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Last week, 10 acts performed at RHAM High School as part of the second annual Hebron's Got Talent. Pictured is Steadfast, a group of three friends who have been playing together for three years. The girls – from left, Justine Boonstra, Emily McDougall and Alex Currier – sang Ed Sheeran's "I See Fire."

Area Stars Come Out to Shine

by Geeta Schrayter

Anyone familiar with television shows such as *America's Got Talent* or *American Idol* knows with the judges' praise comes equal – if not more – criticism. But a very different scene unfolded at RHAM High School last Friday, where 10 acts took the stage for the second annual Hebron's Got Talent and received praise, praise and more praise.

The Feb. 6 event presented by Gilead Congregational Church consisted of individuals and groups who sang, danced, told jokes and played instruments – all hoping to win first place which included a trophy and \$250.

But even more important than earning top spot was the overall purpose of the event: raising money to support the children's scholarship programs of AHM Youth and Family Services and Hebron Parks and Recreation.

And as of Wednesday, Stephanie Haines, minister of missions at Gilead Congregational, said the event had raised more than \$4,300. She explained half of that money would go to AHM, while the other half would go to Hebron Parks and Recreation.

"That's important for families to know because a lot of times I think families don't want to say 'I can't afford sending my child to play

basketball or attend summer camp,' and there are these programs available."

Haines added, "Our hope and idea for the event is that we're watching people of all ages share their talents and every child, we feel, should have the opportunity to explore the talents and gifts God has given them."

"We are so pleased," she added of the event. "It was a wonderful outpouring of community support. We do these things certainly to benefit the children's scholarship funds, but also on another level it really brings the community together."

The event, she furthered, "just keeps getting better."

After each performance Friday, input was received from a team of three judges (although the winner would actually be determined by the audience). These were: Chris Ambrose, a retired educator with "more than half a century of viewing and listening to live theater and musical acts," according to the event program; Miss Connecticut 2014, Acacia Courtney, who the program described as "an accomplished jazz, musical theater and ballroom dancer"; and the 2014 Hebron's Got Talent winner, Aaron

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EHHS Baseball Coach Moves to Wesleyan

by John Tyczkowski

Scott Wosleger has been a fixture of baseball coaching in town for the past 20 years, and he's now bringing that experience to the collegiate level.

This weekend, he'll start coaching at Wesleyan University for the school's Division III baseball team.

Wosleger will coach first base for the Cardinals, and will be in charge of infielders and outfielders alike. He is one of three assistant coaches under head coach Mark Woodworth.

"I'm very excited about this next step," he said. "I'm fortunate to join a really good staff."

Under Woodworth, the university has been enjoying some notable success over the past 14 years. Most recently, the Cardinals notched two consecutive Little Three Championships in 2013 and 2014; they also won their first New England Small College Athletic Conference title last year and reached the NCAA regional finals while setting a school record for victories.

The position at Wesleyan is part-time, which Wosleger will balance with this job as an in-school suspension supervisor at Great Path Academy in Manchester.

"It works out well," he said. "Having the ability with my school schedule to be able to coach college is very advantageous."

Wosleger said his love for baseball stretches back all the way to his childhood days.

"My dad was a Little League coach. When I was 6 or 7 years old, I was the bat boy for his team," he said. "I loved the game, and I idol-

ized the older players. I became very interested in baseball at an early age."

Wosleger said that after playing baseball throughout high school, where he had a "pretty good" career, he continued his passion into college during his freshman year at the University of New Haven.

However, Wosleger said he transferred the following year to Iona College in New Rochelle, N.Y., in part because he wasn't getting too much playing time at UNH, but also because Iona College was a Division I school, unlike UNH.

"I enjoyed my career [at Iona] a lot," he said. "I especially loved playing third base on the team when we won the 1985 [Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference] championship."

After college, he said he took a break from baseball for a bit.

"I started working and I wanted to have a family, and didn't think too much about coaching," Wosleger said.

But before too long, he started Little League coaching, in 1995.

"When I got done with college, I was a little burned out, but then I ended up having three boys and I saw I guess my knowledge I had was worth trying to pass on," Wosleger said. "I met a guy who was a high school football coach and we became friends, and I was really intrigued and fascinated by what he did, and I started getting the bug to get to that level."

That was also when Wosleger decided to set some coaching career goals for himself.

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Scott Wosleger stands with his son Owen at third base. Wosleger coached the East Hampton High School Bellringers for nearly eight years, and each of his three sons were on the team at various times while they attended the high school. Wosleger departed the school system in December for a job with Wesleyan University's baseball team.



RHAM High School junior Emma Dokmanovich won the second annual Hebron's Got Talent with her jazz routine last week. She received praise from all three judges before ultimately being named winner by audience applause. Shown here, from left, are judges Chris Ambrose and Aaron Ouellette, Dokmanovich, and the third judge, Miss Connecticut 2014 Acacia Courtney.

Area Stars cont. from Front Page

Ouellette, who won with his original jazz composition.

There was no criticism to be found last Friday, as the show got started with a performance by the dance team Pizzazz, who danced to "You Can't Hurry Love" by the Supremes.

"Right on," Ambrose smiled regarding their performance.

"You were technically on point," added Courtney, while Ouellette said the 12 girls – who range in age from 9-11 – were "brave to get up there."

Next up was 13-year-old Abbey Perrin, who took the stage for her very first performance in front of an audience. She sang a rendition of Taylor Swift's "Blank Space" that had Ambrose telling her she had "great range" and Courtney saying, "You're beautiful and you performed the whole way through. Get up there and own it."

"You sang with confidence," Ouellette added. "You did a great job."

And the show continued on in that vein, as Peter Morse took the stage for some comedy. Courtney said "definitely made all of us laugh."

Ambrose added Morse had "great delivery and cadence."

After 15-year-old Aileigh Galante performed a tap routine to the late Aaliyah's "Are You That Somebody," Ouellette was left impressed with the way she was "always on beat" and had "a lot of energy."

Courtney was likewise impressed, sharing "You had me from the very beginning. Everything was there. You shined the entire time. You started and I was like 'I want her to be the next Miss Connecticut.'"

Emily Quesada took the stage after, accompanied by Owen Henderschedt on guitar. The two performed The Animals' "House of the Rising Sun" and made Ambrose exclaim, "It's a good thing I'm not actually [picking the winner], because this would clearly be a favorite."

Ouellette added, "You were soulful when you got into it," and Courtney called Quesada "amazing."

"You have a quiet confidence which can't be taught," she said, adding both Quesada and Henderschedt did "fantastic."

After a brief intermission, five more acts were left to perform including Jim Blair, who performed an original song that had Ambrose saying "that's my kind of music: guitar and a good vocal."

"You have a unique-sounding voice," Courtney added "It's easy to get lost in your music."

Meanwhile, Ouellette said Blair had a "gritty voice" and liked the truth behind his music.

The compliments continued through the end of the show, as the trio Steadfast performed Ed Sheeran's "I See Fire" and made Courtney exclaim, "You sounded beautiful. Definitely keep at it and don't lose your joy for singing."

Ouellette added he thought the group did "amazing" and Ambrose said "a three-part harmony: you can't beat it."

RHAM High School junior Emma Dokmanovich danced across the stage next with a jazz routine Courtney called "beautiful."

Ambrose added she was a "pleasure to watch" and Ouellette said she seemed "into it" and was "emotional."

After a family emergency made one of the

scheduled acts withdraw, RHAM students Brianna Tracey and Justin Gurry stepped in to fill the spot, performing Joni Mitchell's "A Case of You" that brought Ambrose back to the 1960s.

"Wow," he said. "I thought I was listening to Joni Mitchell. I thought I was back in a coffeehouse in the '60s."

"I liked the folk-style voice," Ouellette added. "The combination of the guitar and vocals – it worked well."

"You did a really great job, especially stepping in," Courtney added. "And thank you [for stepping in] because this was a special treat."

Rounding out the show were four students from the Golden Harp Irish Dance Company who performed traditional Irish step dancing with a twist – it was choreographed to "Levels" by Avicii.

"It never ceases to amaze me how effortless it looks when it's done right," Ambrose stated of Irish step dancing.

"I loved it," Courtney added. "Well done."

When all the performances and the praise from the judges had concluded, the audience decided the winner with the use of an applause meter, which measured and displayed the volume of applause by the audience. Claps, cheers, hoots and hollers echoed throughout the auditorium for everyone who performed, but with a score of 97, the top spot went to Dokmanovich, followed by Steadfast and Pizzazz, who tied at 87.

Taking the mic as MC during the show was Marlborough resident and Glastonbury High School teacher Mark Dursin. He shared this week, "The young people in our communities have so much talent."

He elaborated, saying "the dancers were fantastic - how do they move their feet so quickly? We had many different female singers, and I thought they were all excellent."

In addition, Dursin said "You know what else I liked? We also had two older gentlemen who were exploring their talents. Peter Morse is a grandfather from East Hampton who wanted to explore one of his passions - stand-up comedy. And Jim Blair recorded an album of music after [taking time off to start a family]. As I said during the show, I think these acts just remind us that it's never too late."

Speaking on which act was his favorite, Dursin admitted he was a bit biased since Henderschedt is his nephew.

However, he added "I don't know if I can answer that question, because I thought they were all wonderful. I will say, though, from the applause I was hearing at the end, I thought the group Steadfast was going to win. These three young ladies were so talented, and I could hear people chanting for them. But our winner, Emma Dokmanovich, was an extremely-talented dancer, and she absolutely deserved to take the top prize."

He concluded, "All in all, a great night, to support a great cause. I am honored to be a part of it, and I am already looking forward to next year."

As the show wound down last week, Dursin exclaimed, "Whatever your talent is, don't forget to celebrate it – and celebrate the talent of others."

And that's exactly what happened at the second annual Hebron's Got Talent.



Wosleger consults with a Mystic Schooners player at a game last summer. Coaching for the Schooners served to be Wosleger's gateway to coaching for Wesleyan.

Baseball Coach cont. from Front Page

"My wife Laurie thought I was crazy because I had a regular full-time job," he said, laughing. "But I said by the time I'm 35-40, I'll be coaching at the scholastic level."

In 2004, Wosleger applied for an assistant coach opening at East Hampton Middle School, but was in for a shock when the school offered him the head coaching position instead.

"It was definitely a very nice surprise," he said. "I managed to work it out with my full-time job [in sales]. I was leaving work every day at 2 p.m. to go coach."

He then revisited his goals again, and decided he wanted to coach high school next.

"The head coach at EHHS happened to resign and I put in for the job," he said. "It was a very lengthy process, but I got the job around this time of year in 2007."

It was at EHHS that Wosleger said he accomplished several important milestones, including leading the team to Shoreline Conference championship victories in 2008, 2011 and 2013.

"Actually, even counting the years we didn't win, we made it to the conference championships four years in a row," he said. "That's pretty cool."

In addition, 2011 was an extra-special year for the team, when, in addition to winning the Shoreline and Class S State championships, the Bellingers were voted the best team in the state by the Connecticut High School Coaches Association.

"It was pretty unbelievable to receive that award, because we were in the smallest division," he said. "But those six to eight coaches who voted us in know their stuff; they all have unbelievable track records."

"It never happened before, and it's a pretty safe bet it'll never happen again," he said. "The stars just aligned and some of the bigger teams on the radar just got beat and lost, and the team we beat was a pretty strong team."

On a more personal note, Wosleger said that, for each of those championship victories, he had a son on the winning team.

"It was Tyler in 2008, A.J. in 2011 and Owen in 2013," he said. "One of my sons reminded me, 'Did you know you won a championship with each of us?' and I thought that was pretty neat."

Wosleger himself was also named Shoreline Conference Coach of the year in 2008.

Also, one of Wosleger's players, Marvin Gorgas, was drafted in the 13th round to the Seattle Mariners in 2014.

"That's a first in town, and a high pick for a high school player," he said.

Gorgas is currently playing in the Mariners' minor league system, for the team's Rookie A-ball team in the Arizona League.

Wosleger said he was happy to have had such a career at the high school.

"In high school coaching, it doesn't always end well, unfortunately. Sometimes it's a political thing, sometimes a coach makes an unforgivable mistake," he said. "I'm very fortunate to have ended my time at EHHS on a really good note, and in a good spot among everybody."

While coaching at EHHS, which was a stipended part-time position he balanced with his day job, Wosleger then set his next goal: to coach for a college by the time he was 50.

"I'm a year late, but that's ok," he quipped.

The road to Wesleyan started for Wosleger through coaching last summer for the Mystic Schooners, a New England Collegiate Baseball League (NECBL) team based out of Groton.

"I had been inquiring with a couple NECBL teams out of Newport and Plymouth about coaching for them," he said. "Someone put me in touch with the Schooners and I said, 'If you have any openings, I'd be very interested.'"

After some back-and-forth, Wosleger began with the Schooners as an assistant coach, but a few weeks before the season began, switched roles.

"Their hitting coach decided he wasn't going to show up, so they elevated me to that position," he said. "That was another instance I was very fortunate, I was given a great opportunity by the head coach down there."

For most of that summer, the Schooners led the league in hitting and offense, Wosleger said.

"That was something that raised peoples' eyebrows all over, when you're able to coach at that [Division I] level and have some good success in that league," he said.

And then as it happened, Wosleger said, another Schooners coach was an assistant coach at Wesleyan University, and he approached Wosleger halfway through the season.

"He told me, 'We have a position opening at the university, I could talk to the head coach for you, are you interested?'" Wosleger said. "They said 'You live 10 miles from the school; it's worth a conversation.'"

"I thought of it as a really good opportunity that would be really hard to pass up," he said. "And also, they were interested in me."

At the same time, Wosleger said it was very hard for him to leave East Hampton public schools.

"The program is a phenomenal one in town, I wasn't sure I wanted to leave," he said.

He said he credits a number of people in helping him make the decision, including his wife and East Hampton Public Schools' athletic director Shaun Russell, who went to Wesleyan.

"Laurie, who also teaches at the middle school, has been so incredibly supportive over the years," Wosleger said. "She's the first one giving me a hug after a championship, and she's also understanding when it's a bad season and you come home and you're not in the greatest mood."

As for Russell, Wosleger said he's been "a great friend over the years and a phenomenal resource."

"I was very open with him, and told him I wanted his help in making the decision," he said. "Without him this would've been very difficult. As it was, it took me a whole month to decide."

"But my youngest son, who plays for East Hampton, said he was very supportive of it, and said he wondered what was taking me so long to decide," he laughed.

Wosleger accepted the Wesleyan position late last year, around the beginning of December, and said he was very open with letting the team at EHHS know.

"I had a lot of great relationships with the players over the years," he said. "The relationships with the kids are some of the biggest highlights of my personal career. Those are the kinds of things that no one can ever take away."

"If I never coach another game, I'll have those memories," he said.

Wosleger also said he wanted to give credit to everyone who was involved with the baseball team at EHHS.

"We had some good players, a great coaching staff and Shaun's been a phenomenal athletic director," he said. "Being able to go out on top with a good overall record is great, but it's those relationships that matter the most."

AHM Winter Cabaret to Raise Funds for Kids

by Geeta Schrayter

After focusing on classical music the past few years, the Hebron Women's Club, AHM Youth and Family Services and the RHAM Education Foundation have selected a different type of event for this year's fundraiser – a Winter Cabaret.

At this semi-formal dinner dance, attendees can listen to live music, dine, dance and socialize all while raising money for different community needs.

According to a press release on the event from AHM Executive Director Joel Rosenberg, "The proceeds from this gala will be dedicated to the needs of local children including camperships, grants to RHAM faculty for educational projects and initiatives of direct benefit to students, lunch programs, scholarships and aid to families seeking mental health services."

The event takes place Saturday, Feb. 21 at 6:30 p.m. in the ballroom at Georgina's Restaurant on Route 44 in Bolton, and includes a three-course buffet and a cash bar. Throughout the evening, there will be also live music from the Little Big Band, a 15-piece band the press release describes as "dynamic," with "a repertoire including popular swing and big band

music from traditional standards, through today's contemporary swing sounds, with a little big band rock 'n' roll and rhythm 'n' blues added."

Speaking on the band this week, Marcia Tecca, treasurer of the Hebron Women's Club, said "I've heard this group's music and they're just absolutely great. They're wonderful." She added that for a 15-person band, "they sound so big; their name is appropriate."

Tecca added the event would be "just a lovely night out for people to get together and eat and dance and listen to music."

She explained the idea behind the cabaret was to keep the three groups collaborating with one another – something that began in 2011 – since it's worked so well in the past.

"The main reason [for the event] was to keep these three groups doing something together. We have a history of bringing the Hartford Symphony Orchestra and it was time to do something different," she stated.

AHM Fundraising Assistant Tonja Russo elaborated, saying, "For years we did the Hartford Symphony Orchestra and that was very well-attended. People loved it, but with fundraisers there are always opportunities for

new and exciting ideas."

"It was really just coming up with a new and creative idea to promote awareness of what the three organizations do and what the mission is," she stated, adding the three groups "share a similar vision and they've been working together to create different ideas to help support the community and improve and enrich the quality of community life."

John Grasso, president of the RHAM Education Foundation, felt similarly.

"My impression is that usually community groups are scrambling after the same donors. We see our groups as complementary of one another, and able to do things together which we could not do alone. I am not aware of any analogous collaboration," he said.

Tecca added the groups enjoyed working together, and "at times we duplicate our efforts separately, so it's just really delightful to be doing it together. We don't always get to know each other when we're separate but now we know all the players and missions so there's a lot more respect going on – and friendships. It's been a really, really nice thing."

Tecca concluded her hopes for the cabaret were that "people just have an enjoyable

evening and when we come back to do it next year they'll remember that."

Grasso and Russo were also hopeful for the event's success.

"My hope for this event is that it further strengthens the bond which our [three] organizations have forced over the course of our joint sponsorship of cultural events benefitting the Region 8 community," Grasso stated.

Russo meanwhile, said "our hope is for a large attendance obviously and the opportunity for people who are in attendance to have a good time and to understand what the missions are of the three organizations. "It's really all about the children."

And that's literally what the theme of the cabaret is: "It's all about the children."

Rosenberg continued in his release, "This year's 'A Winter Cabaret' is meant to bring together residents, local and state leaders, and friends from near and far. The Winter Cabaret is a great opportunity to introduce a new annual tradition of dining, live band music and dancing."

Tickets for the event cost \$50 per person. To download a ticket order form online, go to ahmyouth.org or call 860-228-9405.

Linddy Resigns from Andover Selectmen, School Boards

by Geeta Schrayter

Less than a week after Board of Selectmen and Board of Education member Jay Linddy shared his plans to run as a petitioning candidate in the May elections, he resigned from both boards.

Linddy had been serving as vice first selectman and chairman of the school board.

During the Republican caucus held Jan. 13, Linddy wasn't endorsed by the Republican Party for either of the boards. However at that time Linddy said he had no intention of running for another term, as he was looking to take some playwriting courses and focus on other things.

But at the beginning of last week First Selectman Bob Burbank, along with Linddy and selectwoman Elaine Buchardt – none of whom were endorsed at their respective party's caucus – expressed their plans to run as petitioning candidates.

Linddy had said he'd been asked by residents to continue on the boards and see the completion of some projects – like replacing the roof at Andover Elementary School – and was planning to remain on the board for one more term if re-elected.

But the week ended differently than it began, and Linddy submitted letters of resignation to the town clerk's office effective Thursday, Feb. 5, saying only, "I have enjoyed my time serving the residents of Andover."

Speaking about his decision this week,

Linddy again mentioned his desire to focus on playwriting. He explained he was working on a play that will raise funds for the Andover Food Bank – and that he was further behind than he expected.

In addition, Linddy, who said he's been on the boards for "roughly 24 years" said, "If you don't like what you're doing you don't try to do it" and asked rhetorically, "Is it fun going to meetings?"

"I just get tired of seeing people argumentative," Linddy continued. "Disagreeing is great among everybody but it's going to be a political year and a political election and I hope they keep it nice. Disagree with what you want but don't make it dirty."

Linddy praised the boards he's served on, specifically mentioning the Board of Education where he worked with "some great, great members" and "we all worked together."

Linddy added, "We've been very fortunate the last 12 years to have the superintendent that we have and we have some major projects which I really wanted to do but there's this play, and you just get tired. You've got to enjoy life. I have something to give and that's the gift of writing."

He concluded, "I've done everything that I could and I thank the towns people for letting me serve them and I've got so much more I can offer," he said regarding his playwriting, add-

ing, "That's what I enjoy and the older you get you've got to understand what you can enjoy in life. I'm getting tired and it's just not worth it [being on the boards]."

Although Jeff Maguire, the Democratic candidate for first selectman had asked Linddy to resign at previous meetings, alleging he had misappropriated funds, Linddy said that was "absolutely not" the reason he had decided to resign after all.

"All over a case of beer – are you kidding me?" he said, referring to Maguire's criticism of Linddy for purchasing a case of beer for a band that played at a concert in town last summer, and then submitting the receipt of the purchase to the town for reimbursement. Maguire had also wondered what the liability would have been to the town if a band member had gotten into an accident after the concert and killed someone.

But Burbank, who said Linddy's resignation was "disappointing," said he thought Linddy's decision *did* have to do with the behavior of some residents.

Burbank stated, "I think that Jay has done a lot on the programs for the kids and the recreation programs and brought a lot of knowledge through the years to the Board of Selectmen and it seems a crime that somebody makes a mistake and then he's berated at meetings for political reasons."

He added the reason he felt Linddy resigned was that "he was constantly harassed by people – by different people running for office."

Burbank furthered, "He takes it very personally."

Speaking on the work Linddy has put in for the town, Burbank shared, "He's just done many, many things for the townspeople" and "if someone needs something, he's usually one of the first to run out there and try to help somebody out."

Burbank concluded he was "a little shocked" to receive Linddy's resignation.

"I didn't anticipate this myself and whether it was a spur of the moment decision or not – I can't speak for Jay," he said. "But like I said, I think he does take things personal. Sometimes he's not the easiest person in the world to work with, but he does have a good heart."

Also disappointed with Linddy's decision was schools superintendent Andrew Maneggia, who said Linddy had been "very committed to Andover Elementary School and to his position as chairman of the Board of Education. There's no question about that."

Maneggia added frankly, "I'm disappointed. He has been, for many years, very committed to the town of Andover and has provided a lot of services to the community on a volunteer basis that will create a serious void for the community and leave big shoes to fill."

Colchester's WJMS Project Faces Deadline

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

After Tecton architects presented the final option for the new William J. Johnston Middle School building Feb. 5, the boards of selectmen, finance and education decided the rush is on – the school renovation and expansion project needs to be approved and plans submitted to the state before June 30.

The project carries a \$48,656,713 price tag. However, due to state reimbursement, the cost to the town is expected to be \$20,664,232.

The option combines renovating many aspects of the building, demolishing the older 1950s and 1960s wing, and building a new two-story main section for classrooms. It also includes the renovating of the second gym and renovating a new area for Pupil Services which service the whole district. Pupil Services currently is in an area set to be demolished.

Barbara Joslin of Tecton stressed that, based on enrollment projections, the state actually would have allowed a larger school than the one the building committee decided on – but the committee decided to keep the new-look school to solely what is needed.

The building will feature two teams for each grade, made up of four teachers each.

“We will demolish the 1954 wing, the two modulars, the 1962 wing and the 1966 wing,” Joslin said. “In the state’s eyes, it’s three projects. We’re assuming no reimbursement for the gym, but we may get some reimbursement.”

The building for WJMS alone would be a total of \$44,754,213 with a cost to Colchester of \$17,261,700. The section for Pupil Services totals \$1,627,500, but with reimbursement is a cost to Colchester of \$1,127,532. The gym would cost \$2,275,000 before any reimbursement. According to Joslin, the district must

prove to the state that the gym is part of the curriculum as it is a second gym. If they can do that, there will be reimbursement.

Selectman Bill Curran questioned why the project seemed substantially higher for the school portion than the previously rejected project, which combined the school, the senior center and the community center. That \$57 million proposal was soundly rejected by voters at a 2013 referendum.

“It’s a completely different project,” Building Committee Chairman Tom Tyler said. “There are costs here that were not included in the other project like demolition.”

“The voters said the original price was too high and we’re coming in higher” for the school-only section, Curran said. “How do we reconcile that?”

But, while, in the 2013 project, renovations and additions to the middle school came to \$42.4 million, Board of Education Chairman Ron Goldstein stressed the overall cost of this building proposal “is \$9 million less than the other project.”

“The second gym and the pupil services were in the community center section before,” Board of Finance Chairman Rob Tarlov said. “That’s \$6 million that’s in this project. Demolition is a significant addition.”

Curran wondered how voters would react to the senior center no longer being part of the project. Why it was in the project two years ago was town officials felt the existing center on Norwich Avenue was in dire need of repair.

“There has been some activity to move the senior center along, but nothing public yet,” First Selectman Stan Soby said. “We’re also assuming no state reimbursement for the gym.”

Tarlov pointed out that it’s a “huge cost” to demolish the gym and it’s better to renovate it and use it for the school and community.

“We would be harshly criticized to demolish a good gym that the school and town needs,” Goldstein said.

“It’s a part that the school needs,” selectwoman Rosemary Coyle said. “It’s part of the academic program.”

WJMS Principal Chris Bennett explained the gym has an academic purpose, since the school sometimes have three physical education classes going on at once. The gym is also used by the community during the evening and weekend hours. There is also room for the second gym to double as a stage.

Soby also clarified the cost to town is almost half of what the previous rejected project was. The rejected project was \$38 million and this project is \$20 million, Soby said.

“We can’t talk in relation to the former project,” Coyle said. “We’re not talking about the same things. The project is efficiently done and works with the enrollment decline.”

Soby said town officials also need to communicate to voters how much the debt service will be dropping and how that will impact the project.

“There were other issues about voting [the former project] down than money,” Tarlov said, adding that there were concerns with the prior project about the seniors and students being too close, and the project being too big.

Another cost-savings measure due to enrollment, Tarlov clarified, was that once the four-teacher structure was instated, there would be six fewer teachers overall in the building.

“It’s a flex design if population were to

grow,” Bennett said.

However when the three boards got ready to discuss the referendum date, they realized they were too close for comfort.

“If we miss June 30, we go into the next year and the cost goes up,” Goldstein said.

The building project’s next step is for information meetings to the public including why it needs to be done and how it’s being covered financially.

Soby explained that with information meetings coming during budget time and the need for the finances to be put together, the building could not come for an April referendum. Soby said there would not be enough time for Chief Financial Officer Maggie Cosgrove to run the numbers and show how it’s going to affect the mill rate, questions that will come up during public information meetings.

“We need to show there’s long-term value for the next generation,” Soby said. Tarlov also commented town officials need to be able to show the debt service currently coming off of the town.

“Could we do May and get special legislation if possible again?” Goldstein asked.

The boards then decided they would need an early June referendum.

“If it’s turned down, we try for special legislation,” Goldstein said. “If there’s no special legislation, it’s gone for this year.”

“There’s some risk there,” Tyler said.

“Taking the extra time to provide the information is a benefit,” Soby said.

The building committee will now be scheduling public information meetings relating to the project.

Colchester Selectmen Choose New Plow Driver

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

The Board of Selectmen moved last Thursday, Feb. 5 to terminate its contract with Windsor-based Action Jackson for the job of plowing all four schools in town, and hired second-lowest bidder Clark’s Landscaping of Colchester.

According to Director of Public Works Jim Paggioli, Michael Jackson, owner of Action Jackson, did not perform the job as the contract stated and, after the town sent him a letter detailing issues it had with his work, Jackson “realized he was not capable” of the job.

Jackson could not be reached for comment for this story.

Paggioli seemed particularly displeased with how Jackson’s three-person contracting team (which included Jackson) handled the blizzard of Jan. 26-27 – which dumped about two feet of snow on the town.

In a memo to First Selectman Stan Soby, Paggioli wrote that “for the most part of the storm, the contractor maintained emergency access to each of the schools at all time.” However, he added, inspection of Colchester Elementary School and William J. Johnston Middle School at 10 a.m. Wednesday, Jan. 28, indicated that parking areas along the Pupil Services section of WJMS were “undone,” and that “stockpiles” of snow were left that would interfere with bus-turning movements at WJMS, while at CES, “the parking areas along the facilities building were undone, along with the bus entrances.”

Meanwhile, at Jack Jackter Intermediate

School, Paggioli wrote, “the stockpiles that remained within the parking area and a significant stockpile located to the west of the building within the paved area would be required to be moved off that paved area prior to school opening.”

In the statement, Paggioli said Jackson was told that all curb lines were to be made visible and that all work at the schools should be completed in accordance to the contract prior to the contractor leaving that evening, so schools could open the following morning. However, by that evening, the large stockpile at JJIS had not been moved and town staff had to complete the 2.5 hours of work.

Paggioli also wrote town staff had made Jackson aware it would be necessary to start work at 4 a.m. Wednesday, Jan. 29, in order to address “refreeze and icing issues at the schools.” However, John Jones, director of highway operations for the town, attempted “multiple times” that morning starting at 4 a.m. to get in touch with Jackson, finally reaching him at 5:30 a.m. It was then Jackson said he was en route, Paggioli wrote. Paggioli wrote that Jones felt Jackson “would not respond in sufficient time to de-ice the lots in time for bus traffic and education staff arrival.” Jones told town staff to do the work instead.

“In the above storm response, the contractor undermanned the work and did not perform in accordance with the contract and then further demonstrated that they could not respond in accordance with the contract requirements,”

Paggioli said in the memo. “Despite having the adequate tools and staffing levels presented to award of the contract, the actual performance of the work has not met the contract requirements without the significant augmentation of work force by town staff.”

The cleanup of the following week’s storm, which went from Feb. 1-2, was also criticized in the memo. Paggioli wrote town staff had to offer assistance “in regards to adequate pushback or opening all of the parking spaces in three of the schools.” He said four and a half hours were spent by town staff to “find the curb line” in order to ensure parking spaces were adequately plowed.

In short, Paggioli wrote, “Based upon the staffing provided and performance of the contractor noted above when both average and above-average snowfall occurs, it is my opinion that the contractor has demonstrated that his firm is not capable of meeting the contract requirements when these events occur.”

Paggioli recommended the contract with Jackson be terminated, and the selectmen choose the bidder who came in next-lowest when the snow removal contract was awarded last fall.

The next-lowest bidder for the contract had been Clark’s Landscaping at \$92,000 followed by Bakaj Construction at \$98,000 and Herbert Butler Company at \$118,000.

“We need someone up there,” Paggioli said at the Board of Selectmen meeting. “I went back

to the bid and contacted the second-lowest qualified bidder.”

Paggioli said Clark’s was still interested in the work and has the tools and staff.

“He’s presented a list of equipment and staff,” Paggioli said of Clark’s. “They have submitted background checks. He owns or leases the vehicles which the contract allows leasing.”

Since the contract for the schools’ plowing is paid monthly, the remaining two months of the bid amount would be given to Clark’s which would equal \$36,800.

However, Tammy Bakaj, whose husband owns Bakaj Construction, spoke during public comment at the meeting to express her concerns over the handling of the contract.

“You should consider why the recent contract has gone awry,” Bakaj said. “Does the contractor have the capacity to perform the duties? Do they own or lease the vehicles?”

Bakaj also said Clark’s had a discrepancy in its bid. Paggioli, later in the meeting, clarified this, stating that, during the initial opening of the bid, it was found Clark’s had a small typographical error, which was addressed early on. He said it does meet the standards of being a legitimate bid.

“As a teacher, I’m concerned with rush decisions,” Bakaj said.

The selectmen moved to approve the termination of Jackson’s contract and enter in contract with Clark’s Landscaping. Clark’s began doing the town’s schools Feb. 6.

New East Hampton Police Home Up for Discussion

by John Tyczkowski

Tuesday, the Town Council discussed what to do about aging police facilities, and Police Chief Sean Cox was on hand to further expound upon the seriousness of the matter.

"Everyone is talking about how time is running out," he said. "Well, I can tell you that for the police department, the sands are well out of the hourglass for us."

Cox mentioned that the police cruiser motor pool on East Main Street is hampering police operations, and said the huge volumes of snow have only accelerated parking issues for officers and the public, and Town Hall staff.

"We need to decide how much further we're going to go down this road, how much longer we're going to put people through this, how much longer we'll be down there in a police department that's just not functioning where it should be," he said.

Cox endorsed a vacant West High Street property, mentioned in the town facilities committee report, as a good choice for a replacement police station.

"It's on [Route] 66, it's available now to improve the existing structure there, versus using the Center School location which could keep us trapped downstairs for a considerable amount of time," he said. "As far as what's been run past me, West High Street looks far more applicable for an opportunity for us in the short-term future."

Councilor Ted Hintz Jr. said he was "well aware" of the situation, but asked Cox to bear with the council as they did their due diligence

on all options in front of them.

"I don't want to jump into something just because it happens to be there, and it might not necessarily be to the best outcome for the town in the long run," he said. "As you said, anything's better than here, and I understand that, but unfortunately, 'here' has been here a long time, and we do need a little more time to figure things out."

Councilor George Pfaffenbach said he supported moving forward with the West High Street location.

"It's ideal for the town, and, if we could get a fire station there at some point too, it's a great stepping point toward a public safety complex," he said. "I don't think there's another better solution available, including Center School."

Councilor Patience Anderson suggested revisiting the vacant J.C. Barton building in the Village Center as an alternative fix for the police facilities problem.

That option had been discussed at a previous town council meeting in January.

"It's a good, solid building, it's in the center of town, and it could be great for some quick renovations," she said.

Anderson also called West High Street "the easy solution," but expressed doubts as to whether it was best for the town.

Also, Anderson said the council should keep in mind the atmosphere of the town, which she said might not be conducive to major projects.

"Timing is very important, as far as putting something forward to the tax payers goes," she

said. "I think nerves are a little bit raw at this point, and I think it's more important to have the right solution than the quick solution."

Town Council Vice Chairman Kevin Reich said the two virtues the West High Street location and the Barton building had in common were that they would be the fastest to move into, and he was in favor of investigating those possibilities.

"Center School is not going to move quickly, I think we've seen that," he said. "We can't wait for another three or four years. If we wait that long, the situation for the police department is just going to be magnified."

"And people in the public who have approached me indicated they aren't willing to wait that long," he said.

Councilor Mark Philhower said he supported the West High Street property, but with using a long-term lease instead of purchasing the land.

"If we could get a 10-15-year lease for that property, we could still go ahead with the Center School option and then we might be able to bring the police back into the town center down the road," he said. "Also, I'm still not convinced getting rid of Center School as a school is best option."

Councilor Phillip Visintainer said he was in favor of looking into the long-term lease plan for the building on West High Street as well, but also supported looking into the Barton building as an option for the police department.

The Barton building "is in the place I like

better, the Village Center," he said. "It may not work out, but I think it's definitely worth looking at."

Visintainer also indicated in contrast to the West High Street location, the Barton building would only have sufficient space for a police department; it would not be big enough for a public safety complex encompassing both police and fire.

In addition, regarding Center School, Visintainer said that if the town decided to bring back town departments that are currently not located in the town hall, such as the Judge of Probate office, located in Marlborough, and town annex offices, there might not be space for the police department.

"And it would be especially true if we also wanted to bring in the Board of Education, or the Chatham Health Department," he said.

Council Chairwoman Barbara Moore agreed for the need for quick action.

"The conditions down there have only been getting worse and we're opening ourselves up for a lawsuit if we don't act," she said. "Something's going to happen."

Moore said she thought investigating leasing both properties was a good course of action.

The council members made it clear that they were not endorsing any specific course of action at the meeting, but were considering and investigating all the possibilities open to the town.

East Hampton School Board Discusses Budget

by John Tyczkowski

After taking two months off due to vacations and persistent snow days, and with budget season kicking into gear, the Board of Education scheduled a special meeting Wednesday night to get back on track.

The board gathered in the middle school library to hear Superintendent of Schools Diane Dugas' presentation on her proposed budget for the 2015-16 year.

Dugas has proposed a 3.2 percent increase, or about \$907,000 more than last year, bringing the spending package to \$29.17 million.

Dugas began her presentation Wednesday by giving an overview of the town's return on its education investments over the past year.

She read from a long list of accolades, including East Hampton High School being ranked 45 out of 100 on a list of the top high schools in the state, high school students consistently scoring above national and state averages on their SATs and recognition for East Hampton's K-12 focus on community service.

"Our district is doing very well right now, and we certainly have a lot to celebrate," she said.

Along those lines, Dugas displayed a chart showing how East Hampton has one of the most effective return on investments in terms of per pupil spending.

For the 2013-14 school year, East Hampton spent about \$14,000 per pupil – less than schools in its reference group as well as the state average.

However, the district also outscored several schools in its reference group on combined PSAT scores, including Windsor, whose per pupil spending is about \$2,500 more.

"We're doing more with less here," Dugas said. "We spend wisely."

Along those lines, she said the focus of the proposed budget would be fiscal conservatism without sacrificing instructional effectiveness.

"This year we're saying slow and steady wins

the race," she said. "We're looking at how we can more gradually get where we need to be, but still make significant progress."

Last year, the Board of Education received a 2.67 percent increase in its budget, totaling about \$28.27 million. That was down from the 3.07 percent increase it received in the previous year.

The largest drivers of the budget request, as usual, Dugas said, would be certified salaries at 51 percent of the request, followed by benefits at 17 percent, and classified salaries and wages at 13 percent.

"These three categories make up 81 percent of our budget. They're all contract-negotiated so we don't have any leverage there until negotiations come around," she said.

However, according to a graph from the presentation, the board would actually be saving money this year in areas such as buses and fuel, and utilities.

As proposed, spending would drop by nearly \$91,000 in utilities due to lowered heating oil prices, and about \$51,000 on buses and fuel due to "transportation savings," Dugas said.

At the same time, Dugas said one of the biggest cost savings efforts for the town was its decision to implement a high deductible insurance plan for district employees.

"East Hampton is on the cutting edge. We're the only school district in the state with zero employee contribution for certified and non-union staff," she said. "Our insurance representatives have been really complementary over where we're at."

Another significant savings effort came from staff reductions through attrition, Dugas said, as well as special education program development allowing special education students to stay in the district.

"As people have left, we've stopped and thought, 'Do we need to replace them? Can we rethink how their duties might be reassigned?'"

she said. "And we have also developed internal programs that have reduced outplacement costs significantly."

"And it's important to remember those aren't one-time cost-savers, they save us year after year," she said.

Dugas also addressed enrollment numbers. As projected, Center School would stand to gain 11 students and the high school would stand to gain four students. Memorial School and the middle school could lose 25 and 14 students respectively.

Overall, the district could have a net loss of 24 students.

Dugas addressed what she said was a common question, of why the board budget continues to increase while enrollment declines.

"The cost savings from declining enrollment is offset by the implementation of new programs and resources to support state initiatives," she said. "The state asks us to do more each year."

Some of these programs include increasing technology integration in schools, implementing new teacher evaluation standards and setting up new intervention programs for students, Dugas said.

She also said increases in salaries, benefits and operating costs are a factor, as is spending to increase the district's competitiveness alongside magnet schools.

Barring future snow delays, the board will vote on the proposed budget Feb. 25, and need to submit it to the Board of Finance on or before March 1.

From there, a series of special meetings and hearings is scheduled for throughout March, culminating in a town council special meeting on the budget in April and a town budget referendum in early May.

Dugas also took a moment to recognize Donna Turchi, principal of Center School, and Nancy Briere, principal of the middle school,

who will both retire at the end of this school year.

"Their years of service really speak volumes to the quality of our district," she said. "This will be a true loss to the town."

"I just wanted to wish you all the best and thank you for your commitment to the children of East Hampton," she said.

Board members, as well as those in attendance, then gave both principals a long standing ovation.

* * *

With large piles of snow on the ground and more likely on the way, the superintendent also took time to praise the custodial crews throughout the district for their work in clearing the facilities.

"Despite all the snow, you go from one building to the next and they've all been made safe and secure," she said. "They've done an outstanding job and I really want to recognize and thank them."

In addition, Dugas cautioned parents to be especially careful driving their children to school due to the high piles of snow blocking visibility.

"Everyone's been doing a great job, but it does require extra patience as parking lots and paved areas become smaller and smaller," she said.

Also, Dugas said East Hampton has used five of its seven allotted snow days. In addition, she said there is a professional development day in May that could become an additional instructional day before touching April vacation.

"We're holding at the moment," she said.

* * *

The next Board of Education meeting is scheduled for Monday, Feb. 23, at 7 p.m. in the EHHS library.

A meeting for a vote on the proposed budget is scheduled for Wednesday, Feb. 25, at 6 p.m., at a location to be determined.

East Hampton Town Council Talks Center School, the Ledges

by John Tyczkowski

Tuesday evening, the Town Council continued its discussion on what to do about aging town facilities – as well as a particularly dangerous section of road in the area known as “the Ledges.”

Board of Education Chairman Ken Barber answered questions from the council about his board’s proposal to vacate Center School.

In a letter to the council, Barber, on behalf of the Board of Education, put forth a recommendation that if the town wanted to use Center School for its offices, its students would be relocated to Memorial School, which would be renovated to accommodate the addition of fourth and fifth grade students.

The whole process could take three to four years, according to the letter.

High-end figures in the letter put the cost of such construction at \$12 million to \$15 million, but Barber wanted to remind the council that all information in the letter was speculative.

“This was all put together in two days. We called in a lot of favors and spent a lot of man-hours trying to figure out how it would work, as a vision thing,” he said. “And as far as costs, I’m giving you probably the highest numbers we could figure so you don’t get shell-shocked later on.”

Barber said the board’s recommendations were based upon data from the 2008 Friar Report, a comprehensive examination of all town facilities.

That’s because the board has for the past few years been looking into when would be appropriate to abandon Center School for new facilities, Barber said.

The board scaled back from the Friar Report’s recommendation, which was a new building on the Memorial School property, to adding on two new wings to Memorial School and overhauling its cafeteria for the extra students.

The new wings, as tentatively proposed, would total 30,000 square feet, or an addition of about 75 percent of Memorial School’s total size.

“In light of all the circumstances in town, we feel that, for the entire community, abandoning Center School is good,” Barber said. “We also don’t feel that building a separate school is the best for the community right now.”

“We found the best possible option for all stakeholders was to pop a couple of wings onto Memorial School and make it a true elementary school,” he said.

However, Barber also mentioned that not all educators in town were on board with this plan, and that it wasn’t perfect, but that “in light of all circumstances and given the tight time frame, the board believe this resolves almost all issues facing all our boards, in the most efficient manner.”

Councilor Mark Philhower wanted to know about the possibility of splitting the influx of students between Memorial School and the middle school, but Barber said that possibility had already been discussed and refuted.

“Part of the issue was that on an education level, you don’t want to combine little people with bigger people,” he said.

In addition, Barber said the board decided it would be easier to tackle one extra renovation project over two, as moving students to the middle school would require additional construction.

“A wing on this one and a wing on that one would cost a lot more money and create a lot more problems,” he said.

Responding to a question from Councilor Phillip Visintainer, Barber said there was no way to funnel the Center School students into existing facilities without any changes to those facilities.

Barber also said that portable classrooms at

Memorial School were a “very speculative” option to consider.

However, councilor Ted Hintz Jr. was suspicious about what he said was the board contradicting its own facilities priorities from the town meeting in early January.

“On Jan. 6, both the superintendent and yourself talked about consolidation, consolidation, consolidation,” he said. “And then now when we ask about consolidation, we find it comes with a ticket of \$12-15 million.”

Barber defended the proposal by saying that since the board made it known at the Jan. 6 meeting that they were going by Friar Report guidelines concerning consolidation, which the council had access to, “this shouldn’t have been a surprise to anyone on the council.”

After, the council decided to establish a sub-committee to examine the options for using Center School for town facilities and create a report, composed of Hintz, George Pfaffenbach and Patience Anderson.

The committee agreed to meet before the next Town Council meeting in two weeks.

* * *

The council also talked about cooperating with Portland and the state to improve safety at the Ledges, after discussing the latest piece of legislation on that topic.

House Bill 6341, sponsored by State Reps. Christie Carpino and Melissa Ziobron calls for rumble strips before and at the area of Route 66 known as the Ledges, a notoriously dangerous stretch of the road.

There have been three fatal accidents at the Ledges, located near Cobalt, in the past two years, as well as one non-fatal rollover.

Visintainer, who had been a member of the East Hampton Volunteer Fire Department in various capacities for years, including as chief and fire marshal, said more than rumble strips would be needed.

“I’ve been to too many crashes on that stretch of road over the past 50 years of my service,” he said. “It’s a complete disaster waiting to happen. I can’t emphasize enough what a dangerous section of road that piece of 66 is.”

Visintainer suggested “taking out” the rock corners that reduce visibility and force the road to curve.

Town Manager Michael Maniscalco said that the town, along with Portland, has discussed options with the state Department of Transportation in the past, but historically the DOT did not support measures along the lines of those that Visintainer suggested.

However, Maniscalco said the Lower Connecticut River Valley Council of Governments has been in the process of conducting a corridor study on Route 66, including the Ledges, to determine a course of action.

“It’s serving as an eye-opener, not just for us and the communities around us, but for other communities around Connecticut, to continue to put pressure on the state to fix these problem areas,” he said.

Hintz pointed out that there have been numerous improvements to the Ledges in recent years, including clear signage and drainage work to prevent ice from spilling onto the road from the rock corners, but Visintainer said more action is needed.

“It’s still killing people one after another,” he said.

* * *

The council also decided to hold its first public workshop next Thursday, Feb. 19, at 6 p.m. at Hope Church on East High Street. The Arts and Cultural Commission would be on hand at the meeting as well.

* * *

The council’s next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, Jan. 24, at 6:30 p.m., in the Town Hall meeting room.

Marlborough Board Talks Teachers’ Positions, Building Maintenance

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

During the line-by-line discussion of the proposed \$7.46 million Board of Education 2015-16 budget on Tuesday, the board focused on a couple of issues, including a larger-than-expected incoming kindergarten class, a dipping enrollment for sixth grade and an issue of building maintenance.

Superintendent of Schools David Sklarz reported that the district has 66 registered kindergarteners, more than the 60 students originally projected when the board approved full-day kindergarten.

“The only way to explain it is that people who had kids and lived somewhere else moved to Marlborough,” Sklarz said. The original 60 students was a number projected by NESDEC (New England School Development Council.) “It’s a very real number of students registered. We have to have a discussion of an additional class.”

When full-day kindergarten was approved, the proposal was based on 60 projected students with three classes of 20 students per class and a full-time paraprofessional for each class. That proposal totaled \$293,022.

The revised proposal that Sklarz submitted to the board for discussion was based on the 66 registered students with four classes of 16.5 students per class and two paraprofessionals shared by the four teachers. The revised proposal totaled \$326,711 – a difference of \$33,689 from the original proposal.

“That doesn’t include the cost of outfitting another room,” Board of Education Chairwoman Ruth Kelly said.

The board then shifted its discussion to also include the reduction of a sixth-grade academy

teacher because of a decline in enrollment for the incoming sixth-grade. The class is going from 99 students to 77 students.

“Third grade has 100 kids,” Board member Theresa Brysgel said. “Fourth grade has 95 kids. My concern with the sixth-grade academy is that we go from 100 to 77 and back to 100. Are we doing this just for one year?”

Board member Betty O’Brien questioned if the board would rather put the teacher in kindergarten instead of sixth grade.

“There’s many schools where it happens,” Kelly said of shifting teachers between grades. “Teachers can adapt. It’s called ‘looping.’”

“Do we lose someone already in the system?” Brysgel asked.

“We shift people around,” Sklarz said. “It doesn’t necessarily mean the teacher goes from sixth to kindergarten. Teachers here are incredibly responsive. What’s complicated is the team structure in sixth grade.”

Board member Mimi LaPoint questioned the consistency in the sixth-grade academy structure if after a year, they need that teacher back.

Board vice chair Wes Skorski wondered if it would be possible to keep the teacher in sixth grade and have them spend part of the time teaching enrichment – noting that, at earlier community outreach meetings, residents had advocated expanding the school’s enrichment program.

However, board member Sue Rapelye wondered what would happen the following year, when sixth grade enrollment rises again and that teacher would be needed for sixth grade.

“Then we take that enrichment away?” she asked.

Kelly clarified that it sounds like the board is changing the whole sixth-grade academy model, but, “Are we really?”

LaPoint said she’s not trying to say the board is destroying the model by questioning consistency.

“It’s all about allocation of resources,” Marlborough Elementary School Principal Dan White said. O’Brien added that it’s about allocation of money.

“We need to make an eventual decision on focus,” Kelly said. “Academically, small classes in the lower grades have been shown to be more beneficial.”

Sklarz and LaPoint both said the issue of kindergarten and sixth-grade should be separate in the board’s eyes.

“Budget the greatest needs then make some decisions,” Sklarz said.

O’Brien said it is difficult since they are talking about peoples’ jobs which will be affected with the decline in enrollment.

“Everything is about declining enrollment, but we are in a panic with more kindergarten students,” LaPoint said.

“We are not in a panic, but having undue pressure,” Skorski said. “People think the budget should decline by the same amount as enrollment. We can’t decrease services for students that are here.”

* * *

After deciding to let the issue of the kindergarten and sixth-grade teacher sit until their next meeting, the board discussed the issue of building maintenance and whose responsibility it is to maintain the building.

“The school is a town building,” O’Brien

said. “Cleaning the vents and ducts is \$19,000 in our budget. Whose responsibility is this building? We don’t want to make our budget look like what it isn’t.”

Brysgel said at many outreach meetings, she heard the school building be called more like a “town community center,” since other organizations, such as Parks and Recreation, use the building for different programs.

“We are not two Marlboroughs; we are one Marlborough,” Sklarz said. “It’s all in the budget in the end.”

O’Brien suggested the maintenance of the building should almost be a separate budget.

However, Sklarz said the ducts haven’t been cleaned in 10 years and are supposed to be done every three years and they “can’t afford to not have the ducts done.”

Skorski questioned whether the ducts really needed to be cleaned. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Skorski said, ducts do not need to be done unless you have air conditioning and could potentially cause more issues. Skorski said the EPA suggests ducts be cleaned every 25 years. He also questioned why the ducts being cleaned was brought up at community outreach meetings before the board was aware of the issue.

“The proposal came from Chris Corsa [Director of Public Works] and included the ducts and vents,” White said.

The board decided to look into the EPA’s statement and determine if the ducts really need to be cleaned or not.

* * *

The next Board of Education meeting will be Thursday, Feb. 26, at 7 p.m. at MES.

Marlborough Resident Releases Faith-Based Contemporary Christian CD

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

A musician since he was young, a trip to Mozambique for humanitarian work inspired resident Shawn Fisher to write some of the songs for his second CD called *My Call*.

"I was significantly influenced by my first trip five years ago," Fisher, also a member of Marlborough Congregational Church, said. "I went and saw the tremendous need and the remarkable faith, both like ours and not. There was such a devastating poverty that exists and I had a realization that we can change the world."

One of the communities Fisher, his wife Linda and son Garrett visited was an orphan community in Mozambique. Unlike what people consider an orphanage to be, there was no building. The children, many orphaned because of the AIDS epidemic, Fisher said, come to the community during the day and at night they stay with other community members who take them in.

"We went there and saw the community had food production that was improving, but they would produce the food and needed it to be milled," Fisher said. "It took an enormous time for them to get it out to a mill by walking or by bike, pay for it to be milled and bring it back."

After noticing the issue with the milling, Fisher and his family asked if it would make a difference to have a mill in town. Fisher and his family then donated a simple mill with a building built around it for the community. The mill also helped the orphans who were trying to do more for themselves and the community.

"Last trip, we got to see the impact," Fisher said of his trip this past August. "The mill had enabled them to clothe and feed 200 kids and gain access to education."

In Africa, the children can go to school if they have the proper uniform and shoes to be able to get to the school. The mill also freed up funds for the community since they no longer had to pay someone else to mill the food. The other impacts of the mill, Fisher said, was getting the orphans to be able to do some farming on their own and make their own bread by keeping some of the flour they milled.

"It's a relatively small change, but it impacted the entire community," Fisher said.

Fisher said he channeled his feelings

throughout the process of helping the orphan community into his music, which he said helps inspire people to use their gifts for a purpose and that they can make a difference.

"After the trip, we focused on how we spent time and spent money," Fisher said. "It gives an amazing sense of hope."

Around the time of his first trip to Mozambique five years ago, Fisher began writing the songs for *My Call*. It was initially a slow process. "Writing comes over time," Fisher said.

However, after he had about half the album written, Fisher was laid off last March from his job in the health care industry. Fisher took advantage of his newly-available time to write the last half of songs he had planned for the CD, and to record all of them.

"Since I've been young, I've been singing," Fisher said. He started learning piano, but didn't start writing songs until he was in his 20s. "I sat down at the piano and at first, it was horrible. Then it got better and then better. I finally started letting people listen once I got the confidence."

Fisher said writing songs for him has been a "wonderful release" – and that the CD, which came out Dec. 20, hasn't helped just him.

Fisher explained this CD, unlike his debut CD six years ago called *Transitions*, is entirely faith-based contemporary Christian music.

"This CD in particular had people saying how it's helping them," Fisher said. "It was very satisfying especially the first time someone said it. It made all the work for the CD worth it. It's remarkable to hear."

Fisher said he has been told this CD is helping people who are going through a difficult time, and determining what faith is about and their relationship to something bigger – whether it's God or not.

"It's helping to connect back with faith," Fisher said. "Knowing this [CD] is meaningful makes it all worth it."

One of the first songs Fisher wrote for the CD was inspired by the sense that sometimes people are trying to find happiness in things in the world, whether it be through people or objects, and they can spend too much time and money trying to find this happiness. Fisher said this song really came after seeing his son, who

is a freshman at RHAM High School, begin to figure out who he is.

"I heard struggles and tried to capture them in the way people will connect to and provide uplift and hope," Fisher said. "Mozambique was conveyed on the CD in the song 'Little by Little.'"

The song, Fisher explained, came after he heard so many people who said the issues are so big, what can I do? He said he heard the feelings of powerlessness and the song helps to show people how they don't have to solve the issues on their own.

"You can change the world for some people," Fisher said. "You can make a tremendous difference. Communities have needs that are very addressable. You have to make yourselves aware of it and hold yourself accountable and act on it."

After he finished recording *My Call*, Fisher decided to do something very different than when he recorded *Transitions* six years ago.

"Unlike six years ago, now there's programs and social media to help [get your music out there]," Fisher said. "There are places for artists who aren't signed to get music out."

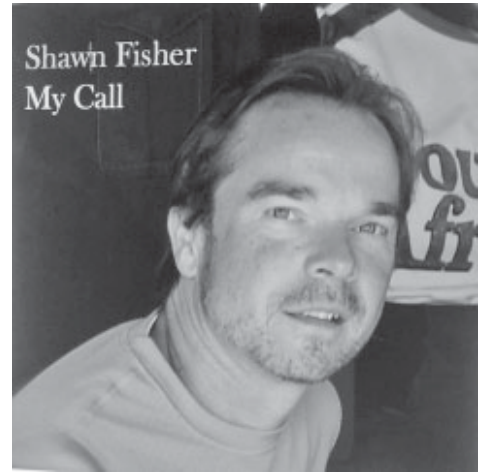
With *Transitions*, Fisher had just handed out CDs to family and friends and sang some local concerts. But for *My Call*, Fisher has seen success with Facebook, Twitter and a website called ReverbNation, which helps artists promote their work.

"Now hundreds of people I've never met are hearing my music," Fisher said. "It's been neat to see. Almost 1,500 people have accessed my music and it's not something that's ever happened before."

"It's been a wonderful surprise," Fisher said of the album's success. "I didn't realize how it would catch on."

Fisher said three things in particular have surprised him – how quickly some of the music has spread with the number of people listening all over the country, the amount of people he doesn't know sharing stories about the challenges they've faced, and that he had had no expectations as to who would listen before putting the music online.

When he first put *My Call* on ReverbNation, the album was ranked number 8,000 in the con-



Resident Shawn Fisher's CD *My Call* is his first entirely faith-based contemporary Christian album.

temporary Christian category, Fisher said. But now, he said, "I'm in the top 100 in the country."

As for his immediate plans, Fisher said right now he just wants to see where *My Call* will go.

"I'll go around and perform," Fisher said. "Someone asked in Seattle and California for me to perform. I don't know if I will do that, but it shows how far it's stretched."

Fisher said the CD isn't his anymore since it belongs to all who have listened and he doesn't have any set plans or expectations, but is not limiting what's possible for the music. On March 1, Fisher will be recording music videos so he can put the music up on YouTube as well.

Fisher also thanked Marlborough Congregational for being so supportive of his music.

"They're one of the places that's been incredibly supportive," Fisher said. "They're usually the first feedback."

Although Fisher has half of the songs written for a third CD, he said he won't record it until the end of this year.

To listen to Fisher's music, you can go to shawnfishermusic.com or [Facebook.com/shawnfishermusic](https://www.facebook.com/shawnfishermusic). If interested in a copy of the CD, Fisher can be reached at fishersr@comcast.net or sent a message on Facebook.

Marlborough Sees Minimal Grand List Growth

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

The numbers are in, and the 2014 Marlborough Grand List saw just a slight increase, with the list rising \$2,780,415 to \$575,045,865 or 0.486 percent, down from the previous year's .75 percent increase.

The list represents the net value of assessed real estate, personal property and motor vehicles in town.

In a release sent from town assessor Marie Hall, she said the increase "demonstrates very minimal growth," but "in this era of economic insecurity, growth of any size is significant as some towns and cities face actual declines in their grand lists."

Real estate grew \$2,368,850 to total \$512,407,810 while motor vehicle assessments increased \$493,280 to total \$51,748,800. However, personal property decreased by \$81,715 to \$10,889,255.

"We're comparable to what we're seeing in other towns," First Selectwoman Cathi Gaudinski said. "Based on property values, we're seeing minimal growth around the state."

The Grand List is used by the Board of Finance to help set the mill rate for the upcoming fiscal year. The mill rate is then used to deter-

mine residents' taxes; a resident can determine their taxes by multiplying the mill rate by their total assessments. One mill is equal to \$1 in tax per \$1,000 of assessed property and under the current mill rate of 31.45 a resident with a home assessed at \$250,000 would pay \$7,862.50 in taxes.

The top 10 assessments in the 2014 Grand List included Connecticut Light & Power (now known as Eversource Energy) at \$4,447,290; Elliott Enterprises/Robert M. at \$3,973,270; BOTH LLC at \$3,311,700; Marlborough Health Care Realty Co. at \$2,579,500; Robert H. & Mary C. Soleau at \$1,722,390; C&B Marlborough Associates LLC at \$1,326,220; BCD Holdings LLC at \$1,123,640; Country Barn Properties LLC at \$949,200; Bruce M. & Donna T. Grimm at \$909,090; and Known Litigation Holdings LLC at \$907,340. The ten taxpayers total \$21,249,640 in assessment.

Taxpayers unhappy with their appraisal can appeal them in front of the Board of Assessment Appeals. The deadline to apply for an appeal is Feb. 20. Appeals will take place in March and all decisions are expected to be made by the end of that month.

From the Editor's Desk

Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

Time will not stop. The sun will continue to stay out a little bit longer each day. Eventually February will become March and then April. I know all this.

But at this point I – and I suspect a good chunk of the state – can't help but wonder: When will it all end?

After yet another Monday snowstorm dumped another half foot of the stuff, as I write this Tuesday there's more snow in the forecast for Thursday and yet another storm possible for over the weekend. And for those of you who say "But it's winter in Connecticut! It's supposed to snow!" I suppose you're right – but I don't remember it snowing like this.

We haven't had a single event like the blizzard of two years ago, which dumped three feet on much of the area. Yeah, we came close with "Blizzard Colbie," as Channel 3 calls it, but we've had no three-feet-in-one-day events. Instead, we've been battered with these rapid succession storms. Only a few days is passing between these events, leaving little time for melting and leading to snowbanks that keep getting taller and taller.

Driving home from work Tuesday offered plenty of evidence things are getting a little dangerous out there – even on those increasingly-rare occasions when the roads aren't covered in snow. Stopped at particularly long red light, I watched as someone repeatedly attempted to make a left turn out of a gas station parking lot. He'd slowly start to creep out into the street, then quickly pull himself back when a heretofore-invisible car appeared from behind a massive snow bank.

And so it went, the whole way back to Manchester. Various cars – including my own – would slowly peek out around corners or exits of parking lots, eager to see if there are cars coming but also eager to not stick the front end of their car into oncoming traffic. It's a juggling act that, most of the time, we don't have to juggle.

And then there was the poor guy who I spotted trying to back out of his driveway onto a fairly busy street. Would've been no problem in, say, June, or September, or even most of January this year. But now, the snowbanks seemed as tall as the car itself. Backing out of a driveway had all of a sudden become a lengthy, risky process.

Like I said, I know this is Connecticut; snow in winter is hardly unusual – and, since it's barely mid-February, it will continue to be hardly unusual for the next several weeks. But does every storm have to be, as former Connecticut weather star Hilton Kaderli would say, a gollywhomper? And do they have to occur so quickly after each other? We're running out of places to put the snow, folks.

* * *

I have mixed feelings over this whole Brian Williams mess at NBC. For the (likely few) of you who don't know, Williams admitted last week he misremembered some things when he said a week earlier he had been in a plane in Iraq that had been fired upon in 2003. He was in *a* plane in Iraq, but it was about an hour behind the one that was shot at.

To make matters worse, after Williams confessed to misspeaking, it turned out he'd been misspeaking for years – including during an appearance on *The Late Show with David*

Letterman in 2013.

Since Williams' announcement last week, he was hotly criticized by various folks in and out of the media, with some publicly stating NBC should fire him. I was less certain. I admit part of it may be due to the fact that I've always been an *NBC Nightly News* guy. When I was growing up, my dad watched the then-Tom Brokaw-helmed newscast every night. I found Brokaw to be a comforting, authoritative presence. I continued to watch after Brokaw passed the torch to Williams in 2004, and soon developed a sense of trust for Williams. He seemed like a nice guy, a solid guy, and to this day, when I do flip on the 6:30 p.m. national news, I always turn on Williams.

So I admit my reaction to this story had something of a "Say it ain't so" feel to it. I didn't want it to be true, and I didn't – and still don't – know if firing him is the way to go.

Is what Williams did wrong? No question. He falsely reported a story – and continued to falsely report it for years. Reporters routinely get fired for such gaffes. But Williams has been in the TV news business for a long time – and he's been the face of NBC news for a decade. He's built up a great reputation. If this was an isolated incident, is firing him the way to go?

Maybe it is. You could certainly argue it'd be tough for Williams to come back from this? The great Will Rogers once said, "It takes a lifetime to build a good reputation, but you can lose it in a minute." And if it turns out there have been multiple occasions where he's exaggerated the truth – and indeed, NBC is investigating this – then he should go. But, for now, based on this one incident, is firing him the way to handle this?

I really don't know. In news, being truthful and factual to our readers (and viewers) is our main responsibility. And Williams whiffed on this one, there's no question about it. Does it cancel out all the times he didn't whiff – in, again, a decades-long career? I'm not sure.

I'm really not. This is a really tough call for NBC, and I don't envy them.

I'm also not sure NBC's approach to this is going to work. NBC announced Tuesday it was suspending Williams without pay for six months. I'm guessing they hope that, come August, everyone will have forgotten, and moved on to some other subject, and they can quietly sneak Williams back on the air. I'm not so sure. First of all, it's 2015. Yes, this country has an amazing ability to quickly move on from one controversy du jour to the next. But at the same time, nothing really goes away. Will the Williams fervor have died down in six months? Probably. But the accounts of what he did will still be all over the Internet, ready to be regurgitated at a moment's notice.

Secondly, how do you quietly sneak back on the anchor of a major nightly network news broadcast? You don't. Does NBC start moving Williams slowly back up the ladder? Will he have to bide time as, say, a special correspondent on MSNBC's *Hardball* or something?

It'll be interesting to see what happens in the coming months.

* * *

See you next week.

East Hampton Police News

1/26: Christine Walsh Slossberg, 49, of 72 Abbey Rd., was arrested and charged with shoplifting (sixth-degree larceny), East Hampton Police said.

2/1: Troy Timothy McIntosh, 32, of 28 Main St., Apt. 1, was arrested pursuant to three outstanding warrants for his arrest, police said. Police said McIntosh was charged with second-degree failure to appear, two counts of violation of probation and possession of heroin and drug paraphernalia, police said.

2/2: Stephanie Philena Slack, 20, of 28 Tartia Rd., was arrested and charged with second-degree criminal mischief, police said, pursuant to an active warrant stemming from an Aug. 6, 2014, incident.

Portland Police News

1/22: Steve Williams, 48, of 30 Banner Rd., Moodus, was charged with DUI, evading responsibility, operating unregistered motor vehicle and failure to drive right, Portland Police said.

1/25: Ryan Prince, 32, of 18 Lowell Rd., East Hampton, was charged with DUI and failure to drive in established lane, police said.

Hebron Police News

2/4: State Police said Andrew Bates, 22, of 108 Wellwood Rd., was arrested and charged with breach of peace and interfering with an officer.

2/5: State Police said Amanda Backhaus, 29, of 48 Eastbrook Heights, Mansfield, was arrested and charged with DWI, failure to drive right and distracted driving.

2/8: State Police said Cody Collier, 26, of 111 Cidermill Rd., Bolton, was arrested and charged with DUI and following too closely.

Marlborough Police News

2/10: State Police said Rico Guachione, 39, of 184 Clubhouse Rd., Lebanon, was arrested and charged with interfering with an officer, criminal impersonation, DUI, parking illegally, and operating under suspension.

2/8: State Police said Akina Richards, 39, of 636 Flatbush Ave., West Hartford, and Ann-Marie Green-Brannen, 49, of 120 Collins St., Hartford, were transported to Middlesex Hospital in Marlborough for complaints of pain after the vehicle they were in was hit and spun into a guardrail in the area of exit 13 on Route 2 west.

Colchester Police News

2/7: State Police said Michael Carroll, 33, of 23 Forest Way, was arrested and charged with failure to pay wages.

2/8: State Police said Lynne Amara, 50, of 8 Winterbury Dr., was arrested and charged with DUI.

Obituaries

Amston

Thomas Michael Clark

Thomas Michael Clark, 59, of Amston, formerly of Colchester, passed away Sunday, Feb. 8, surrounded by loving family and friends, after a long, hard-fought battle with cancer. Born June 22, 1955 in Hartford, he was a son of the late Herbert Finley and M. Patricia (Wakely) Clark.

Tom was a 1973 graduate of RHAM High School in Hebron. Owning and operating "Stone Walls by Tom Clark," his talents and life's work will endure for generations throughout the region.

An avid outdoorsman and fisherman, he also loved fast cars and was a die-hard New England Patriots and Boston Red Sox fan.

He leaves his loving companion and best friend, Lynn M. Bjork; his son, Michael Hallowell, daughter-in-law, Lucinda and granddaughter, Stephanie, all of Enfield; his brother, Michael of Colchester; his furry companion, Suzie-Q; and numerous cousins, extended family members and friends.

In keeping with his wishes, family and friends gathered to share memories, offer condolences and celebrate his life Wednesday, Feb. 11, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester.

In lieu of flowers, donations in his memory may be made to the American Cancer Society, 238 W. Town St., Norwich, CT 06360.

For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

Colchester

Dorothea Wyman

Dorothea (McGrady) Wyman of Colchester, Conn., and formerly of Westfield, Blandford, and Greenfield, Mass., passed over Saturday, Feb. 7. She was born June 27, 1924, in Springfield, Mass., to Edward John and Matilda (LeBlanc) McGrady.

She was predeceased by her husband, Master Sgt. USAF Lawrence E. Wyman in 1959, and her brothers, Donald and John "Jack" McGrady.

She leaves a sister, Catherine Balboni of Turners Falls, Mass.; a son, Curtis, Sr. of Cornish Flat, N.H.; and daughters Lisa of Lebanon and Lori (Louis Battalen) of Ashfield, Mass. She dearly loved her five grandchildren; two great-granddaughters; and three great-grandsons.

Dottie organized the first kindergarten in Blandford, was active in the PTA and also taught Catechism class. She worked for Scharr Jewelry Company, which had a concession at the Ames Department Store in Westfield and later flew to many locations to hire staff and open up new jewelry departments. She loved reading, gardening, music and bowling. Dottie was happiest cooking dinners for family gatherings.

A graveside service will be held in the spring. Donations in her name may be made to your local library.

Care of arrangements has been entrusted to the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home of Colchester.

Marlborough

Robert Haley

Robert Haley, 92, of Marlborough, beloved husband of Irene (Lucier) Haley, died Tuesday, Feb. 10, at his home. Born Aug. 30, 1922, in Malden, Mass., he was the son of the late Richard R. and Anna (Tehan) Haley.

Robert served his country in the Army Air Corps during World War II from October 1942 until March 1946. Robert served in the European Theatre as a staff sergeant in the 87th Carrier Troop in England, France and Germany. He had retired from Pratt & Whitney Aircraft where he was a Jet Engine Assembler in 1983. He was a member of EAA Experimental Aircraft Assoc. and loved to work with planes and build things.

Robert also enjoyed bee keeping and growing fruit trees. He and his wife Irene had a fruit stand on their property where they would sell their fruit to neighbors and friends.

Besides his wife he is survived by his four sons, Michael R. and Adriana Haley of Florida, Paul and Helen Haley of Wisconsin, James and Patricia Haley of North Carolina, Stephen Haley of Colchester, eight grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren.

He was predeceased by his brother, William Haley, and his two sisters, Bernice Owens and Claire Crowley.

A funeral liturgy will be celebrated Saturday, Feb. 14, at 11 a.m., in St. John Fisher Church in Marlborough. Burial will be private in Marlboro Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions can be made to St. John Fisher Church, P.O. Box 239, Marlborough, CT 06447 or to Masonic Partners, 111 Founders Plaza, Suite 200, East Hartford, CT 06108.

To leave online condolences, visit spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

East Hampton

Susan L. DeAngelis

Susan L. (Metcalf) DeAngelis, 44, of East Hampton, beloved wife of Stephen DeAngelis, died Wednesday, Feb. 4, at Hartford Hospital, surrounded by her loving family. Born July 15, 1970, in Hartford, she was the daughter of Richard and Maxine (Schiessl) Metcalf of Bolton.

Sue was a 1988 graduate of Bolton High School, a 1992 graduate of UConn and received her MBA from UConn in 1998. Sue had worked for B.E. Aerospace, Ensign Bickford, William Moro Company, and GE Capital before her current job as a human resources manager for UTC Research Center.

Besides her parents and her husband Stephen, she is survived by her two loving sons, Ryan and Luke of East Hampton; her mother and father in-law, Ellen and Rudy DeAngelis of Niantic and Sarasota, Fla.; brother in-law Robert and Keri DeAngelis of Massachusetts; sister-in-law Susan DeAngelis of Rhode Island; nephew Matthew and niece Sophia of Massachusetts; several aunts, uncles, cousins, extended family and friends.

Susan's family would like to thank Dr. Timothy Hong and the staff at Hartford Hospital's Helen and Harry Gray Cancer Center for the compassionate care they gave to Sue during her illness.

Friends called at Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton, Monday, Feb. 9. A funeral liturgy was celebrated Tuesday, Feb. 10, in St. Patrick Church in East Hampton. Burial will be in St. Patrick Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to Autism Families of CT Inc., P.O. Box 370162, West Hartford, CT 06137, or to Cholangio Carcinoma Foundation, 5526 West 13400 South #510, Salt Lake City, UT 84096.

To leave online condolences, visit spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

Colchester

Leon Shedroff

Leon Shedroff, son of Edward and Rose Shedroff died after a short illness Monday, Feb. 9, in San Diego, Calif.

Leon was born in Colchester and attended high school at Bacon Academy. He loved baseball and played shortstop in high school. While in high school he was called by the Brooklyn Dodgers to try out for the Major Leagues. He never tried out because he dislocated his shoulder sliding into second base.

He could not leave the sport he loved so much and in his 20s became an umpire. He worked his way up from Little League to high school, college and American Legion ball and officiated throughout the state of Connecticut. He was also an avid New York Yankees fan for over 60 years.

Leon served in the U.S. Navy during World War II in the Pacific Theatre. After his discharge from the military he worked as a master welder at the Underwater Sound System in New London. In 1950, he married Sylvia Stein and became a father in 1952. In 2000, Leon and Sylvia renewed their vows at their 50th wedding anniversary.

Leon served as a master of the Mason's Worcester Lodge in Colchester, and also served as a Masonic District Deputy. In 1987, Leon and his wife moved to San Diego, Calif.

Leon is survived by his wife, Sylvia Shedroff; his daughter, Sharon Shedroff, the apple of his eye; his brother, Allen Shedroff of Norwich; his brother, Herb Shedroff of West Hartford; many nieces and nephews and many dear friends from Connecticut and San Diego, Calif. He will be missed for a while.

For online condolences, visit amisraelmortuary.com.

Hebron

Harold E. Perry Jr.

Harold E. Perry Jr., "Hal," passed away peacefully at home in the early-morning hours of Sunday, Feb. 1. He was born Sept. 1, 1938, in Middletown. He was the only child of the late Harold E. Perry Sr. and Paulina (Czens) Perry. In his growing-up years he lived in Cromwell and then in Middlefield. He attended the former Hartford Technical School, concentrating in the field of electronics.

Once he graduated, he took many correspondence courses at several institutes (the forerunner of classes online). His compromised health (pneumonia and ulcerative colitis) kept him close to home. He became proficient in TV and radio repair and was able to establish a small business in a small shop in the basement of his parents' home. He was able to venture out of his house and find employment with the Ripley Company and then Skinner Precision in New Britain.

He and a friend from work decided to take a short jaunt to Rockville to investigate a new group of post-college graduates who were forming a club in the basement of St. Bernard Church. The group was bowling that day at Vernon Lanes. It was April 9, 1970, and after introductions were made, teams of bowlers established, the games started. It was that day that he met his future wife, a girl from Tolland named Natalie Colombaro, a young teacher working in the Hebron school system. After more than a year of dating, they were married at St. Bernard Church on July 31, 1971. They lived their first year as man and wife in East Hartford, moving to Andover in June of 1972.

Harold continued commuting to his job in New Britain, but found himself applying to jobs nearer his Andover home. He acquired a job as a media tech in the library of E.O. Smith High School on the campus of UConn in October 1973. On good days he rode his bike to work, always trying to keep up his strength. He became interested in organic gardening and each year would plant a sizeable garden in the expansive front yard. He grew many different varieties of vegetables and helped with canning and freezing of those crops, giving away excesses to family, friends, and churches.

Soon after marrying, Harold found himself yearning to further his education. He applied for and was accepted into the general studies program at the University of Hartford in August 1971. He then transferred to the Ward School of Electronics, part of the university's many specialty schools on campus. He continued working and went to school evenings until May 1984, when he graduated. He also took various courses at Goodwin Tech and Vinal Tech, always seeking out newer ways of doing things in the field of electronics.

He worked on the AV equipment at his wife's school, bringing old 8-mm projectors, filmstrip projectors, earphones and tape recorders back to optimum working order.

His only son, Daniel, was born in 1976 and from the time Dan could walk, he was helping his dad in the garden. Harold would often find Dan sitting among the beans and peas eating them. He loved hiking with Dan strapped to his back and going on many trails picking blueberries. Natalie usually followed with the bucket and two lively dogs named Skipper and Spice.

In 1987, Harold "retired" from E.O. Smith and found a job as an electronic tech/installer at the state police facility on Mill Hill Road in Colchester. He loved his work and at times would call home to say he was leaving a bit late because a trooper had come in to the facility with a broken wire on his light rack or communication gear in the car. By this time, he was living in Hebron, having moved there in 1988.

Harold took early retirement in 1997, since he was becoming more and more exhausted with each passing year. He yearned once again to return to a college, this time Quinnebaug up in the Brooklyn/Danielson area. He took classes, concentrating on computers, using some of his money to have a computer custom built in 1998. Oddly enough, he started investigating why he continued to be so tired and sluggish. Using all his computer skills and wondering why he was losing his sense of smell as well as the tremors beginning in his right hand, he pretty much came to the conclusion he was in the early visible stages of Parkinson's disease. It wasn't until the fall of 2001 that his primary care physician agreed to send him to a neurologist and Harold's worst fears were confirmed.

His quality of life was compromised earlier when he became an ileostomate on Valentine's Day 1979. He never stopped seeking out specialists and other health care professionals.

On Oct. 29, 2010, he was admitted to the hospital with pneumonia, released to Harrington Court for rehab on Nov. 12, 2010, then released 98 days later. He was cared for by the VNA nurses, occupational therapists, physical therapists and speech therapists until December 2010. Then Companions and Homemakers sent various caregivers to be PCAs (24 in these last two-plus years).

Leaving behind to mourn are his wife, Natalie; his son, Dan; daughter-in-law, Kelly; and two precious granddaughters, Rylee and Harper. He also leaves a cousin, Priscilla and her husband, Jerry, of Tucson, Ariz.

The funeral service was held Saturday, Feb. 7, at St. Peter's Church, 30 Church St., Hebron. John F. Tierney Funeral Home, Manchester, had care of the arrangements.

In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to the friends of the Mansfield Animal Shelter, where Harold and Natalie walked the dogs and groomed the cats. Paralyzed Veterans of America was another of Harold's charities, or give to one of the donor's choice.

For online condolences, visit tierneyfuneralhome.com.

Colchester

Rosemary Jane Kinard

Rosemary Jane Kinard, 88, wife of Ronald Kinard, died Thursday, Feb. 5, at Midstate Medical Center after a lengthy illness. Born in Waterbury Feb. 13, 1926, she was the daughter of the late Francis and Mary Mungavin. She had resided in Meriden and Colchester since 1948.

Mrs. Kinard was employed by JC Penney as credit manager, retiring in 1988. She was a parishioner of St. Joseph Church and was the past president of the St. Joseph Rosary Society. She enjoyed knitting and cross stitch and was a loving, caring, and thoughtful wife, mother, and grandmother.

She is survived by two daughters, Jane Jones and her husband, Robert, of San Diego, Calif.; and Colleen Kinard Haines and her husband, Gary, of Meriden; four sons, R. Stephen Kinard and his wife, Marie, of Rotonda West, Fla.; Brian Kinard and his wife, Sharon, of Southington; Ronald Kinard and his wife, Laura, of Meriden; and Mark Kinard, of Wallingford; eight grandchildren, Traci Tasto (James), Michael Kinard (Sarah), Andrea Szymaszek (Joseph), Kyle Kinard (Aleksandra), Katherine Molter (Craig), Kevin Kinard, Allison LeBouthillier (Keith), and Sara Hall (Josh); and nine great-grandchildren, James, Delanie, and Hannah Tasto; Alyssa, Trent, and Austin Kinard; Emma and Cole Szymaszek; and Sophia Hall. She is also survived by several nieces and nephews, and a special niece, Linda Taylor.

She was predeceased by her husband, Ronald Kinard; her brothers, Francis and Joseph Mungavin; and her parents.

The funeral was held on Wednesday, Feb. 11, at St. Joseph Church, 22 Goodwill Ave., Meriden, for a Mass of Christian burial. Burial was in Walnut Grove Cemetery. Friends called at the John J. Ferry & Sons Funeral Home, 88 E. Main St., Meriden, Wednesday, Feb. 11, prior to the service.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to St. Joseph School, 159 W. Main St., Meriden, CT 06451.

Rosemary's family would like to thank the staff at Westfield Care Rehab, especially Wing 400, for the compassionate care and love they gave to her and her family.

For online condolences, visit jferryfh.com.

Portland

Loretta Bielot

Loretta (Westafski) Bielot, 98, of Leesville Road, Moodus, wife of the late Joseph Bielot, died Sunday, Feb. 8, at Chestelm Health & Rehabilitation Center. Loretta was born in Portland, the daughter of the late Adam and Alice (Nursick) Westafski.

Prior to her retirement, she was employed with Brownell & Company. Loretta was a Communicant of Saint Bridget of Kildare Church and a member of the Ladies Guild.

Loretta is survived by a son, James Bielot and his wife Susann of Moodus; a daughter, Eleanor Ziobron and her husband Ken of Moodus; three grandchildren, Keith Ziobron and his wife Mari of Georgia, Pamela Forcinelli and her husband Frank of Dominica, Brian Bielot and his wife Kathy of East Hampton; and 10 great-grandchildren, one great-great-grandchild and also several nieces and nephews.

She was predeceased by a sister, Jennie Kowalczyk, and a brother, Walter Westafski.

A funeral liturgy was held in St. Bridget of Kildare Church Thursday, Feb. 12. Friends called at the church Thursday, prior to the service. Burial will be in Saint Bridget Cemetery in the spring.

Those who wish may send memorial contributions to Golden Heart Fund c/o St. Bridget's Church, P.O. Box 422, Moodus, CT 06469, or to Weiss Hospice Unit c/o Dept. of Philanthropy 28 Crescent St., Middletown, CT 06457.

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

Colchester

Eleanor Sullo

Eleanor “Ellie” (Sampeck) Sullo, born Feb. 29, 1936, in Hartford, daughter of the late Edward Sampeck and Frances (Judyki) Sampeck of Wethersfield, beloved wife of Joseph Sullo of Colchester, formerly of Newington, died peacefully at St. Francis Hospital Friday, Feb. 6.

Eleanor’s faith in God was the core of who she was. A marriage of 60 years to her devoted husband Joseph was an inspiration to many. She was a woman of many talents. Her passions included: family, friends, writing, gardening and traveling. An accomplished author, she published 10 books. She would nurture garden seedlings with the same tenderness she showed her children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. Traveling to England, France, Italy and many other places provided many fond memories. She created a welcoming home filled with spirited conversation, gourmet food and acceptance of everyone.

Ellie was a graduate of Mount St. Joseph Academy, Hartford, she received a BA in English literature from CCSU and a master’s degree in pastoral counseling from St. Joseph College, which led to her being a pastoral associate of St. Matthew in Tolland and St. Patrick in East Hampton.

She was predeceased by her son Donald Sullo.

Ellie is survived by her son Christopher Sullo and wife Elizabeth of Colchester; her daughter Lynore Williams and husband David of Colchester; her grandchildren Valerie Sullo and husband Ahmed, Michael Sullo, Peter Sullo, Lauren Williams, Matthew Williams and wife Keliy, Jason Williams and wife Molly, Erin Williams and husband Ben; great-grandchildren Madeleine, Simon, Finnian and Djuna; and her sisters Kathy Sampeck and Carolyn Sampeck, plus numerous friends and family.

Calling hours were Wednesday, Feb. 11, at Sheehan- Hilborn-Breen Funeral Home, 1084 New Britain Ave., West Hartford. A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated Thursday, Feb. 12, at St Patrick- St Anthony Church, 285 Church St., Hartford. Interment followed in Mount St. Benedict Cemetery, Bloomfield.

Donations may be made to the Franciscan Center for Urban Development, 285 Church Street, Hartford, CT 06103.

The family wishes to acknowledge the wonderful care and compassion Eleanor received from Thomas Freund MD, Richard Soucier MD, Joseph Dellorfano MD, PAs, APRNs, RNs, CNAs and other staff members who cared for her at the Congestive Heart Failure unit of St Francis Hospital.

Online condolences may be made at [Sheehan HilbornBreen.com](http://SheehanHilbornBreen.com).

East Hampton

Cornelius Jay

Cornelius “Neil” Jay, 70, of East Hampton, beloved husband of Susan (Melesko) Jay, died Saturday, Jan. 24, at his home. He was born in Middletown, son of the late Neal and Harriet (Beckett) Jay.

Prior to his retirement, Neil was a skilled machinist. Known around town as the “Vega man” Neil loved working on his cars and racing/showing them. He liked going to various drag strips and watching racing on TV. Neil often helped others with building their cars and offering his expert advice. He also enjoyed riding his Harley. Neil and Susan recently celebrated their 40th anniversary with a vow renewal at St John’s Church.

He was much loved and will be missed more than words could ever express.

Besides his wife, Susan, he leaves his niece Roseann and husband Mark Bullett, three great-nephews, TJ, Travis and Todd, his nephew, Raymond Varricchio, his niece, Linda Driscoll, all very special to him, along with his mother-in-law Mary Melesko; his brother-in-law Robert and wife Sharon Melesko; his niece Christy and husband Gio Melesko-Muriente, and their two daughters, Anya and Katarina; step-niece Katie Gagnon; daughters, Lisa, Laura and Trisha Jay; his sister, Catherine Baron; and many other nieces, nephews and cousins.

He was predeceased by a son, Cornelius; his sisters, Bunnie Kinney and Barbara Kennedy; Stephen Melesko, father-in-law; Karen Melesko, sister-in-law; and his very special brother-in-law, Brian Melesko.

In honoring his wishes, there was no wake or funeral. A memorial Mass was said at St. John’s Church in Middletown Saturday, Feb. 7. A celebration of Neil’s life will be held later this year.

In lieu of flowers, those who wish may send memorial contributions to MARC: Community Resources, 124 Washington St., Middletown, CT 06457 or St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital, P O Box 1000, Dept 142, Memphis TN 38101.

Hebron

Irene Marciniac Bombaci

Irene Marciniac Bombaci, 95, of Hebron and longtime resident of Essex, died suddenly Wednesday, Feb. 4, at Middlesex Hospital. She was the beloved wife of the late Stanley Marciniac and the late Joseph F. Bombaci, and daughter of the late Joseph and Stephanie (Rudzki) Zabielski.

Irene was born at home and raised in Ivoryton and spent her entire married life in Essex where she raised her five children. Her time was always focused on family, faith, and friends. She was a bank teller at Deep River National bank, retiring in 1982. Her favorite pastimes included rooting for the UConn Huskies and her beloved Red Sox (and any team who beat the Yankees!!).

She will always be remembered for her wonderful homemade pies, infamous chocolate chip cookies, and unconditional love and generous spirit as a devoted wife, mother, sister, aunt, grandmother and friend. May she continue to know God’s love and peace, knowing that she will always be in our hearts.

Irene is survived by her children: Robert S. Marciniac Sr. and his wife Mary of Plainfield, Stanley A. Marciniac Jr. and his wife Linda of Essex, Nancy M. Ebler and her husband Joseph of Wathung, N.J.; Andrew Marciniac and his wife Katrina of Westbrook and Janet Marciniac and her husband Phil of Hebron, her sisters; Jean Forden McCloy of West Hartford, Helen MacWhinney of Essex and Bette Nielsen of Vero Beach, Fla.; as well as 13 grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren.

Irene was predeceased by her brother Henry Zabielski.

Visiting hours for Irene were held Monday, Feb. 9 at Robinson, Wright & Weymer Funeral Home, 34 Main St., Centerbrook. Her Mass of Christian Burial was at Our Lady Of Sorrows Church, Prospect Street, Essex, on Tuesday, Feb. 10. Interment followed at Centerbrook Cemetery.

Donations may be made in Irene’s memory to either Mercy High School, 1740 Randolph Rd., or Xavier High School, 181 Randolph Rd., both in Middletown.

To share a memory or condolence of Irene, visit www.fh.com.

Colchester

Irene Mullaney

Irene (Danielovich) Mullaney, 86, died peacefully at her home in Uncasville Tuesday, Feb. 10.

Irene was born Irene Stella Romanewicz to Stanley and Helen Romanewicz on Jan. 22, 1929. She grew up in the Bronx in New York City. She moved to Colchester and married Michael Danielovich (predeceased). They moved to Waterford, having two children, Paul Danielovich (Shutesbury, Mass.) and Steven Danielovich (North Sandwich, N.H.). She married John Mullaney (predeceased), living in Waterford and then moving to Uncasville.

She was active in the Polish Club and Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church. She was employed by the CT State Police for many years.

Irene was predeceased by three sisters, Eleanor, Helen and Regina; and brother, Stan.

Irene is survived by her brother, Ed; both her children and their spouses, Denise and Linda; and her four grandchildren, Hillary, Austin, Fraser and Sander.

We will miss her dearly.

A funeral Mass will be held at 1 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 14, in Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church, Quaker Hill. Calling hours will be held prior from 10:30 a.m. until noon, at Fulton-Theroux Funeral Home, 181 Ocean Ave., New London.

Visit fultontherouxnewlondon.com for tributes, directions, and more service information.

Andover

Steven George Patrick

Steven George Patrick of Glastonbury and Corinth, Vt., passed away Tuesday, Feb. 10, in Hartford Hospital, Hospice Care. Steven was born Dec. 10, 1940, in Middleboro, Mass., to William C. Patrick and Sylvia (Pentikainen) Patrick. His childhood was spent in Andover and Columbia, Connecticut.

Steven is survived by his wife and best friend of forty-seven years, Ruth Erickson Patrick, and by his sister, Ann Patrick Rudolph of Glastonbury. He is also survived by his niece Jacqueline Rudolph Enrique and husband Brian Enrique and their children Maria and Kyle Enrique of Colchester; and by his nephew David Rudolph and his wife Virginia Maxwell and their children Alexandra and Samuel Rudolph of Hebron.

Steven was predeceased by his parents and brother-in-law, Achim Rudolph.

Steven graduated from Windham High School and from The University of Connecticut College of Agriculture with a double major in chemistry and animal sciences. At UConn he earned bachelor’s and master’s degrees and he continued doctoral studies at Michigan State University. He was Senior Scientist at Heublein and United Distillers and Vitners. He traveled the world for both professional responsibilities and for pleasure. However, the world travels didn’t compare with the rich experiences and joy he had as a young lad visiting his grandmother, Kate Sleeper Patrick, in Cookeville, Vermont. As an adult he had the pleasure of serving as a guide at the Corinth, Vermont Historical Museum.

Steve was blessed with a sharp and creative mind. His academic achievement was honored by UConn with a top student plaque on the wall of a university building. He would quote and write poetry. He was well-spoken and had a quick sense of humor. Steven was an inspiration to many for his great courage and positive outlook while facing many health challenges. Steven and Ruth maintained an energetic and supportive connection with The University of Connecticut, attending most women and men’s basketball games. His sense of humor was evident at a non-sports theatrical event when Steve asked Ruth, “Who’s got the ball?”

Steven especially loved fishing throughout his life and, as a boy, won prizes at Andover Lake fishing derbies. As a little boy he carried a very large bass home in the leg of his jeans because he thought it might not be legal to catch such a big fish. The trout in rivers in Vermont must be swimming more freely now that this accomplished fly fisherman is no longer casting his lines.

In lieu of flowers, donations in Steven’s memory may be made to the Music Board, First Church of Christ Congregational, 2183 Main St., Glastonbury, CT 06033, or donations in memory of Steve may be made to the Lighting and Heating Fund, East Corinth Congregational Church, P.O. Box 1086, East Corinth, VT 05040.

A celebration of Steven’s life will be held Saturday, Feb. 21, at 11 a.m., at the First Church of Christ Congregational, 2183 Main St., Glastonbury. A private burial will be held in the spring in Columbia. Calling hours will be held Friday, Feb. 20, at Mulryan Funeral Home, 725 Hebron Ave., Glastonbury, from 5-7 p.m.

For online condolences, visit mulryanfh.com.