surveyed, "We could accurately assess the level of need and program appropriately."

East Hampton Council Workshops to Kick Off Next Month

by John Tyczkowski

The Town Council has found another avenue to connect with residents about pressing issues in town.

At last week's council meeting, councilors discussed holding a series of monthly council workshops with the public during the spring and summer, slated to begin in late February and run through June.

Each meeting would be at a different venue in town, and each meeting would last approximately one hour and deal with only one topic on the agenda, Town Council Chairwoman Barbara Moore said.

She also stressed the importance of these workshops as ways for the council and community to be more involved together beyond bi-monthly meetings.

"It would help people in town to see the lighter side of the council," she said. "It's another way of getting our message out to the public and getting us out into the community."

The council discussed several venues and topics, including a general discussion on town issues at Hope Church; a meeting on the town's youth programs led by Wendy Regan of East Hampton Youth and Family Services; a discussion of the future of the Village Center at a local business in the Village Center; a tour of Center School; and a discussion of its future and a gathering at the Sears Park gazebo to finish the series.

"Meeting in a place with such a community-based feel to it would be ideal for our first outing," Moore said, of Hope Church as the first meeting space.

The council agreed to reach out to the church for the use of their facilities.

The Town Council has yet to set a formal date and time for the workshops, but at the meeting last week, the third Thursday of each month at 6 p.m., was tentatively chosen as the timeslot.

Marlborough Selectmen Helps EDC Find Focus

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

Members of the Economic Development Commission and the Board of Selectmen discussed the commission's focus on goals at the selectmen's meeting Tuesday.

"The EDC seems to have been on pilot," First Selectwoman Cathi Gaudinski said. "I don't know if you have a specific focus."

Gaudinski also said she wondered if the commission needs some new members, as many have been absent from multiple meetings.

EDC Chairwoman Jane Boston attended Tuesday's meeting, along with member Poppy Sun and alternate members Joe Asklar and Christopher Heberder.

"Our charter and ordinances provide flexibility in how we progress," Gaudinski said.

On the town's website, the EDC describes Marlborough as a town "currently undergoing a dramatic transformation from a small, rural community to a thriving, affluent suburban municipality." It also states that the EDC exists to "facilitate the growth of our valued business community in a manner consistent with our Marlborough's shared values."

The meeting began with going over the history of the EDC beginning in the 1970s, when the town hired Leslie Cosgrove as town planner, to help develop the industrial park on North Main

"That was her job, finding businesses and bringing them in," Asklar said. "After that project was over, there was no use of her services and the position was not in the budget." The project was the original industrial park on North Main Street.

"It was the biggest initiative as a formal project," Gaudinski said of Cosgrove's position.

Gaudinski also brought up another big project for the town – the long-gestating 143-acre Marlborough Business Park, located near Route 66. Part of the park is privately-owned, and part is owned by the town; the town purchased its chunk, 76 acres, about 10 years ago and the land was "set aside for the future," Gaudinski said.

However, since the purchase of that land, nothing has been done on it and the land needs to be developed and an infrastructure installed, Gaudinski said.

"The business park was the result of a survey because there was no place in town to put businesses," selectman Dick Shea said.

"There are three main owners now with three major parcels," Boston said of the business park land. "It's the town and two privately-owned parcels. They are all interdependent for roads and infrastructure."

Boston questioned whether updating the business park should be a priority.

However, Asklar said, the problem is more how the town can get companies interested in

the land.

"We have nothing in place," Asklar said of any programs to help businesses start up. "I see other towns with excellent programs" such as tax abatement.

Asklar suggested the town needs to "open the door" and offer incentives to businesses to attract them to Marlborough.

"We're competing against towns with tools," Heberder said. "We need tools to try and attract businesses."

Boston also suggested town officials bring people on tours of available spaces in Marlborough.

However, Gaudinski countered, "Most of the spaces are taken." Asklar confirmed that, saying there are no open properties on North Main Street.

"It suggests that unless we develop the business park, we don't have a home for you," Shea said.

"Someone has to bite that bullet," Heberder said of developing the business park.

"We need to do work on the business park," Gaudinski agreed. "We need infrastructure there."

Gaudinski said phase four of the town's Capital Non-Recurring Plan is development toward exit 12 off of Route 2.

"People look at raw land and how many square feet they would have to build," Asklar said. "With the amount of real estate, the market is saturated with it. A used building is a fraction of the cost than to build."

Asklar asked how the town can compete with other communities when it comes to drawing businesses.

"We can compete," selectman Denis Soucy said. "We just need to get out there."

"We need to make a strategic plan and provide tools," Gaudinski said. "We can get studies, but if we don't put them into action, they get stale."

Soucy asked if it was possible to hire a part-time person focusing on economic development. Gaudinski said the town could look into it, since Director of Planning and Development Peter Hughes is overloaded with responsibilities.

The town officials circled back to the idea of incentives. Boston wondered if the EDC could offer low-interest loans to companies to attract them to town.

"We all have different ideas," Gaudinski said – but questioned whether residents would even support incentives given to businesses.

Asklar, meanwhile, wondered what other towns have that Marlborough doesn't have.

"Is there a way to find out what the neighboring towns are offering?" he asked. Asklar

particularly wondered how East Hampton got CVS to come into town.

"It would be nice to have a CVS or a similar pharmacy," Boston said.

Shea said the retail chains are usually aggressively scanning the market.

But, a couple of factors worked against Marlborough, Gaudinski said. For one, "We don't seem to support our businesses," she said. "One moved to East Hampton and now they do gangbusters."

And then, she said, there's the population factor. Gaudinski said there are 6,400 people in Marlborough – compared to 11,000 in East Hampton, 9,000 in Hebron and 16,000 in Colchester.

"If you're a town of 10,000, with towns of 3,000 surrounding you, you're a draw," Shea said. "It's more of a challenge where we are. The business climate is different."

"We should look at rebranding ourselves," Gaudinski said. "We are known for the [Marlborough] Tavern and the Marlborough Barn."

"We should work on development on this side of the bridge," Soucy said. "We have the town center plan and are putting in the water system. The sewer is here. We need to work on the potential on this side before looking at the other side of the highway. It will be a great subdivision down there when we can get utilities there."

Gaudinski said the next opportunity to apply for state Clean Water Fund money is 2017 – and that will be aimed at the Marlborough Commons.

Shea also said there are substantial differences between the needs of a manufacturing company and a CVS-like business; with this in mind, Asklar suggested the town develop a program to attract manufacturing companies and a separate one to attract a CVS-type business.

Gaudinski then shifted the meeting and asked the EDC members if they have had any feedback from the Marlborough Business Association about the current issues and concerns in town.

"The concerns are the look of the Tavern," Boston said.

Brothers Marc and Scott Digalbo had planned to open The New Marlborough Tavern in December 2013; previous ownership had closed the eatery – called simply The Marlborough Tavern – in 2011. The brothers had renovations planned, and indeed, additions to the front and rear of the building were made – but then the project fell apart. The site spent the bulk of 2014 looking more like a construction zone than a restaurant – and many felt the

building, a landmark property located in the center of the town, had become something of an eyesore.

And while Boston said the exterior of the building has been cleaned up some since the first of the year, the thought at Tuesday's meeting was the saga of The New Marlborough Tavern drives home a point about private property.

"What can the town do with a private property?" Gaudinski said. "The Tavern is a private property. It all comes down to money. [If there's] no tenant, then there's finance issues. It's tenant and landlord issues."

Shea said it's a common perception in town that the town can tell private property owners "what to do and what needs to be done and when."

"It's a lot easier to say than do," Shea said. "Maybe the town can say, 'What can we do to help?'" Soucy suggested.

Boston also said the commission should collaborate better with businesses on their issues.

"The former owners of the Tavern cited the change in sewer connection [as a reason for closing in 2011]," Boston said. "The restaurant was charged based on the number of seats and meals served. It's a difficult pill to swallow. Other towns meter. We don't have that."

"We chose it to be that way because of the expense," Gaudinski said.

Asklar suggested once the water system goes in, if meters will as well.

"It could be looked at by the" Water Pollution Control Authority, Gaudinski said. "It was the cost of the meters [that caused the WPCA to not use them with the sewer project]. As we grow, that's a possibility."

With the current system, the town fronts the money and the users pay it back in the form of operating and maintenance fees along with the fixed cost toward the loan.

The system is "a tremendous burden on businesses," Soucy said.

If the sewer costs to businesses were lowered, Gaudinski said the WPCA was concerned where the money for the sewers would come from; the costs would have to be redistributed.

However, Heberder said lowering the fixed cost of the sewers for businesses could be seen as an incentive. "Make it attractive for a new development," he said.

Boston wrapped up the meeting by stating that the goals for the commission will include updating a marketing plan to get new businesses, strengthen their relationship with the MBA and identify incentives so the town can be more competitive.

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

Hebron Teen Raising Funds for Smiles

by Geeta Schrayter

Hebron resident Emily Everlith has a lot to smile about. After all, she lives in a country where, when she was born with a cleft lip and palate, she was able to receive the surgeries necessary to live a normal life – including something as simple as a smile.

But she realizes not everyone is as fortunate as she's been, and in response, she's looking to spread smiles to those she's never met by raising funds for Operation Smile, a charity that provides free surgeries to repair cleft lip, cleft palate and other facial deformities for children around the world, according to operation.smile.org.

This week, Everlith explained she's been spreading awareness about cleft lip and palate for the last four years through her Facebook page, "Emily First Hand: Cleft Lip and Palate and Craniofacial."

But Everlith added she's on her way to becoming advisory of her assembly in the International Order of the Rainbow, an organization for daughters and granddaughters of freemasons. As part of that, Everlith explained she needed to have a fundraiser.

"So I had an idea for a while now, and this was the catalyst to kick it off: I made a smiley face magnet modeled after my cleft lip [with a scar] on the left side – just something simple people can put on the back of their cars."

The magnets cost \$5 each and all of the funds will be donated to Operation Smile.

"This kicked off faster than I thought it

would. I posted that we needed donations for seed money and in the first week we had \$1,000" Everlith shared.

That initial money was used to order 500 magnets. Everlith said she was "hoping some people would have some interest in them," and that's proved to be the case: the fundraiser, which started at the beginning of December, has already raised \$4,030, and people have regularly donated more than the requested \$5 donation for a magnet.

Everlith added they were actually already able to donate \$3,000 to Operation Smile.

"Before the year ended we made one donation for \$1,500 and an outside organization was doubling any donation – so we actually donated \$3,000," she shared.

And that \$3,000 translates to 12 of the initial surgeries for cleft lip and palate – "so you can eat and talk," Everlith explained – at \$250 each.

As for Everlith, she's had 10 surgeries and said she'll have more. While she said the first was most important, other surgeries are often needed to help with things like breathing because the nose may not be properly aligned.

The fundraiser is going to run through June, and while the current goal is to raise \$5,000, Everlith said that number might be increased to \$10,000 because of the success she's been having.

"One in 700 people have [cleft lip and palate] and some people would think of it as a disadvantage or a burden, but I'm actually thank-

ful of being that one in 700," Everlith explained. "I feel like I developed more as a person and have a greater sense of security because of it. I want other people to have that."

Everlith added being that one in 700 has also helped determine what she wants to do when she graduates RHAM.

She explained she watched a video last year in one of her classes about Chernobyl, the location of a 1986 nuclear disaster in Ukraine. As a result of that, Everlith learned many children suffered from birth defects like cleft lip and palate "and it would cost all the family's life work to pay for surgeries while it costs \$250 for American doctors."

"That was eye-opening," she said. "Being born in America I've been lucky enough to receive all the operations I need without any issues and I want other children in third world countries to have that opportunity."

And so, when Everlith receives her diploma in June, she plans to attend college to become a maxillary facial surgeon.

And in the meantime, she's making a difference through her fundraiser.

"I'm hoping the campaign will continue for a long time and the magnets will keep spreading," she stated. "We've got donations all over the country. ... I hope by mailing a magnet to someone in Iowa, they'll put it on their car and someone else will see it and ask about it and then they'll want it too."

The magnets have also already gone interna-



Emily Everlith of Hebron is raising money for Operation Smile, a charity that provides free surgeries to repair cleft lip and palate through the sale of smiley face magnets with a cleft lip and palate scar – much like her own.

tional; Everlith shared one of her mom's friends in American Samoa donated to the cause.

To donate or learn more about Everlith's fundraiser go to gofundme.com/isupportasmile.

Portland School Board Passes \$19.78 Million Budget

by John Tyczkowski

Tuesday evening, the Board of Education adopted its 2015-16 schools budget, and also passed a capital budget plan request and a new school lunch price schedule.

The overall budget totals \$19.78 million, and represents a 2.75 percent increase over current year spending. Unanimously passed, the budget now heads to the Board of Selectmen.

The board considered two budgets at Tuesday's meeting. In addition to the one they approved – which includes funding for maintenance costs around the district – board members also eyed a budget that totaled \$500,000 less, which did not include the maintenance money.

At the same time, all board members were very clear to say that what they were voting on was just a request, and could be altered further down the line, as had happened with past school budgets. Indeed, last year, the board had asked for a \$19.26 million budget and selectmen knocked it down to \$19.25 million, while for the 2013-14 school year, the board requested a \$19.13 million budget and wound up with an \$18.9 million one.

School board chair MaryAnne Rode expanded upon her support of this year's budget increase by saying the public schools needed to upgrade their facilities and equipment.

"It's time to start investing again in our future," she said. "We've been very frugal and we're not asking for anything we don't need. I don't want to cut things just in anticipation of someone saying 'no.'"

Superintendent of Schools Phillip O'Reilly agreed, and said his plan would be to begin to phase in more laptop carts that would make rounds around the schools as an alternative to desktops, as well as a replacement cycle to keep the technology current.

"I think the future of the district should be in mobile laptop carts," he said. "It's the size differential, the space differential."

He also mentioned how increasing the number of laptop carts, which are already in use, would allow schools to scale back the computer labs and increase technology accessibility to students.

"We don't want kids to be learning technol-

ogy by appointment, we want technology to be an integral part of every day," O'Reilly said.

Laptop cart costs would be one expenditure included in the maintenance costs added to the overall budget.

One of the other additions to the budget would allow for the production of a musical at Portland High School every year, as opposed to the every-other-year plan the school is currently on. It's an addition board members stressed their support for Tuesday.

"I do think the education benefits of a yearly musical are real and of benefit to the school," board member Chris Phelps said. "It just makes sense."

At a previous meeting, PHS band director Kristin Novak discussed how the alternating nature of the musicals was damaging to the theatre culture at the school, in terms of allowing skills to fall out of use and weakening student interest.

"She compared it to trying to run a track program at the high school only every other year," Rode said.

Novak's presentation had talked about the broad range of skills required in musical production that would benefit students, from the actors' skills to the pit orchestra and the production and technical crew skills.

* * *

The board also approved the capital budget plan unanimously. The budget proposal totaled \$537,000, an amended total including \$20,000 for a facilities study of Brownstone Intermediate.

Other components of the capital budget plan request included \$60,000 for resurfacing the rubber track at the middle school and high school, \$175,000 for work at Brownstone Intermediate for boys' bathrooms, the gym and exterior brick, \$22,000 at Gildersleeve for facilities maintenance and \$260,000 for technology hardware upgrades district-wide.

That \$20,000 request, added to the initial plan, was an area of contention between board members that entailed discussion before it was passed.

Several members cited the need to get mov-

ing on renovations to the school, which was built in the 1930s.

However, Phelps was in favor of the other capital budget proposal that would call for a \$20,000 facilities study for the 2015-2016 school year.

That option would also eliminate \$502,000 from the capital budget plan over the next four school years, and those renovations, plus any additional, would instead be covered by a bond of indeterminate amount.

That amendment passed, with board member Ben Srb and board member Mike Pelton the nay votes.

The board talked back and forth about the pros and cons of requesting line items versus turning to bonding, citing the uncertainty they felt about the capital funding process.

"For the record, what this discussion is illustrating is that the process of funding capital improvements in this community is broken, and has been broken for years," Phelps said. "It's bad flip of the coin A, versus bad flip of the coin B."

Srb then proposed an amendment that would add the \$20,000 to the budget plan along with the itemized renovations to Brownstone Intermediate, in place of a bond.

That amendment passed unanimously.

* * *

Business manager Laura Webb said that, in order to stay in compliance with federal standards, lunch prices would have to be increased by 10 cents next year, at both the elementary schools and the secondary schools in town.

The new lunch prices for the next school year would be \$2.50 per lunch at Valley View, Gildersleeve and Brownstone, and lunch prices at the middle school and high school would be \$2.75 per lunch.

"Once a year we have to do a computation to make sure our free and reduced lunches will get reimbursed correctly by the federal government," she said. "And then we have to make sure we're charging our full-price lunches accordingly to make sure the federal government isn't subsidizing the full-price lunches."

In addition, Webb talked about the new

method of lunch sale service through Sodexo that will be implemented across the public schools beginning in February.

Phase 1 will begin in just a few weeks, and will entail students using swipe cards to pay for their lunches.

"We anticipate that'll probably back up the lunch line a bit that first week as students get used to using the card," she said. "But it should go pretty smoothly soon after."

Phase 2 is slated to begin during the 2016-17 school year. It involves an online system where parents can add money to their child's meal plan balance, as well as check on the balance and be notified when the balance drops below a certain amount.

Until then, parents will be able to pre-load the card by sending a check to school at the beginning of the school year, as usual.

Finally, Webb mentioned that Portland and "several other" school districts have been selected for a state and federal audit of district food service and wellness practices.

"They'll be coming in for two to three days at the beginning of March and they'll be auditing everything," she said. "What the kids are served, the cleanliness of the kitchens, our reimbursement reports, our wellness policy, everything."

The board approved the lunch price increases unanimously.

* * *

According to the town's budget timetable, which is subject to change, First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield will present her budget proposal to the Board of Selectmen no later than March 2. A public hearing on that proposal is scheduled for March 10.

After a series of budget workshops for town departments in March and April, a town meeting on the budget is scheduled for May 4, with the first budget referendum set for May 11. If necessary, there will be a second referendum on May 18.

* * *

The next Board of Education meeting will take place Tuesday, Feb. 3, at 7 p.m. in the Portland High School Media Center.

Entire Colchester JJIS to Attend Bushnell Performance Thanks to Grant

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

Thanks to a \$20,530 state arts grant, the entire Jack Jackter Intermediate School will attend a performance of *Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad* at the Bushnell in March.

The grant, administered by the state Department of Education, the state Department of Economic and Community Development, the Connecticut Office of the Arts and the Connecticut Association of Schools was highly competitive, with only eight schools being awarded the grant out of 82 applications.

JJIS Principal Deb Sandberg worked closely with reading consultant Lynne McCune and teachers Tammie Bakaj and Helen Desrochers to put the grant together.

Sandberg said the grant supports the schools' focus on the arts being a HOT school. A HOT (Higher Order Thinking) school focuses on three main values, strong arts, arts integration and democratic practice.

According to the state's website about HOT

schools, the arts stimulate student learning, improve the culture and climate of schools, and inspire the professional development of educators, and intentionally engage parents in the process.

"Artists work in the classrooms infusing arts," Sandberg said. "We offer general music, arts, jazz band, chorus and arts at recess. As far as partnering with an arts organization, not really."

The grant begins what Sandberg said they hope to be a long-term partnership with the Bushnell.

"It gives the students an opportunity to see a live play," Sandberg said. "They will go to the Bushnell and see what theater is like."

As far as other field trips relating to theater, Sandberg said they haven't done many plays and the school tries to limit field trips since they do get costly for parents.

"This grant allows every child to go at no

cost to the parents," Sandberg said.

Before attending the March 4 performance of *Harriet Tubman* in Hartford, third grade students will be working with a Bushnell poet to write poetry. Then they will work with the Hartford Symphony Orchestra to integrate jazz and poetry.

"They will go and appreciate what art is," Sandberg said of the performance. "Fourth and fifth grades will do poetry as well with Lynne."

Sandberg credited McCune with being a driving force behind the grant and going to see *Harriet Tubman*, which works into the students' academics and what they are studying in all grades.

Before the poet even comes to work with the students, however, all third grade teachers will be headed to Hartford for professional development so they can further the arts education and integrating them into their own lessons.

"We never had much to do with poets,"

McCune said. Currently – and thanks to another grant – the school is working with the Middletown nonprofit professional theater organization ARTFARM, to work dance and movement into academics.

"We were so fortunate to get this grant," Sandberg said of the arts grant. "We write grants to give the kids more opportunities. They're not just add-ons, but related to the curriculum; things they wouldn't have otherwise."

In May, as part of the partnership with the Bushnell, the third grade will attend an arts festival in which a select few students will present on stage their poetry. Each school attending the festival will present some form of art.

"It opens up a lot of opportunities for the kids," McCune said of the Bushnell partnership. The school is already thinking of its next trip to the Bushnell, as it will perform a play based on the popular student book, *The Lightning Thief* by Rick Riordan, next year.

Colchester Plan of Conservation and Development Draft Presented

by **Kaitlyn Schroyer**

The Planning and Zoning Commission reviewed its newest draft of the Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) Wednesday night and allowed for a community discussion about the direction the plan would be taking the town in.

Glen Chalder of Planimetrics, the company the town hired to facilitate the plan, presented to the commission a general overview of things the plan covers. Chalder also worked on the previous plan which was adopted in 2001.

Before beginning his presentation, Chalder reminded the commission that they must adopt the plan by July 1 of this year or else the town may become ineligible for state discretionary grants. The commission would have the plan ready for adoption in April, followed by a public hearing in June, since the commission has to give a 65-day notice before the hearing.

“It’s an advisory guide for the community in the future,” Chalder said. “It’s where we are now and where we are headed. We need to stop doing things in the direction we don’t want to go.”

Chalder explained that the conservation part of the plan is things they want to protect while development is guiding change and infrastructure is what is needed or wanted.

“Your population growth is expected to continue,” Chalder said. “While recent growth resulted from attracting younger families, baby boomers are getting older and numbers are starting to decrease. Still, our age composition is expected to change [with the majority being] 55-plus years of age. It will be a very different place in the future.”

The plan, Chalder said, goes over honoring Colchester’s heritage, protecting water resources and other resources, preserving farms and farming, preserving open space, implementing the 2006 open space plan, preserving community character through a design review process, enhancing quality of life by physical character and spirit, sustainability and resiliency such as preparing for storms and going green, guiding growth and change, maintaining the town center and Westchester, strengthening the center economically and physically, supporting economic growth, and striving to be a regional center.

“If we had more here, we could generate traffic and additional business,” Chalder said. “We now know what we want and where.”

Chalder said they also need to maintain residential character, address future housing needs and other options with an aging population, identify and prioritize future facility needs, maintain and enhance roadways and sidewalks and enhance utility services.

Chalder suggested the town implement a Plan Implementation Committee made of people from multiple boards and a Capital Improvement plan to guide the town.

* * *

Joe Mathieu, chairman of the Planning and Zoning Commission, asked Chalder what is going on with the state’s Plan of Conservation and Development.

“Their plan runs from 2013-18,” Chalder said. “It’s available online. They’re starting soon to update it because they have to have it approved by legislature.”

Chalder assured the commission their plan is consistent with the state’s plan.

Mathieu then asked Chalder about Westchester’s position in the overall plan.

“Colchester is a diamond in the rough,” Chalder said. “It has tremendous opportunities. You have one downtown, but Westchester is a hamlet or smaller village. The plan doesn’t specify specific outcomes [for Westchester].”

Mathieu then asked Chalder what kind of changes he’s seen between the 2001 plan and the new draft.

“Open space has not changed too much, but you have a plan and vision now,” Chalder said. “You need the resources to move ahead. Community character has always been important. The last plan had no farming.”

The farming aspect was missing from the 2001 plan, Chalder said, because the community was focused on taming its rapid growth. Now the town is beginning to embrace their farming heritage, its tax base it brings and the local food.

“The plan recognizes that now and celebrates it,” Chalder said. “The focus on greenness is bigger and the economy has changed.”

* * *

Chalder explained Colchester used to have industrial zones all over and the last plan recombined those and brought businesses toward water and sewer.

“The challenge is balancing the economic activity with developing commercially and protecting natural resources,” Mathieu said.

“The plan is not a simple outcome,” Chalder said. “For instance, if a new supermarket came to Colchester, you might say it’s a win/win situation, but if they were to propose it in the wetlands, that’s terrible. That’s your job to find the right balance.”

Chalder suggested a way to accomplish that is to form a Plan Implementation Committee from members of multiple boards so everyone is on the same wavelength and accomplishes that balance.

Chris Bourque, chairman of the Agricultural Commission, said that instead of putting a new supermarket in when they have three – two of which are small, local stores that are thriving – the town put in things such as a medical office or office park.

“Put in a higher wage than just minimum wage part-time jobs,” Bourque said.

Another issue Bourque said that he’s seen is that the “community hasn’t embraced the POCD as a general guide.”

“They should be here,” Bourque said. “It should be on every commission’s desk. It’s not just land use. This is community infrastructure.”

* * *

James Noel, owner of Noel’s Market, asked how the plan would balance “mom and pop” places versus bigger stores.

“This is where the commission has to find the balance,” Chalder said.

“We don’t own the properties,” Town Planner Adam Turner said. “We put money into properties like Lebanon Avenue and the Air Line Trail. We can adopt village regulations. What can we do to do more?”

Noel seemed taken aback by this.

“There’s no control over businesses?” he asked.

“There’s some control, but it’s control over what you build,” Turner said.

The commission expressed some worry over “commercial blight,” or vacant spots where the owners haven’t invested anything in the spaces.

Turner said the most the town could do was offer incentives and add capital to depressed areas.

A citizen spoke up to express her concern over the areas which haven’t been maintained in town such as the sidewalks or even the shrubbery outside town hall.

“If you’re marketing your house and leave the weeds, it’s not a great impression,” Turner

said. “The new code adds some new development maintenance plans, but the town has to be budgeted.”

* * *

Dave Wasniewski, a member of the Agricultural Commission, said the town needs to be sure to build flexibility into the plan to go with economic changes.

“That’s the beauty of the plan,” Mathieu said. “It’s not a set of regulations, it’s a guidebook.”

Wasniewski then asked Chalder if he could think of a town 10 years ago that was where Colchester is now and that did a great job.

“Colchester is unique,” Chalder said. “The growth curve caught is differently than most towns. However we have opportunities that other towns don’t have.”

* * *

Bourque then asked Chalder to put something in the plan about agriculture land and using more eased land by the town as agricultural land.

Leslie Curtis, an alternate member on the Agricultural Commission, reminded the group that Colchester is a “right to farm” town after a member of Planning and Zoning reminded Bourque that developers that build high-end subdivisions attract residents that don’t want to be living next to a farm.

“People have little right to complain about farms,” Curtis said. It was clarified however that the right to farm clause has to be put in home deeds for it to happen.

“In the past, it hasn’t been disclosed,” Wasniewski said. “Realtors skirt the issue.”

Chalder then changed the discussion toward adding housing to downtown.

“It could feel more ‘village,’” Chalder said. “It’s little things over time like strengthening the town green. It needs to have one owner and not be split.”

Turner ended the discussion by asking Chalder to put something in the plan regarding their work toward building a food hub for manufacturing and processing farm-grown food for schools since the town is looking at USDA grants for such a thing in town.

* * *

The draft will be revised by Chalder and come before the Planning and Zoning Commission again in February, at a date yet to be announced.

Police News

1/8: Christian Heath Waylon, 34, of 30 Namonee Trail, was issued a ticket for failure to drive at a reasonable distance apart and possession of less than half an ounce of marijuana, East Hampton Police said. It was also found, police said, that Waylon had an active warrant for his arrest held by the Meriden Police Department and was then turned over to that department.

1/9: At about 9:15 a.m., officers were dispatched to a car off the side of the Road on Mott Hill. Upon arrival it was discovered that the vehicle had collided with a utility pole and that the vehicle was unoccupied and was ab-

sent of any mounted registration plate. After an investigation, Michael Cavanaugh, 32, of 159 Main St., was issued a summons for evading responsibility, operating an unregistered motor vehicle and operating a motor vehicle while under suspension, police said.

1/12: Thomas Gordon, 43, of 164 Willington Hill Rd., Willington, was arrested for violating a restraining order, police said.

1/14: Scott Minor, 51, of 85 No. Main St., turned himself in pursuant to an active warrant for his arrest. Minor was charged with second-degree failure to appear, police said.

Marlborough Police News

1/14: State Police said Thomas Giordano, 54, of 98 Elm St., Danbury, was arrested and charged with speeding, DUI and unsafe movement.

1/16: State Police said Gerardo Torres Jr., 24, of 40 James St., Holyoke, Mass., was arrested and charged with reckless driving.

1/17: State Police said Candace McNaughton, 61, of 31 Hodge Rd., was arrested and charged with sixth-degree larceny.

Andover Police News

1/16: State Police said Kristy Borders, 27, of 41 Pickett Rd., Plainfield, was transported to Windham Hospital for evaluation after she rear-ended a car on Route 6 near Long Hill Road.

Colchester Police News

1/13: State Police said Ruthanne Colburn, 32, of 156 Halls Hill Rd., was arrested and charged with failure to appear.

1/14: State Police said Larry Radney, 22, of 18-20 King St., Hartford, was arrested and charged with three counts of violation of probation.

1/15: State Police said Steve Michaud, 44, of 86 Clark Rd., was arrested and charged with threatening and breach of peace.

1/18: State Police said Robert Allen, 25, of 1 Labella Dr., Middletown, was arrested and charged with third-degree assault, threatening and breach of peace.

Obituaries

East Hampton

Harry W. Brahen

Harry W. Brahen, 84, of East Hampton, husband of Mary (Fazzino) Brahen, passed away Wednesday, Jan. 14, at Marlborough Health Care Center. He was the son of the late William and Leona (Smith) Brahen.

Born July 1, 1930, in Hartford, he had lived in East Hampton for the last 48 years. He worked as a draftsman for Pratt & Whitney for 36 years until his retirement. He was a member of the Belltown Auto Club and a member of St. Patrick's Church in East Hampton.

Besides his wife, Mary, he leaves his children, Michael Brahen of Thompson, Debra Brahen of Portland, Mary Leighton of Hadlyme, Connie Mata of Portland and Patrick Brahen of St. Augustine, Fla.; a brother, Edward Brahen of Portland; numerous grandchildren, great-grandchildren, nieces and nephews.

He was predeceased by a brother, William, and a sister, Betty.

Funeral services were held Monday, Jan. 19, with a Mass at the Church of St. Mary, Portland. Burial was in St. Mary Cemetery, Portland. Relatives and friends called at Portland Memorial Funeral Home, 231 Main St., Portland, on Monday morning, prior to Mass.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Alzheimer's Association, CT Chapter, 2075 Silas Deane Hwy., Suite 100, Rocky Hill, CT 06067.

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

Amston

Fred Ueberacher

Fred Ueberacher, 100, of the Amston section of Hebron, beloved husband of Helen (Meagher) Ueberacher for 76 years, passed away peacefully Friday, Jan. 16. Born March 1, 1914, in The Bronx, N.Y., he was the son of the late Frederick and Bertha (Markus) Ueberacher.

Mr. Ueberacher served proudly with the U.S. Army as a Quartermaster during World War II, and was a longtime member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

Married in 1938, he and Helen settled in Brewster, N.Y., to raise their family, where he owned and operated a Mobil service station along with an auto body shop. They later retired to St. Petersburg, Fla., where he enjoyed gardening and was an avid golfer. He hit a "Hole in One" at 93 years of age. He enjoyed spending time with his six grandchildren Amy, Todd and Marty Ueberacher and Jeff, Diane and Kevin Coffey.

Including his wife, he leaves two children, Lynn Coffey and her husband, Robert of Amston, with whom they made their home most recently; and Peter and Barbara Ueberacher of Dover Plains, N.Y.

Services will be private and burial will be observed at a later date at the Cemetery of the Holy Cross in Brooklyn, N.Y. There are no calling hours.

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

Portland

Genevieve D. Davis

Genevieve D. Davis, 90, of Portland, wife of the late George C. Davis, passed away Tuesday, Jan. 20, at Portland Care and Rehab. She was the daughter of the late Jacob and Anna (Krzak) Damm.

Born on July 25, 1924, in Meriden, she lived in Portland for most of her life. She retired from Safeway after many years. She was a member of the Portland Senior Center, the Church of St. Mary, Portland, and enjoyed ceramics, and arts and crafts.

She leaves her daughters, Mary Louise Tobias and her husband, Marvin of Middlefield and Loraine Tatro of Middletown; a brother, Alfred Damm and his wife, Gen of Meriden; and grandchildren, Darlene Ciurcina and husband Paul of East Hampton, Curtis Tatro and wife Stephanie of Portland and Gary Tatro of Cromwell; two great-grandchildren, Connor and Gena Tatro.

She was predeceased by two brothers and two sisters.

Funeral services will be held today, Jan. 23, at 11 a.m., at the Church of St. Mary, 51 Freestone Ave., Portland. Burial will be in Calvary Cemetery, Middletown, at the convenience of the family. There are no calling hours.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Church of St. Mary, 51 Freestone Ave., Portland, CT 06480.

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

Colchester

Harry Talcott Rhodes Jr.

Harry Talcott Rhodes Jr., 96, of Colchester, formerly of Old Saybrook, widower of the late Irene M. (Guthrie) Rhodes, passed away Monday, Jan. 19, at the Harrington Court GHC Center in Colchester. Born Nov. 28, 1918, in Hartford, he was a son of the late Harry and Arvella (Beard) Rhodes Sr.

In October of 1939, Harry enlisted in the U.S. Navy, serving as a Photographer's Mate 1st Class for six years during World War II before his honorable discharge in November of 1945. While in the service, he and Irene were married at St. Mary Church in Eugene, Ore., on Dec. 16, 1944, and shared 66 years of marriage before she predeceased him on July 15, 2011.

Mr. Rhodes worked in shipping and receiving for the Lee Co. for many years before his retirement. He was a communicant of St. John Church in Old Saybrook.

Survivors include two sons, James and his wife, Martha of Colchester and Barry of Norwich; four grandchildren, Deborah, David, Maryanne and Michael; seven great grandchildren; and numerous extended family members and friends.

In addition to his wife and parents, he was predeceased by a daughter-in-law, Diane; and two brothers, Robert and Warren.

Burial with military honors will be private in the State Veterans Cemetery, Middletown. There are no calling hours.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Center for Hospice Care, 227 Dunham St., Norwich, CT 06360.

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

East Hampton

Daniel Robert Coleman

Daniel Robert Coleman, 87, of East Hampton, died Saturday, Jan. 17. Born in Manhattan, N.Y., Sept. 7, 1927, he was the son of the late William and Elizabeth Coleman. He was a member of Hamburg Cove Yacht Club and Marlborough Congregational Church.

Dan was a graduate of Kings Point Military Academy. A consummate salesman and sailor, Dan was a longtime resident of East Northport, N.Y., where he was a member of the Centerport Yacht Club; never happier than when sailboat racing on Long Island Sound or cruising with Norma. He and Norma traveled the world, but loved nothing more than a family reunion. He will be missed.

He is survived by his loving wife Norma; his five children, Paul Coleman and wife Victoria of Arizona, Brian Coleman and wife Diane of Kansas, Carol O'Brien of New Jersey, Lynn Sinclair of Pennsylvania, Nancy Coleman of Marlborough; a sister, Dorothy Mathews of California; and 10 grandchildren.

He was predeceased by his three brothers.

A memorial service was held Wednesday, Jan. 21, in Marlborough Congregational Church, with the Rev. Robert Faulhaber officiating. Friends called at the Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton, on Tuesday, Jan. 20.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to Marlborough Congregational Church Memorial Fund, P.O. Box 57, Marlborough, CT 06447.

To leave online condolences, visit spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

Colchester

Wilma Shade Joyner

Wilma Shade Joyner, 87, of North Fort Myers, Fla., formerly of Manchester and Colchester, beloved wife of the late Walter H. Joyner, passed away Saturday, Jan. 17, at Apple Rehab in Colchester, with her children at her side.

She was born May 31, 1927, in San Diego, Calif., daughter of Marion and Katharine Wilcox) Shade. She grew up in West Hartford, graduated from Hall High School and attended Hilliard College.

She was a longtime member of Center Congregational Church in Manchester where she served as a deacon, was a member of the choir, Sacred Dance Choir, and was a past secretary for the Center Church Nursery School. She was also a member of Gilead Congregational Church in Hebron. She served on Manchester Hospital Auxiliary, Manchester Homemakers and was a Girl Scout leader.

She is survived by her three children, Christine M. Joyner, Stephen D. Joyner and wife Carol, and Penelope Shimchick and husband George; her six grandchildren Benjamin Kibbe and wife Kathy, Stephen M. Joyner and wife Dawn, Dennis Joyner and wife Heather, Katie Barkasy and husband Joel, Eric and Gregory Shimchick; and eight great-grandchildren, Emily and Grace Kibbe, Hannah and Megan Joyner, Addison and Wyatt Joyner, Zephyr and Anora Barkasy.

She was predeceased by her brothers, Kiefer and William Shade.

Family and friends are invited to calling hours today, Jan. 23, from 4-7 p.m., at Watkins Funeral Home, 142 East Center St., Manchester. A funeral service will be held Saturday, Jan. 24, at 11 a.m., at Gilead Congregational Church, Route 85, Hebron.

The family would like to thank all of her caregivers especially the staff at Apple Rehab, Colchester for their kindness and support.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Gilead Congregational Church or a charity of the donor's choice.

To sign the online register book, go to holmes-watkinsfuneralhomes.com.

Andover

June R. Christensen

June R. Christensen, 74, of Manchester, died peacefully Thursday, Jan. 8, at Manchester Memorial Hospital. June was born May 30, 1940, in Andover, daughter of the late William and Bessie (Cushman) Rider. She attended local schools and had been a resident of Manchester for most of her life.

Prior to her retirement, she was employed as a file clerk for the state of Connecticut for over 17 years. June was a member of North United Methodist Church in Manchester and enjoyed singing in the church choir. She was an active volunteer with the Eighth Utilities District Fire Department in Manchester and was a member of the fire and police for over 27 years.

June is survived by her four sisters, Janice Peacock of Tolland, Geri Eudy of Wallingford, Gail Muncy of Lincoln, Delaware, and Beverly Malo of Stafford Springs; and numerous nieces and nephews, including Robin Sole of Vienna, Va.

In addition to her parents, she was predeceased by her son and daughter-in-law, James A. Christensen and Kim Christensen; and her sister, Nellie Duncan.

A memorial service to celebrate her life will be held Saturday, Jan. 24, at 11 a.m. at North United Methodist Church, 300 Parker St., Manchester.

There are no calling hours. Memorial contributions may be made to North United Methodist Church Choir, 300 Parker St., Manchester, CT 06042.

Holmes Funeral Home, Manchester, has care of the arrangements. To leave an online condolence, visit holmes-watkinsfuneralhomes.com.

Colchester

Gertrude Ross Smith

Gertrude Ross Smith, 94, passed away peacefully Saturday, Jan. 10. Gertrude lived in Spartanburg, S.C., the last few years, but had spent most of her life in Newington.

She moved to Palm Coast, Fla., with her beloved husband, Gerrish F. Smith, in 1983. Their summers were spent at Lake Hayward near Colchester.

She attended Morris Business College and her employment included a number of years with the State of Connecticut, from which she retired. She was very active in civic and religious organizations throughout her life.

She was predeceased by her husband of 63 years, Gerrish F. Smith and is survived by her cherished family including sons Gerrish A. Smith and his wife Cathy of Chesnee, S.C., and Clifford Smith and his wife Thea of Pawleys Island, S.C.; three grandsons, Mathew, Craig and Kevin; granddaughter Jeanne Geisler; five great-grandchildren and one great-great-grandchild.

Memorial service will be scheduled for the family at the National Military Cemetery in Beaufort, S.C. at a future date.

Gertrude generously donated to many worthy causes. It is requested that in lieu of flowers, donations be made to charities of the donor's choice.

Portland

Gerhard Gaiser

Gerhard Gaiser, 74, of Middletown, formerly of Portland, died Wednesday, Jan. 14. Born in Maichingen, Germany, he came to this country in 1949 and lived most of his life in Portland. Prior to his retirement, he was employed at Pratt & Whitney in Middletown for many years.

Gerhard was a U.S. Army veteran, having served during the Vietnam War.

He is survived by his sister, Ursula G. Demko; his two nieces, Dorothy Schlier and her husband Brian and Julie Demko; his two nephews and their wives, Edward and Donna Demko and Bernie and Stevanie Demko; and many grandnephews and grandnieces.

Funeral services were Saturday, Jan. 17, at 3 p.m., at the Sheehan Hilborn Breen Funeral Home, 1084 New Britain Ave., West Hartford. Burial was private. A calling hour was held prior to the service, at the funeral home.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the American Cancer Society, 825 Brook Street, Rocky Hill, CT 06067.

Online condolences may be made at SheehanHilbornBreen.com.

Portland

David Gannon

David Gannon, 62, of Portland, beloved husband of Patricia "Patty" (Conroy) Gannon, died suddenly Thursday, Jan. 15. He was born in Oklahoma City, Okla., the son of the late Herbert R. and Alice (Purcer) Gannon Jr.

Dave was employed for over 35 years with Pratt and Whitney Aircraft in East Hartford. He was an avid golfer and longtime member and past Men's Club champion at Quarry Ridge Golf Course, Portland.

In addition to his wife, he is survived by his daughters, Jennifer Gannon of Overland Park, Kan., Kelly Reyes and her husband, Ruben of Providence, R.I., and Rebecca Baenig of Annandale, Va.

He is also survived by his brothers, Michael Gannon and Patrick Gannon of East Haddam; his sisters, Gayla Bagley and her husband Ronald of Higganum, Casey Biega of Somers, and Amy Gannon of Norwich; two grandsons, Andrew and Benjamin Reyes; and several nieces and nephews.

Some say a man with daughters always longs for a son, but with Dave this was not the case. Dave coached his girls in sports and reveled in their academic achievements. He taught them to be independent women by making sure they were able to do basic home improvement and automotive tasks. He shared his passion for music and sports with them. Later in his life, Dave experienced the joy of boys through his two grandsons, who brought him much pride.

Funeral services were held Tuesday, Jan. 20, at Biega Funeral Home, 3 Silver St., Middletown. Burial was at St. Mary Cemetery, Portland. Friends called at Biega Funeral Home Monday, Jan. 19.

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

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

Portland

Carl Winicki

Carl "Zah" Winicki, 74, of Portland, died Tuesday, Jan. 13, at Middlesex Memorial Hospital. Born Aug. 29, 1940, Carl was the son of the late John J. Winicki and Anna M. (Piasecki) Winicki. He proudly served his country in the Marine Corps.

Carl helped his father as a boy and then became the proud owner of Zah's Sport Shop in Portland for his lifetime. He was an icon in his community for his passion for fishing and hunting. He sold bait and tackle, along with advice, to customers from all over the state. He would talk about fishing and all of his outdoor adventures while he repaired rods and reels. What joy it brought him to see others share his love of the sport. He always enjoyed letting customers know about good fishing spots in the area and along the shore, especially Rhode Island beaches and waterways.

Carl was also an avid fly fisherman who learned and carried on the art form of tying flies from his father. From the Grey Ghost to the Hornberg and Caddis Fly to the Woolly Bugger, he was quite skilled at his craft. The first day of fishing season was always exciting for him and his family. Carl always had stories of the one that "got away" and truly loved talking to people and being part of their lives. He will be sorely missed.

Carl is predeceased by his wife Sandra E (Sweet) Winicki and his brother Francis Alexander Winicki and leaves behind step-daughter Ellen and her husband Edward Zehren of Portland; two nephews and their wives, David and Deborah Winicki of Stafford Springs, Kevin and Dianne Winicki of Colchester; grand-nephews and grand-nieces Hannah, Jonathan, Christian, Meredith, Benjamin and Harrison Winicki. He also leaves behind stepchildren Maria, Michael and John Sforza, Debra Bridgeman and Mark Gagliardo, many grand and great-grandchildren, along with many lifelong friends who will miss him dearly.

Friends were invited to the Brooklawn Funeral Home, 511 Brook St., Rocky Hill, Saturday, Jan. 17. Burial was private.

Colchester

Helen Fogarty

Helen (Topaz) Fogarty passed away peacefully Monday, Jan. 19, at Harrington Court in Colchester. Born Nov. 27, 1912, in Yonkers, N.Y., to Peter Topaz and Mary (Homiak) Topaz, she moved to Salem with her family in 1914. The family later moved to New London where she resided for almost 80 years before moving back to Salem in 2003.

Helen met the love of her life, James D. Fogarty Sr., at Sheffield Tube Company. They married in Montville on April 15, 1939. Sadly, Helen had to assume full responsibility for her family upon her husband's sudden death on April 17, 1954. For many years she worked as a housekeeper at the St. Mary's Rectory in New London. She was very active in the parish, especially in St. Mary's Ladies Guild. A very skilled baker, she also worked as the dessert chef at St. Bernard's High School when it started in New London.

A kind, energetic, loving soul, Helen related especially well with children. She enjoyed them, and they knew it. Visiting Helen involved laughter, games of all kinds and freshly baked cookies, pies, or even blueberry pierogi. She also was very fond of her flower gardens; often towering over her diminutive self. Helen shared a very long and very close relationship with her late older sister, Anna (Larson) Zieziulewicz. They thoroughly enjoyed many trips together.

Helen is survived by her son, James D. Fogarty Jr. and his wife, Gloria, of Salem; her daughter, Mary Jane Brandon and her husband, Joe, of Seffner, Fla.; her grandchildren, Andy Brandon and his wife, Susan, of Cumming, Ga., Myev (Fogarty) Bodenhofer and her husband, Erik, of Norwood, Mass., Jennifer Brandon of Tampa, Fla., and Michelle (Fogarty) Williamson and her husband, Dan, of Salem; and her great-grandchildren, Nicholas and Drew Brandon of Cumming, Ga., Emily Anzalone of Tampa, Fla., Anya and Jacob Bodenhofer of Norwood, Mass. and Wesley and Mia Williamson of Salem.

Calling hours will occur from 6-8 p.m. today, Jan. 23, at the Thomas L. Neilan Funeral Home, 12 Ocean Ave., New London. A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated at 10 a.m. Saturday, Jan. 24, at St. Mary Star of the Sea Church, 10 Huntington St., New London. Interment will follow at St. Mary's Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that donations in Helen's name be directed to St. Mary Star of the Sea Church, or to St. Mary Ukrainian Catholic Church, 178 Linwood Ave., Colchester, CT 06415.

Visit neilanfuneralhome.com for directions or to share a memory.

Portland

William E. Wrang, Jr.

William "Bill" E. Wrang, Jr., 87, of Portland, formerly of Middletown, husband of Alice (Kensel) Wrang, died Tuesday, Jan. 20, at St. Francis Hospital, Hartford.

He was born in Middletown, the son of the late Dr. William E. and Catharine (Lee) Wrang. He graduated from Deerfield Academy in Deerfield, Mass., and attended Nichols College in Dudley, Massachusetts. A veteran of World War II, he served with the U.S. Navy in Virginia and served in the Navy Reserves for several years after the war.

Bill spent close to 35 years as a salesman with the former F. L. Caulkins auto dealership on Main Street, Middletown, where he sold Cadillac's and Buick's, but more importantly where he enjoyed meeting and talking with people. He spent the remainder of his life working as a deputy sheriff/marshal with the State of Connecticut where he used his gift of talk and charm to ease the burden of those he served.

He was a member and Past Exalted Ruler of the B.P.O. Elks Lodge 771, served as a councilman for many years, acting mayor, and on too many commissions to individually mention, for the city of Middletown, as well as participating in several civic and non-profit organizations. He was an avid runner for close to 40 years, never missed a work out regardless of the weather, ran more than 20 marathons, and ranked in the top of his age group for running events. He was inducted into the Middletown Sports Hall of Fame in 2008. He was a lifelong member of the YMCA, where he would spend time there at least once a day.

In addition to his wife Alice, Bill is survived by his daughter, Melanie Foley and her husband David of Middletown; two sons, William E. Wrang III and his wife Heidi of Middletown, and Michael J. Wrang and his wife Sally Durgan of Portland; two sisters, Lenore Schumann of Old Saybrook and Sheila Farrell of Cromwell. Bill has five grandchildren, Ashley Foley Avola married to Greg living in Manhattan, Meghan Foley of Middletown, William E. Wrang IV and Catharine Wrang of Middletown, and Thien Wrang of Durham.

Bill loved and cherished his family. Bill and Alice celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary in September 2014 with their family. Besides his love for his family he treasured his time at Stannard Beach in Westbrook, where he spent summers enjoying sailing, swimming and time with family and friends.

The funeral liturgy will be held Saturday, Jan. 24, at 11 a.m., at St. Mary Czestochowa Church, Middletown. Burial will be in Pine Grove Cemetery. Friends may call at Biega Funeral Home, 3 Silver St., Middletown, today, Jan. 23, from 4-7 p.m.

In lieu of flowers, those who wish may send donations to the Dr. William E. Wrang Memorial Scholarship at Xavier High School in Middletown.

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

Colchester

Christine Phaup Kopp

Christine Phaup Kopp, 49, of Long-meadow, Mass., passed peacefully from this world surrounded by beloved friends and family Friday, Jan. 9, at St. Francis Hospital, Hartford, after courageously battling cancer.



She brought inspiration and hope to so many during her life and her fight. She is survived by her parents, Pat and Fran Phaup, her brother-in-law Donald Therrien and her nephew, Oliver Therrien, all currently of Colchester; her extended family; her dedicated and loving boyfriend, Terry Ditmar of Longmeadow, Mass.; and many dear friends.

Christine was predeceased in 2014 by her big sister, Mary Anne Therrien.

Christine was born in New Britain, graduated from Woodrow Wilson High School in Middletown and from the Middlesex Community College Radiologic Technology Program. She had a 25-year career doing mostly vascular ultrasound as a tech, lead tech and supervisor. She was an adored daughter, sister, auntie, best friend and colleague; a connoisseur, gardener, dog-lover, traveler and athlete who ran, biked, swam and played for a Cure and summited Mt. Rainier in June 2013 with Terry, in support of Mary Anne's fight against cancer. Christine's beauty, strength, love, laughter and friendship will be profoundly missed.

In accordance with her wishes, there will be no wake or funeral; rather, a Celebration of Christine's Life will be held later this year.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the American Cancer Society in Memory of Mary Anne Therrien or to the PedigreeFoundation.org in memory of Christine Phaup Kopp.

From the Editor's Desk

Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

I got a call Tuesday from George Allingham of Marlborough. He said that at around 5 a.m. that morning, he happened to look out the window of his Buckboard Lane home and saw three bobcats in his driveway. He suspected it was a mother bobcat and her two nearly-grown children, whom she was teaching how to hunt.

George watched as the three meandered down the driveway, curved around a fence and walked into the woods.

While they didn't cause any damage, it was definitely quite the sight. "They looked like little lions," he said.

And George was also quite relieved the family cat was in the house when the bobcats were lurking about.

Bobcat sightings seem to be on the rise in the area. Just last week, our sister paper the *Citizen* wrote about several recent spottings in nearby Glastonbury.

Now, bobcats don't pose much of a threat to humans. You leave them alone and they'll just go about their business. But pets are a different story. Cats and small dogs could be easy prey for a bobcat.

So perhaps folks in the Marlborough area would do wise to heed George's advice: "Keep your animals in, folks."

* * *

Well, this is a new one. A man down in Georgia got busted by the cops last week for DWE.

What's that, you ask? Why simple: Driving While Eating.

Madison Turner of Alabama was driving down a highway outside Atlanta, enjoying a double quarter-pounder with cheese from McDonald's. He got pulled over by police, and issued a ticket violating Georgia's distracted driving law.

Turner told ABC's Atlanta affiliate WSB-TV the officer who pulled him over told him three times, "You can't just go down the road eating a hamburger." The officer told Turner he had been watching him eat the burger for about two miles.

"Maybe I was enjoying the burger too much; I needed to tone it down," Turner told the station. "I was certainly willing to do so, but I didn't expect to be fined or punished."

According to the Associated Press, there's nothing in Georgia's distracted driver law about food. The statute only states that drivers can't engage in actions that distract them from operating a vehicle safely.

I guess you could argue that sentence is vague enough it could be open to interpretation, but Turner's lawyer, William Head, told WSB-TV he expects the charge to get tossed since many drivers, himself included, eat and drive.

"I've only seen something like this charge when there's an accident," Head said. "There was no accident here, so the fact that this man was charged with eating and driving is a first for me."

Turner is due in court Feb. 3.

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When I'm reading up on movies I've either just seen on TV or am thinking of seeing, I always like to read the movie reviews, and the reviews I seek out first are those of the late Roger Ebert. Ebert was of course one half of TV's *Siskel & Ebert*, that great movie review show. But he was also the film critic for the *Chicago Sun-Times*, and his critiques were syndicated and ran in lots of different papers across the country.

I respected Ebert's opinion a great deal; he had sound reasons for what he liked and what he didn't like, and I found myself agreeing with him more often than not. But there was another reason I liked reading Ebert's reviews too: The man just knew how to write. He had a true passion for films, and you could see that in his writing. How good was he? In 1975, he won the Pulitzer Prize – the first film critic ever to do so.

And while reading his words about a movie he loved could be great, some of the best Ebert moments over the years came in reviews of movies he hated. Just hated. Because Ebert wasn't one to mince words; he wasn't a "well, I didn't much care for it" type. If he hated a movie, he didn't hold back.

The reviews of movies he hated became so popular over the years that, several years ago, he grouped a bunch of them together and published them in an anthology (titled, appropriately, *I Hated, Hated, Hated This Movie*). Over the weekend I was cracking up when I came

across a webpage that listed some particularly awesome lines of hate from Ebert reviews over the years. Here are some highlights:

On the 2010 film *The Last Airbender*: "*The Last Airbender* is an agonizing experience in every category I can think of and others still waiting to be invented."

On 2005's *A Lot Like Love*: "To call *A Lot Like Love* dead in the water is an insult to water."

On 2008's *The Bucket List*: "I urgently advise hospitals: Do not make the DVD available to your patients; there may be an outbreak of bedpans thrown at TV screens."

On 2008's *The Spirit*: "To call the characters cardboard is to insult a useful packing material."

On 2011's *Seven Days in Utopia*: "I would rather eat a golf ball than see this movie again."

On 1999's *200 Cigarettes*: "Maybe another 200 cigarettes would have helped; coughing would be better than some of this dialogue."

On 1976's *Diary of Forbidden Dreams*: "If [a talented director has] made several good films, chances are that sooner or later someone will give him the money to make a supremely bad one. I wonder how much [producer] Carlo Ponti gave [director] Roman Polanski to make *Diary of Forbidden Dreams*. Ten cents would have been excessive."

On 1993's *Breaking the Rules*: "It is a long, painful lapse of taste, tone and ordinary human feeling."

On 2011's *The Human Centipede II (Full Sequence)*: "The film is reprehensible, dismaying, ugly, artless and an affront to any notion, however remote, of human decency."

On 2009's *Transformers: Revenge of the Fallen*: "If you want to save yourself the ticket price, go into the kitchen, cue up a male choir singing the music of hell, and get a kid to start banging pots and pans together. Then close your eyes and use your imagination."

On the end of 2004's *The Village*: "To call it an anticlimax would be an insult not only to climaxes but to prefixes. ... It's so witless, in fact, that when we do discover the secret, we want to rewind the film so we don't know the secret anymore. And then keep on rewinding, and rewinding, until we're back at the beginning, and can get up from our seats and walk backward out of the theater and go down

the up escalator and watch the money spring from the cash register into our pockets."

On 1988's *Last Rites*: "Many films are bad. Only a few declare themselves the work of people deficient in taste, judgment, reason, tact, morality and common sense. Was there no one connected with this project who read the screenplay, considered the story, evaluated the proposed film and vomited?"

On 2007's *The Revolver*: "Some of the acting is better than the film deserves. Make that all of the acting. Actually, the film stock itself is better than the film deserves. You know when sometimes a film catches fire inside a projector? If it happened with this one, I suspect the audience might cheer."

On 2011's *Battle: Los Angeles*: "Young men: If you attend this crap with friends who admire it, tactfully inform them they are idiots. Young women: If your date likes this movie, tell him you've been thinking it over, and you think you should consider spending some time apart."

On 2000's *Battlefield Earth*: "*Battlefield Earth* is like taking a bus trip with someone who has needed a bath for a long time. It's not merely bad; it's unpleasant in a hostile way."

On 1997's *Mr. Magoo*: "*Mr. Magoo* is transcendently bad. It soars above ordinary badness as the eagle outreaches the fly. There is not a laugh in it. Not one. I counted."

On 1998's *Armageddon*: "No matter what they're charging to get in, it's worth more to get out."

On 2011's *Freddy Got Fingered*: "This movie doesn't scrape the bottom of the barrel. This movie isn't the bottom of the barrel. This movie isn't below the bottom of the barrel. This movie doesn't deserve to be mentioned in the same sentence with barrels."

And last but certainly not least, Ebert's thoughts on 1994's *North*: "I hated this movie. Hated, hated, hated, hated, hated this movie. Hated it. Hated every simpering stupid vacant audience-insulting moment of it. Hated the sensibility that thought anyone would like it. Hated the implied insult to the audience by its belief that anyone would be entertained by it."

I'm going to go out on a limb here – I don't think he was too fond of that one.

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See you next week.