

RIVEREAST

News Bulletin

Serving Amston, Andover, Cobalt, Colchester, East Hampton, Hebron, Marlborough, Middle Haddam and Portland

Volume 40, Number 5

Published by The Glastonbury Citizen

May 29, 2015

Portland Gathers To Remember

by John Tyczkowski

Sunday afternoon, hundreds of residents turned out along Main Street to honor fallen soldiers, sailors, Marines, airmen and Coast Guardsmen, and to celebrate veterans who served their country in a variety of ways.

To help set the tone for the event, members from the Portland Exchange Club handed out American flags to the onlookers lining the parade route.

The parade, which stepped off at the Fire Company No. 2 station near Gildersleeve Elementary School shortly after 2 p.m., paused for a short ceremony at the town's Civil War memorial at Bartlett and Main.

Soldiers from a National Guard detachment in Middletown, as well as the American Legion Color Guard, rendered 21-gun salutes to the fallen.

Jeff Kelsey played Taps, and was echoed by his daughter MacKenzie Kelsey and fellow Portland resident Chris Leroux.

Kelsey said this was his 40th year playing Taps at the Memorial Day ceremony.

"I started in 1975 and I've done it every year since," he said. "I want to honor the people who've sacrificed their lives so we can live the life that we live."

"I never served in the military, so this is my way of saying thank you," he said.

From there, he got MacKenzie involved once she was old enough, and she's been participating for 12 years.

Leroux is the newest addition to the group,

with this as his fourth year. He was in eighth grade when he asked Kelsey if he could play Taps with them at the ceremony. That was when his father was first on active duty in the Middle East with the Army National Guard.

Leroux's father is currently deployed to Afghanistan.

The parade then moved steadily down Main Street to the reviewing stand in front of the Brownstone Intermediate School.

The National Guard soldiers received steady applause and calls of gratitude from the crowds, as did the number of veterans from World War II, Korea and Vietnam, who rode or marched in the parade.

The Portland Veterans Commission also had a truck in the parade.

First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield, Deputy First Selectwoman Kathy Richards and Selectman Ryan Curley marched in the parade, along with state Rep. Christie Carpino, who handed out flags to onlookers.

Selectman Carl Chudzick rode along in style with Board of Education member Ben Srb in his 1967 Chevy Impala.

The Portland Highlanders in full parade dress serenaded those lining the route with patriotic songs and popular hits. The Portland Middle School marching band also provided a soundtrack for the event.

In addition, the Portland Volunteer Fire Department marched in the parade, and fire appa-

See Portland Gathers Page 2



The American Legion Color Guard, including veterans from all military branches, proceeds down Main Street at Portland's Memorial Day parade. Just moments before, the color guard rendered a 21-gun salute at the Civil War Memorial on Bartlett Street.

RHAM Budget Passes on Second Try

by Geeta Schrayter

The 2015-16 RHAM Board of Education budget headed back before voters in Andover, Hebron and Marlborough – and this time, the spending package passed.

The \$27.77 million budget passed by a combined vote of 1,235-1,095.

The RHAM board's first attempt to get a budget passed was met with failure; voters in the three towns shot down a \$27.84 million proposal by an 896-767 tally on May 5.

In response to that defeat, the Board of Education trimmed the budget by \$68,880 – a reduction made up of savings from lower-than-expected health insurance premiums due to staff switching over to high-deductible health insurance plans.

Some town officials, however, had considered the reduction too small, and expressed concern last week over whether or not it would be enough to get the budget to pass.

Hebron Board of Selectman Chair Jeff Watt had shared he didn't really consider the \$68,880 decrease a reduction at all, saying he thought the district was playing "catch-up" by incorporating the insurance changes.

"I don't really feel they've made any reductions at this time," he stated, adding the town had been looking for more.

Similarly, Marlborough First Selectwoman Cathi Gaudinski had said she was hoping the budget, which is a 3.43 percent or \$919,853 increase over the current year's spending package, would come in closer to 3 percent.

RHAM's cost to the town, she explained last week, "is really a large percent of the increase for the Town of Marlborough and we typically don't have this type of tax increase so I was hoping that the RHAM board would take this into consideration."

The RHAM budget is paid for by each of the sending towns in the district – the amount each town is responsible for is based upon their levy, which is determined by the number of students they have attending the two schools. Marlborough is responsible for 29.65 percent of the 2015-16 budget, up from 29.03 percent in the current year. Under the approved budget, that amount translates to \$8,234,035.

Hebron meanwhile, remains responsible for the largest amount, 55.83 percent or \$15,504,424; and Andover is responsible for 14.52 percent or \$4,032,316.

The budget was approved Tuesday in two of the three towns: Andover voted in favor of the package by a vote of 179-45 and Marlborough said 'yes' with a vote of 307-288. In Hebron,

however, the vote was close but ultimately voters said 'no' by a 762-749 tally.

In total, 2,330 residents from the three towns cast a vote for the budget, up from 1,663 at the first referendum.

Speaking on the results this week, Gaudinski said, "The number is the number and we have to make it work. The boards of finance and selectmen don't have a choice about the RHAM number so this is the number that the voters approved and we will put it into our budget."

Marlborough is the only town in the district that has yet to approve their budget and has a town meeting scheduled Monday night for that purpose.

"We'll be having our town meeting Monday night, so depending on how people vote that night we'll see what happens," she added. "It's still up in the air for us. There was a slight decrease [from RHAM] but not as much as we had hoped."

Watt meanwhile, added, "A lot of the three towns supported [the RHAM budget] moving forward. It was very close in Hebron so I know from that perspective residents do feel that [the RHAM board] has a lot of work to do even with the budget we've got today."

And in Andover, First Selectman Bob

Burbank said it was a good thing the budget had passed.

"It doesn't do any good to go referendum after referendum" he said, adding, "It's hard for me to evaluate the RHAM budget because I'm not involved with the numbers and programs and the day to day, but they do have a board and I trust that the board has done their best to cut costs and do the best they can for their students and that's the important part."

RHAM Superintendent of Schools Bob Siminski said Thursday, "We're very happy that it did pass. I think that it allows us to go forward, especially with the technology initiative."

Included in the budget is a one-to-one computing program that, under the approved budget, will provide enough notebook computers for each eighth grade student.

Major areas of increase in the proposal include \$775,539 in special education costs, \$381,575 in transportation costs and \$343,117 for operations and maintenance.

In addition, there is a \$63,791 increase in instructional supplies and \$57,665 is included for textbooks (an increase of \$19,665).

"I think the additional textbooks that are in there will help us to continue as well," Siminski

See RHAM Budget Page 2



Robert DeCarlo, U.S. Navy, retired, spoke at the commemoration ceremony held at Portland's Veterans' Memorial. Behind him are, from left, First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield, Deputy First Selectwoman Kathy Richards, selectman Carl Chudzick, state Rep. Christie Carpino and selectman Ryan Curley.

Portland Gathers cont. from Front Page
ratus both modern and antique proceeded down the route.

Other groups involved in the parade included the Boy Scouts, the Cub Scouts, the Sea Scouts, the Girl Scouts, Portland Unified Sports, Inner Circle Family Martial Arts, Portland Little League teams, resident Karen Johansmeyer of the Third Connecticut Regiment Fife and Drum Corps, and Shriners out of Newington.

The Portland Corvette Club also participated for the first time.

David Kuzminski reprised his annual role as reviewing stand announcer, providing play-by-play commentary on parade participants as they marched into the center of town, joined by Bransfield.

After the parade concluded on Main, many participants as well as residents turned onto Fairview to head to the town hall for the commemoration ceremony at the town's Veterans' Memorial.

Army Major Thomas DeRing served as the master of ceremonies for the remembrance.

Zion Lutheran Church pastor Kari Plymette offered an invocation, followed by the National Anthem courtesy of the Portland High School band.

Bransfield then spoke about what she called "a very moving day."

"When I come to work and go home at night, [the memorial is] such a peaceful place to remember all of the people who served our country," she said. "They are here today with us in spirit, if not in physical form."

DeRing then took a moment to speak about Marion Anderson, affectionately known as the "Poppy Lady" for more than 64 years in town, and this year's honorary parade marshal. Anderson passed away last July.

"She served for 69 continuous years as a member, president and past president of the American Legion Auxiliary," he said. "Rest in peace; you never missed a Memorial Day ceremony. You are here in spirit as you have served so many in our community and beyond."

Robert DeCarlo, who served for more than 21 years in the U.S. Navy as a cryptologic officer the Naval Security Group Command at various assignments, was the keynote speaker for the event.

He also worked for more than 30 years with the U.S. Postal Service in various roles, and has also been a part of the American Legion for the same amount of time, serving as post commander at Post No. 17 in Naugatuck and Post No. 61 in Deep River, and the commander of Districts 2 and 7 for Connecticut, among other various roles.

DeCarlo began with setting the record straight about what Memorial Day is.

"The day is sometimes confused with Veterans Day. Memorial Day is a day of remembering the men and women who died while serving their country during their military service," he said. "That includes military veterans from the Revolutionary War to the present."

DeCarlo talked about his first Memorial Day ceremony he experienced when he was young with his father, a World War II veteran.

"I was so proud to be there, and I wished to become a part of that Memorial Day observance," he said. "My wish came true; I served in the United States Navy for 21 years and I am very proud of my service."

DeCarlo said he felt "very proud" to be able to be speaking at the event in order to honor all of the fallen service members throughout the U.S.'s history.

"There are so many who did not make it home; those servicemen and women who sacrificed their lives in the defense and preservation of Old Glory," he said.

He also talked about the annual decorating of veterans' graves at anywhere from Arlington National Cemetery to local cemeteries.

"This is one way to honor and remember those men and women," DeCarlo said. "Have you made a visit to a local cemetery on Memorial Day to pay your respects to a fallen military loved one?"

DeCarlo also urged people to take time for a moment of silence amid their family plans throughout the weekend to honor fallen veterans, which is the reason for the day.

"God bless and protect our military men and women serving at home and abroad, and God bless America," he said. "Memorial Day is truly a day of remembrance."

After, DeRing read a list of names of 24 veterans who had passed away since last year's Memorial Day.

He also listed four names that had been added to the Veterans' Memorial this year: Roman Glowinski, who served in World War II; brothers Andrew and Thomas Chaisson, who served in the Persian Gulf War; and Adam Fontenault, who also served in the Persian Gulf War.

To conclude, DeRing read a poem about what veterans have done for the country, by an unknown author.

"It is the veteran, not the preacher, who has given us freedom of religion. It is the veteran, not the reporter, who has given us freedom of the press. It is the veteran, not the poet, who has given us freedom of speech," he read. "It is the veteran, not the campus organizer, who has given us freedom to assemble. It is the veteran, not the lawyer, who has given us the right to a fair trial. It is the veteran, not the politician, who has given us the right to vote."

"It is the veteran who salutes the flag; it is the veteran who serves under the flag," he read.

Then, Father Paul Boudreau of the Church of Saint Mary offered a benediction.

The American Legion Color Guard concluded the ceremony with a 21-gun salute, along with the playing of Taps.

A full photo gallery from the parade and ceremony can be found online at [facebook.com/rivereastnewsbulletin](https://www.facebook.com/rivereastnewsbulletin).

RHAM Budget cont. from Front Page

stated.

There is also a 2.8 percent salary increase for teachers with no step, a 1.9 percent increase for administrators as per the second year of their contract, and non-certified staff is currently in negotiations.

Siminski added, "The excellence we've been able to achieve we'll be able to continue."

He mentioned RHAM was ranked No. 28 in

the state, according to U.S. *News and World Report* – just below Glastonbury.

"We're proud of that," he said, "and I think one of the things we've been able to do here is create a culture of learning and appreciation for learning, and wanting to succeed academically – for all kids – and I think those are the important things."

Marlborough to Vote on Budget Monday

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

The rescheduled town meeting on the town's proposed 2015-16 fiscal year budget is set for next Monday, June 1, at 7 p.m., in the Marlborough Elementary School cafeteria.

The vote was set for May 11, but postponed as the RHAM schools budget – the single largest component of the town spending package – had not yet been passed. Taxpayers wanted to wait and see what reductions the regional school board made to its budget following the spending proposal's May 4 referendum rejection.

After trimming \$68,000, the RHAM school board sent a new budget out to referendum this week, and it passed with voters.

As a result of the trimming, the Marlborough proposed budget sits at \$23.06 million, an \$831,860, or 3.74 percent, increase over the current year. (The budget that was sent to the June 1 meeting was a \$23.08 million; at Monday's meeting, the results of the RHAM referendum will first need to be accepted and realized into the town budget – then voters will proceed with deciding the fate of the

\$23.06 million spending proposal.)

With the referendum victory, Marlborough's portion for RHAM now sits at \$8.23 million, or a 5.65 percent increase over what it is currently paying for RHAM. The rest of the Marlborough budget includes: \$7.40 million for the local Board of Education, a \$125,000, or 1.71 percent, increase from current year spending; \$4.68 million for town operations, a \$70,000, or 1.52 percent, increase; \$20,000 for contingency; \$212,880 for capital; and \$2.52 million for town debt. (Taxpayers vote separately for the \$212,880 for capital.)

The spending proposal calls for the mill rate to rise 1.44 mills, from 31.45 to 32.89. This would translate to a 4.6 percent tax increase.

The mill rate is used to determine residents' taxes; a resident can determine their taxes by multiplying the mill rate by their total assessments. One mill is equal to \$1 in tax per \$1,000 of assessed property and under the proposed mill rate of 32.89, a resident with a home assessed at \$250,000 would pay \$8,222.50 in taxes.

Glastonbury Woman Killed in Marlborough Crash

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

One person died Tuesday as the result of an accident on Route 66 in Marlborough involving a student transportation van.

Courtney Wilczewski, 22, of 82 Shipman Dr., Glastonbury, was pronounced dead at Hartford Hospital after the Nissan Altima she was driving was hit head on by an Access Transportation student van.

State police reported the accident occurred around 5 p.m. after the Access van, a Dodge Caravan driven by Felix Pagan, 61, of 352 South St., New Britain, crossed the center line, hitting Wilczewski's car head on.

As a result of the impact, police said, the Access van spun around, striking a third car.

Pagan, along with a juvenile that was in

the van at the time, were transported to Hartford Hospital due to "non-evident injuries," police said.

Wilczewski was originally transported to the Marlborough Clinic, police said. However, she was later transported by LifeStar to Hartford Hospital.

The driver and passenger of the third vehicle were not injured, police said.

According to police, Route 66 between Johnson Road and the Route 2 entrance ramp was shut down for approximately four hours following the accident.

State police said the cause of the accident is currently under investigation.

Middletown Woman Charged in Portland Fatal Crash

by John Tyczkowski

A Middletown woman has been charged in connection with a fatal January car crash, according to Portland Police.

Sandra Civitillo, 45, of Middletown, was arrested and charged with second-degree manslaughter with a motor vehicle, operating under the influence, failure to drive in the proper lane and traveling unreasonably fast, police said.

The manslaughter charge is a Class C felony that carries a penalty of one to 10 years in prison.

Civitillo's arrest on Thursday, May 14, was

in connection with a Jan. 10 motor vehicle collision at the Ledges on Route 66 just after 2 a.m.

The crash resulted in the death of Don J. Martin, 73, of East Hampton.

Sergeant Jim Kelly of the Portland Police Department said a medical report showed Civitillo's blood alcohol level was over the legal limit, and that the department's traffic reconstruction investigation revealed Civitillo had both crossed into the oncoming lane and had exceeded the posted speed limit.

H No Purchase Yet for Former Moose Property in Marlborough

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

The former Moose Lodge property at 303 South Main St. still sits vacant after the seller, Moose International, rejected the town's offer for purchase.

First Selectwoman Cathi Gaudinski said the Board of Selectmen made two offers for the property, neither of which were "acceptable to the seller."

"If the Moose would like to reconsider the last offer, the town would reconsider purchase, contingent on satisfactory inspection results," Gaudinski said.

During a May 12 Planning Commission meeting, Peter Hughes, the town's director of planning and development, said the Board of Selectmen will not make another offer on the property. Hughes stated the latest asking price by the seller is \$346,000. According to Hughes, the land is worth between \$175,000 and \$200,000, and this was the basis of the town's original offer. There are no additional bidders because of the restrictive uses of the property,

Hughes said.

Back in November, the town held a public forum to discuss whether or not the town would be interested in purchasing the property. At the time, many residents spoke in favor of purchasing the land and using it for fields or other passive recreation activities.

Included in the property is a one-story building, a pavilion, and two fields, one soccer and one baseball, that are smaller than regulation fields. The town had been leasing the fields from the Moose before Moose Lodge 1631 disbanded in August 2014.

When the group disbanded last August, members of the lodge were reluctant to speak about the closing. However, sources at the time indicated it may have been caused by the lodge not having enough members to fill all of the officer positions.

A source also told the *Rivereast* last August it was their belief that, when a lodge closes its doors, Moose International is responsible for

getting rid of it and selling its assets – which would include the property.

In 2012, the property was assessed at \$235,810, and was appraised at \$338,300. The building was constructed in 1955 and is 5,225 square feet. The property includes 19.5 acres of which nine acres are wetlands and is currently zoned DRE, for recreational use only. The realtor for the property originally asked \$425,000 when listing the property last fall.

During the public forum in November, Gaudinski clarified that a purchase would have to go for public approval.

At the time, she said the board was potentially looking at a Department of Energy and Environmental Protection open space grant to cover part of the purchase. However Gaudinski had said they may not apply for a grant because the grant would not cover any buildings on the property and place restrictions on the use of the property.

That grant application due date passed on

March 1.

Also at the public forum, Gaudinski had said the soccer fields are only good for the under 10-year-old group and the baseball field is tee ball-sized. The building also would need extensive work to bring it up to code and the town was considering demolishing the building. Demolishing the building, Gaudinski said, would be approximately \$75,000 plus abatement if necessary.

The two fields are surrounded by wetlands and the soccer field could not be expanded and the baseball field could be expanded only a small amount.

Selectman Dick Shea during the public forum had clarified that the property is zoned for recreational use only, and therefore could not be developed for commercial or residential use.

Some ideas residents had expressed for the property were fields, passive recreation activities geared toward adults and a dog park.

Hebron Marks Another Bucolic Memorial Day Parade

by Geeta Schrayter

The center of Hebron looked like a Norman Rockwell painting Monday, as residents lined the street for the town's Memorial Day parade. Red, white and blue specked the crowd as many spectators gathered in patriotic colors, while others waved small, likewise patriotic flags.

Families, friends and neighbors – people young and old – along with plenty of canine companions, made an appearance to view the parade as it passed. And when it did, making its way along Main Street in honor of the fallen, appreciative applause broke out while veterans marched or were driven along the route.

Along with veterans, the parade included some officials: selectmen Dan Larson and Brian O'Connell, Town Manager Andrew Tierney and state Rep. Gayle Mulligan (R-55th District) all marched past while they smiled and waved to those watching.

In addition, the parade included three bands: the Hebron Elementary School band and the RHAM middle and high school bands, along with a number of town groups and organizations. These included boy, girl and tiger scouts; participants in Hebron baseball and soccer; the Hebron Lions – who reminded people about their free fireworks show June 27; and local members of the fire department with their gleaming fire trucks.

As usual, the parade made its way to St. Peter's Cemetery for grave honors before turning around and making a return trip, during which time all halted at the Veterans Memorial Green for a ceremony honoring the fallen.

The Rev. Mark Santostefano, an Air Force veteran and member of the Veteran of Foreign Wars Post 8776, got things underway with an invocation.

"We give you thanks and praise for your great love for us, for your abiding presence with us, and for the blessings and privileges we have as citizens of America the beautiful," prayed Santostefano, pastor of The Worship Center Church. "May you forever keep her strong, faithful and free. On this Memorial Day, we remember with great gratitude and deep appreciation those amazing men and women who, out of love and devotion, have given their lives to protect our country and bring peace to the world. Keep them in your loving care."

Joe Fetta, commander of the Hebron American Legion, reminded those present of the "solemn duty" they had as citizens "to honor those

who made the ultimate sacrifice so we may live in freedom," before introducing Lt. Col Sean Connolly of the U.S. Army Reserve to speak about the day.

Connolly is a Hebron resident who was recently named commissioner of the Connecticut Department of Veterans' Affairs.

"For too many people in this nation, Memorial Day has simply become the kick-off to summer; part of a three-day weekend with barbecues, the opening of swimming pools and the start of summer vacation season," Connolly began. "But these wonderful American traditions are only possible – they are *only* possible – because of the servicemen and women who gave their lives in the fields, in the deserts, in the skies and the seas all across the world."

The crowd erupted in applause at his words, which were followed by, "To those who know better, like all of you, like our great town of Hebron, this is our opportunity to recognize the sacrifices made by so many of our fellow citizens to protect our security, defend our freedom and defend our right to be here this morning."

Connolly went on to note "since the founding of our nation over 800,000 soldiers, sailors, Marines, airmen and Coast Guard men have given their lives in service to the United States to defend our liberty and to uphold the promise of our democracy. It is therefore only fitting that we set aside at least one day – today, Memorial Day – to recognize their service and the ultimate sacrifice of those who gave their lives in service to our nation."

He added this year marks the 70th anniversary of the end of World War II during which Connecticut lost over 4,000 citizens; and the 50th anniversary of the Vietnam War, during which Connecticut lost more than 600 citizens.

Connolly also discussed the significance behind lowering flags to half-staff and then raising them again.

"In traditional Memorial Day observance, the flag of the United States is raised quickly to the top of the staff and then slowly and solemnly lowered to half-staff in remembrance of those who gave their lives so that this nation would endure," he explained. "As is our tradition, their memory will be raised again when the flag is returned to full staff by us, the living, who resolve not to let their sacrifice be in vain."



World War II veterans Warren Holbrook (left) and Emil Caron drove along in a red Ford Mustang during Monday's Memorial Day parade in Hebron. They smiled and waved as spectators applauded in appreciation of their service.

"Although our lives are often permeated with political debates and disagreements, we would do well to remember that the United States has the longest enduring constitutional democracy in the history of the world," he furthered to more applause.

"And it's our military men and women who have sacrificed to make that so. So today we come together to honor our fallen comrades, their selfless service, courage, devotion to duty, and patriotism – may we never forget them or their sacrifices."

After Connolly concluded, saying, "God bless the fallen and their families, God bless this great town of Hebron, the great state of Connecticut and God bless the United States of America," a final salute was given to three Hebron veterans who passed away this year.

In addition, mention was made of a resident who returned safely from serving in a combat zone this year, those from Hebron who are cur-

rently serving, those from town who died serving in the Civil War up through present-day, and all who are Prisoners of War or Missing in Action.

Connolly's words about the flag came into play as the ceremony wound down, when Honorary Grand Marshal Milton Porter, who served in the U.S. Army during World War II, returned the flag to full staff.

And when the ceremony came to a close minutes later, after the 12-gun salute, the playing of Taps and a performance of the National Anthem, the crowd began to disperse. Many, one could assume, headed off to a family barbecue or to open their pools as Connolly had alluded to. But with all they'd seen and heard as part of the town's annual Memorial Day parade, their thoughts might also have lingered on the true meaning of the day – the fallen – and all that was possible due to their ultimate sacrifice.

Hebron School Board Appoints New Superintendent

by Geeta Schrayter

The local Board of Education last Thursday voted unanimously to appoint Ellington resident Timothy M. Van Tassel its new superintendent of schools.

The name of the new school leader shouldn't be wholly unfamiliar to regular *RiverEast* readers – as, since 2013, Van Tassel has served as assistant schools superintendent in East Hampton. (A story about his departure from that town's school system appears on page 27.)

Prior to his East Hampton tenure, Van Tassel worked in Enfield, where he spent time as principal of Eli Whitney Elementary School as well as John F. Kennedy Middle School. He began his career in 1999 as an elementary school teacher at Mary Louise Aitken Elementary School in West Hartford.

Van Tassel received a bachelor's degree from Westfield State College in Westfield, Mass.; a master's degree in public administration from American International College in Springfield, Mass.; a master's degree in education from Cambridge College in Cambridge, Mass; and a sixth-year diploma in educational administration and his superintendent of schools certificate from the University of Connecticut.

According to the Board of Education, 14 candidates applied for the superintendent's position, who were assessed by referencing the leadership profile compiled from focus groups and responses to an online survey by school and community members. The original number was then reduced to six who were interviewed, after which three finalists were selected for a second round of interviews, with Van Tassel coming out as the finalist.

Speaking to the appointment Thursday, school board member Abe Kriszt congratulated Van Tassel and said, "I think your qualifications to do this job are tremendous."

He added, "I know you mentioned during the interview process the important qualities of collaborator and listener. As we move forward with important decisions in this town – and there are many moving forward – I hope you'll use those."

He concluded, "I think we're going to need that in a big way. I think you're ready."

Board member Geoffrey Davis added similar thoughts, welcoming Van Tassel and shar-

ing, "I think that you have the excellent qualities to be a great leader to support this district and to move us forward and to reach the goals that we have."

Davis added Van Tassel's passions "in terms of working with teachers, working with students, working with staff, reaching out to parents and to members of the public are going to be crucial."

"I think you'll do an excellent job of moving us forward," he stated – and board member Carol Connolly echoed those thoughts.

"While we were looking for a new superintendent, we considered a lot of the factors the community told us they wanted," she stated. Such as "someone with great leadership, someone who would work on morale, someone who would stay for a long period of time, someone with early childhood experience, a teacher, and someone we could entrust our children with. And I am very happy to say that when we interviewed you and you met with us, you really had met all of those qualities and will be a true asset to Hebron."

Board chairwoman Maryanne Leichter shared her sentiments in the board's press release, writing she was "excited to welcome Mr. Van Tassel to the Hebron Public Schools."

She continued, "We, as a Board of Education, look forward to working with him as we continue to move the Hebron Public Schools forward to provide our students the very best education in the 21st century. As a former elementary school principal, he brings an understanding of and commitment to children."

Van Tassel was present at the meeting with his wife Jen, his children Emma and Luke, and his parents George and Alice – all of whom were proud of his appointment.

Emma, 9, said she was excited for her dad, while Luke, 7, said "I'm proud of him because he's worked so hard being a teacher and a principal and an assistant superintendent in East Hampton, so I think he'll do a good job as the superintendent in Hebron."

Likewise, his wife said, "We're very proud of him. We think we'll find a home here in Hebron; his elementary education is really his love."

Similarly, his mother said, "We're thrilled and we're very proud," and his father added,



Ellington resident Timothy M. Van Tassel was unanimously appointed Hebron's new superintendent of schools last week. He will start July 1. Van Tassel was present at the special school board meeting with his family, including his wife Jennifer, and children Emma, 9, and Luke, 7.

"We're as proud of him as he is of being appointed."

Speaking on that appointment last Thursday, Van Tassel said he was "so, so thrilled for this opportunity" – one he said he "couldn't miss."

"I'm thrilled you have the confidence in me to be your district leader to serve as your superintendent of schools," he addressed the board. "I do anticipate this is going to be a long tenure. I am very, very happy to have this opportunity. I look forward to this."

He furthered, "I am really looking forward

to being here working in collaboration with the leadership in the district and I'm looking forward to working with the teachers as well. This is a wonderful start and I couldn't think of a better place to be right now."

Van Tassel will resign from his position in East Hampton, where he said he had a "wonderful two years," at the end of the school year. He accepted a three-year contract with a base salary of \$142,200 and begins his work in Hebron July 1.

Hebron Budget Passes on Second Try

by Geeta Schrayter

All signs pointed to 'yes.' That is, all the signs at the intersection of routes 85 and 66 encouraged passersby to vote in favor of the Hebron town budget for the 2015-16 fiscal year, which amounts to \$36.38 million, for an increase of 1.74 percent over the current year's budget.

And on Tuesday, that's exactly what residents did. The budget passed by a vote of 810-697, after a referendum that saw about 460 more voters take to the polls than at the May 5 referendum, when the then \$36.65 million budget fell by a vote of 586-462.

After the initial failure, the Board of Finance voted to reduce the town government budget by \$75,000, lowering that amount to \$8,886,923, for a 2.54 percent or \$220,486 increase over the current year.

In addition, the finance board lowered the local Board of Education budget by \$150,000 for a zero percent increase over the present year. The Board of Education budget now stands at \$11,990,454.

However, just where cuts will be taken to make up for those reductions is yet to be determined. At its meeting last Thursday, the Board of Selectmen touched briefly on the subject but decided to wait and see what the results of the referendum would be before making any finite decisions.

Similar sentiments were shared by members of the education board at their meeting May 14 where, apart from \$50,000 in savings from an adjustment in insurance costs, a retirement and some staff shifting, they elected to wait until a new superintendent was on board to decide upon the remaining \$100,000 in cuts. (The board made an appointment last Thursday; Ellington resident Timothy M. Van Tassel begins in the district July 1.)

Board of Education Chairwoman Maryanne Leichter said this week she was happy the budget had passed.

"I'm happy that it passed because I was fearful that we were going to have to go below zero," she stated. "But we still have to get to-

gether as a board to figure out what we're going to do to get to the amount cut."

Leichter added she was "relieved" Van Tassel would soon be on board.

"He'll be helping us find things too for these cuts."

Also included in the overall budget number is \$15.50 million for Hebron's portion of the RHAM budget, which was also approved Tuesday at \$27.77 million – a 3.43 percent increase over the 2014-15 budget.

Speaking on the budget's approval this week, Town Manager Andrew Tierney said "I'm glad it passed. I think a lot of people tried to get the vote out. I know the Board of Education, RHAM and [the Town] worked hard to try to get participation, and we got another 500 or so voters."

He added, "Hopefully people were happy with the amount cut from the budget and now we can go to work. The next couple of meetings we'll try to figure out where we can reduce the budget, at least on the town side, by the \$75,000 and try to make it as painless as possible."

Likewise, Board of Selectmen Chairman Jeff Watt said he was "happy with the results."

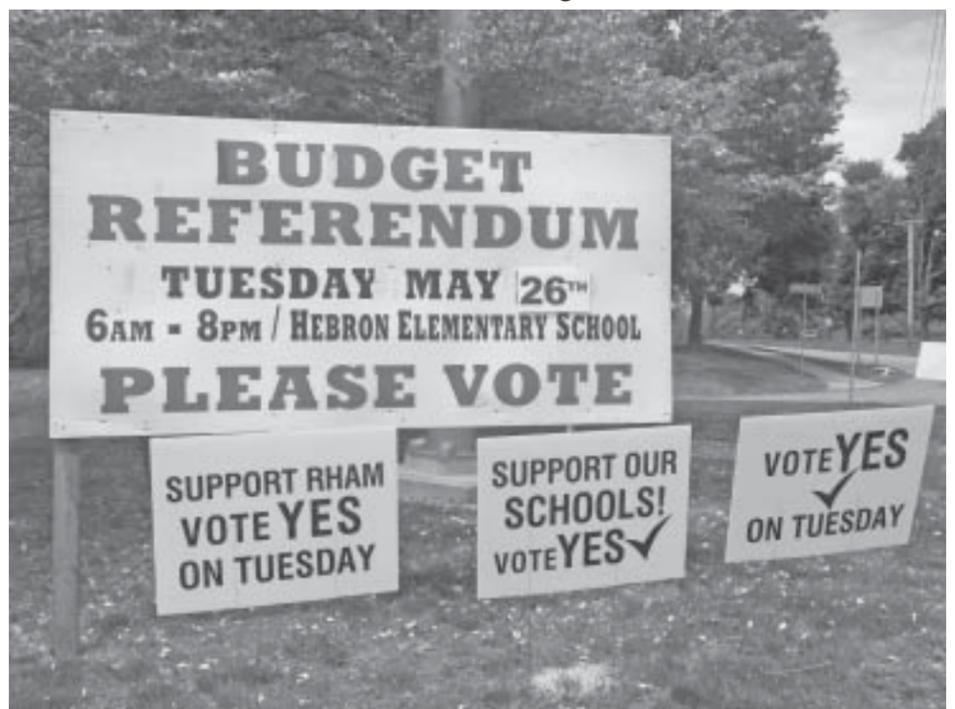
"Now I think the Board of Selectmen, from the town side, has work to do to be able to get to that \$75,000 number," he added.

Like Tierney, Watt mentioned the increase in participation, saying he thought the increase was partially due to the use of the town's messaging system which can send out automated calls, texts and emails with a specific message.

The selectmen had voted to use the system at their meeting May 21, as long as the information was kept concise and factual. Watt said, "I'm hoping it contributed to" the increase, but he also mentioned if the system was used again, there was something he'd do different.

"It was my fault but I forgot to put non-emergency," he explained. "So the precursor to the message was 'this is an emergency.'"

Watt said he wanted to apologize to residents for the misunderstanding, adding "I will make



Signs in the center of Hebron urged voters to vote 'yes' during Tuesday's referendum. While not everyone did so, enough voted in favor of the \$36.38 million budget for the 2015-16 spending package to pass.

sure to click the non-emergency box" next time.

But overall, Watt said the participation increase was likely due to a combination of the signs around town, the call system, word-of-mouth efforts – and the reductions.

"The Board of Finance listened to voters last time and picked a number I think the voters were more comfortable with," he stated.

Board of Finance Chairman Mike Hazel felt similarly.

"I'm pleased that the turnout was much better than it was the first time," he said. "More voters showed up to the polls, which was pleas-

ing."

He added, "I think the cuts that we made got the voters to come out. You hate to do it but the first time around the 'no's prevailed so we had to take action."

And now that there was "another one down," Hazel said the finance board would now move on to setting the mill rate.

As a result of the approved budget, the mill rate is expected to increase 0.25 mills to 36.00 mills. For a home assessed at \$250,000, this would equate to a \$63 tax increase, bringing the amount to \$9,000 in taxes.

Colchester Celebrates Anniversary of World War II

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

It was a sunny and bright day for Colchester's Memorial Day parade on Sunday as the town came together to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the end of World War II and the liberation of the prisoners of war and concentration camps.

"We must never forget our men and women who fought so valiantly to protect our freedom," Henny Simon, a Colchester resident and Holocaust survivor, said during the ceremony after the parade. "They have been called the greatest generation. If not for them, I wouldn't be alive today."

During her speech, Simon recalled being born in Germany and at age 16, her father immigrated to China; however, Simon and her mother were not allowed to follow. Simon's mother was murdered by the Nazis.

"This past Jan. 29 was the 70th anniversary of my liberation from the hands of the Nazis," Simon said. "I consider it my second birthday."

Simon said being a survivor for her is truly a miracle.

"The feel of going to be killed, the unbearable cold and the unbelievable hunger we had to endure is indescribable," Simon said. "Whoever could not keep up with the pace was shot. That I survived was a miracle."

Simon ended her speech with "God bless America, my adopted home."

Hundreds of residents speckled the parade route from the William J. Johnston Middle School down Norwich Avenue and onto Main Street, ending at the Veterans Memorial Green.

The parade began with the Colchester Police along with the American Legion and VFW Color Guard, the parade stepped off at exactly 12:30 p.m. to residents waving flags and smiling, remembering all of the veterans in Colchester and around the world.

Next was the Bacon Academy and William J. Johnston Middle School bands followed by the National Guard and the USN Silver Dolphin Drill Team.

Grand Marshal Walter Karrenberg Sr. rode along in a convertible and was followed by the Antique Veterans and Adler-Boluck VFW Post 6990 Auxiliary.

Many of the local politicians walked together including First Selectman Stan Soby and the

rest of the Board of Selectmen, state Rep. Linda Orange (D-48th District), state Senator Art Linares (R-33rd District), state Rep. Melissa Ziobron (R-34th District), the Democratic Town Committee and the Colchester Republicans.

Other marchers following the politicians included the Knights of Columbus Council 6107, Boy Scout and Cub Scout Troop 109, Boy Scout Troop 13, Boy Scout Troop 72, the Girl Scouts, Daisy Troop 63048, Colchester Fife and Drum, John Koopman and his horse Abishai, a group of antique cars, Colchester Grange 78, Colchester Community Theatre, the Colchester Co-op, Therapy Dogs, Galaxy Youth Cheer, Colchester Baseball and Softball, the Colchester Hayward Volunteer Fire Company and the Salem Volunteer Fire Company.

Following the end of the parade, a group gathered on the Veterans Memorial Green for a ceremony honoring the veterans.

Announcer Charles Savitsky led the ceremony with the National Anthem, sung by the St. Andrews choir. This was followed by a prayer and moment of silence by Chaplain Roger Bergeron.

Savitsky also introduced the parade's grand marshal, Walter Karrenberg Sr., and described some of his accolades and experiences. Karrenberg is a veteran of World War II and a Purple Heart recipient. He was a paratrooper in the 322nd Airborne Battalion and 101st Airborne Division. On D-Day in France, he was captured by the Germans and spent 10 months as a prisoner of war before being freed by American forces in 1945.

Ben Cooper, a World War II veteran, then spoke. Cooper was drafted into the Army at the age of 20 and became a medic administering first aid to soldiers and civilians. Cooper, during his speech, clarified he was not a doctor. Cooper was assigned to the 45th Infantry Division and took part in liberating many towns and concentration camps.

"One of Colchester's own Private First Class William J. Johnston served with the 45th Infantry," Cooper said. "I am very proud to have been part of the same infantry division."

Cooper said the 45th Division was also known as the Thunderbird Division and liber-



The Colchester Community Theatre won best theme float for ITS rendition of soldiers liberating prisoners of war and people from concentration camps. The actors kept completely still throughout the entire parade route.

ated over 35,000 prisoners.

"I'll never forget the smell of burning flesh or the sight of emaciated humans that looked like human skeletons who were so happy to see us," Cooper said. He also said he will never forgive the Nazis.

Cooper said he and Simon work together to eliminate hate and bullying.

"When we speak to young people, we share this motto; no act of kindness no matter how small is ever wasted," Cooper said. "Anyone can do it. Practice it every day. Regardless of religion, race, or culture, we are all part of the same race – the human race."

Soby then took the stage to give out the parade awards. The best marching group went to the Daisy Troop. The best theme float went to the Colchester Community Theatre with their reenactment of the liberation of concentration camps and prisoners of war. The most patriotic went to the veterans' trailer.

The rest of the ceremony included the poem *What is a Soldier*, read by Jennie Boluck Lenkiewicz; a singing of "American the Beautiful" and "God Bless America" by Patrice Ashburner-Smith, Terry Phillips and Maureen Kelly-Kevorkian; and the laying of flowers at the monuments by the girl scouts escorted by veterans.

After the laying of the flowers, Bergeron and Tom O'Meara read the names of the deceased from Colchester, Alphonse Letendre raised the flag and the Antique Veterans' Rifle Squad performed the rifle salute.

Nicholas Levine and Colin Hiscoz performed Taps to end the ceremony.

Once the ceremony commenced, a wave of appreciation for the men and women who have served or are serving came over the crowd before the group dispersed to continue remembering all of the veterans and the true meaning of Memorial Day.

Colchester Selectmen Appoint Reeveer to Board

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

The Board of Selectmen unanimously appointed John Reeveer as its newest member at its meeting last Thursday.

Reeveer, a former member of the Board of Education, began his appointment by walking in the Memorial Day parade on Sunday with the rest of the board.

"We were very fortunate [to have so many candidates]," selectwoman Rosemary Coyle said at the meeting Thursday. "I have a number one choice: John Reeveer."

The board has had the vacancy since Feb. 19, when Republican Bill Curran resigned from the board. The term runs through this November, at which point Reeveer will have to run for a full term.

In 2013, Reeveer opted not to run for re-election to the school board, citing time commitment issues with his family. However Reeveer explained to the board during his interview May 7 that the "timing is better," and he now understands the kind of workload it takes to be on a board.

Reeveer is a managing partner of RJS Associates, a company which works to place mid-level to executive level professionals in engineering and manufacturing, environmental and civil, scientific and pharmaceutical, information technology, sales and marketing, quality, and accounting and finance.

Two other candidates had also been interviewed by the selectmen – and Coyle stressed her decision to vote for Reeveer was in no way meant to diminish Seth Breitmaier or Andreas Bisbikos' interviews. She encouraged both to be involved in the town. Bisbikos already is, serving on the Economic Development Commission.

"Andreas is a solid member of the EDC and we will continue to harness his talent there," First Selectman Stan Soby said.

"Selectmen is difficult," Coyle said of the board position. "It takes time to get the experience. John will be able to get up to speed in a reasonable amount of time."

Coyle said she especially enjoyed Reeveer's answer about asking questions and listening.

"We try hard to listen in this role," Coyle said.

Selectwoman Denise Mizla said she was impressed with Breitmaier's willingness to serve.

"He expressed interest in the EDC, and maybe he can start there and gain a little experience," Mizla said. But, she added, "John is my choice."

Mizla said that, with Reeveer's past experience on the Board of Education, he has served over the years and has the skills to be a selectman.

Selectman Kurt Frantzen identified with the candidates – as he himself was an appointee to the board, joining last June to replace Democrat Mike Caplet.

"One year ago I was in the position of these candidates," Frantzen said. For Frantzen, a key issue was building a team to move the board

forward.

"We had the luxury of evaluating several candidates. The best candidate is Mr. Reeveer," Frantzen said.

Coyle moved to appoint Reeveer and his appointment was unanimously approved.

The board also appointed Susan Dubb to the Police Commission and Jennifer Rayburn DeHay as an alternate on the Commission on Aging.

At the meeting Soby said during his first selectman's update that the Colchester Sports Arena is moving forward with a new location, and there should be an announcement soon on exactly where that would be. Originally, the arena was supposed to be on Old Hartford Road, but that location fell through.

The next Board of Selectmen meeting will be June 4 at 7 p.m. at Town Hall.

Colchester Police News

5/19: Colchester Police said Rachel Groszswicz, 34, of 202 Valley St., Willimantic, was arrested and charged with violation of probation.

5/21: Colchester Police said Stephen Robbins, 48, of 303 Lebanon Ave., was arrested and charged with DUI and failure to drive right.

5/22: Colchester Police said Chad Stringer, 41, of 1188 Hartford Turnpike, Waterford, was arrested and charged with fourth-degree criminal mischief, breach of peace, and violation of a restraining order.

5/22: State Police said Jesse Benware, 33, of 5 Uncas Court, Quaker Hill, was arrested and charged with failure to appear.

5/23: State Police said Hans Quamme, 48, of 26 Flounders Dr., Bristol, was arrested and

charged with third-degree identity theft.

5/24: State Police said John Coloccio, 21, of 80 Pinebrook Rd., was arrested and charged with operating an unregistered motor vehicle, throwing objects at a motor vehicle, failure to carry insurance, speeding, engaging police in pursuit, DUI, failure to drive right, and restricted turns.

5/25: State Police said Anthony Martin, 36, of 16 Stuart St., Springfield, Mass., was arrested and charged with DUI and speeding.

5/25: State Police said Timothy Malone, 38, of 17 West St., Manchester, was arrested and charged with violation of probation.

5/25: State Police said David Barnes, 32, of 52 Brindlewood Path, was arrested and charged with third-degree assault.

Portland Police News

5/7: Stanley Haig, 43, of 162 Atkins St., Meriden, was charged with sixth-degree larceny, Portland Police said.

5/11: Corine Moisberry-Foss, 33, of 208 Main St., Apt. 47, was charged with disorderly conduct, third-degree assault and sixth-degree larceny, police said.

5/19: Stephen Anderson, 22, of 40 Ferry St., Middletown, was charged with second-degree burglary, fifth degree larceny and disorderly conduct, police said.

5/19: Dominica Anderson, 19, of 14 Chatham Court, was charged with criminal attempt to

commit possession of marijuana, police said.

5/19: Lewis Nicholas, 21, of 30 Ferry St., Middletown, was charged with second-degree burglary, fifth-degree larceny and disorderly conduct, police said.

5/19: Brenden Carr, 21, of Pine Street, Meriden, was charged with second-degree burglary, fifth-degree larceny and disorderly conduct, police said.

5/21: Christie Leclair, 20, of 163 Airline Ave., was charged with third-degree assault and breach of peace, police said.

WJJMS Building Project Headed to Colchester Meeting

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

The proposed William J. Johnston Middle School renovation and expansion project has one more hurdle to clear before heading to referendum – a town meeting, set for next Thursday, June 4, at 7 p.m., at Town Hall.

At the meeting, taxpayers can offer any feedback on the \$48.66 million project and then will vote whether to send the proposal to a town-wide referendum, which is slated for Tuesday, June 16.

“What an exciting time for the future students of WJJMS,” Superintendent Jeff Mathieu said. “With the opportunity to move into a 21st century school with updated technology and in an appropriate educational setting to meet the learning needs of today’s students, Colchester will now have a building which mirrors the excellent status awarded by the state.”

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.

After months of deliberations, the building committee behind the project chose to go forward with a mix of renovation and new construction for the middle school. The proposal calls for renovating many aspects of the building, demolishing the older 1950s and 1960s wing, and building a new two-story main sec-

tion for classrooms.

The committee opted for this option over solely new construction, as that alternative would have cost the town \$2 million more, and there was no guarantee the new construction would save money in the future for energy or operating costs.

The new-look school, which, if approved, would open during the 2017-18 school year, also would reflect declining enrollment. Instead of the current five-teacher teams, the school would feature four – two teams for each grade, made up of four teachers each. WJJMS Principal Chris Bennett has said that, while this isn’t ideal for academic learning, it can be done.

Cutting down the teams also saved in cost per square foot, by shrinking the overall footprint of the new school.

Barbara Joslin of Tecton Architects 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 option presented for referendum keeps two gyms in the school, and allows for the renovation of the pupil services area. The pupil services department currently is in an area set to

be demolished. It also includes space for two fields, increased parking and separated areas for bus drop-off and parent drop-off.

“In the state’s eyes, it’s three projects,” Joslin said. “We’re assuming no reimbursement for the gym, but we may get some reimbursement.”

The building for WJJMS 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 it can do that, there will be reimbursement.

Tecton estimated construction would take between 18 and 19 months.

Town officials have said the project will not affect the town’s mill rate, since town debt is currently decreasing at such a rate that this project would just replace it.

After selecting the mix of renovation and new construction in February, the building committee has hosted information meetings at the middle school, along with tours around the current building.

During those tours, participants saw faulty windows, issues with getting handicapped students around the school, broken sinks in science laboratories, broken doors, issues with the building not reflecting the team structure of the school, heating problems and blocked off water fountains and urinals among other issues.

With the referendum scheduled for June 16, the rush is on, since the project needs to be approved and have plans submitted to the state before June 30. If the project does not pass with voters, the town will have to apply for special legislation to extend the June 30 deadline. If the town is not granted this extension, the town would have to wait another year to submit the plans to the state.

“I am extremely encouraged at the work which has been done by the building committee and staff at WJJMS in designing a learning environment which will give the students an A+ opportunity for their future and compete with all other middle schools in the state,” Mathieu said.

The town meeting will take place Thursday, June 4, at 7 p.m., at Town Hall. The referendum, if approved on Thursday, will be Tuesday, June 16, from 6 a.m.-8 p.m., at Town Hall.

RHAM Board Approves Superintendent Contract

by Geeta Schrayter

At last week’s RHAM Board of Education meeting, the board completed negotiations on the contract for Superintendent Bob Siminski, to run through June 2017.

The board voted 6-2 to authorize Board Chair Danny Holtsclaw to sign the contract, which is retroactive to July 1, 2014.

The contract is actually from last year, hence the retroactive date. Speaking on why negotiations had taken so long, Siminski said this week, “I think that there were just a lot of things before the board.”

Included in the contract is an annual salary of \$163,200.

The contract also includes a section on the deferred salary Siminski will receive after he leaves the district, in five equal installments for the five fiscal years following his separation.

RHAM Board of Education Chairman Danny Holtsclaw had explained previously that at the request of the board, when the economy first started to take a downturn in 2008, Siminski agreed to defer some of his negotiated salary increases.

“So let’s say, for example, he was given a certain increase for the 2010-11 contract year. In his contract, those increases were deferred,”

he explained. “The justification for the board was to not have the salary increase impact the budget in that given year. So what happened was that kind of carried over in his contract to where essentially, Dr. Siminski was still receiving the same salary he got in the first year he agreed to defer.”

The amount deferred from fiscal year 2010-11 up through 2013-14 is \$60,142 and this amount, as it’s worded in the contract, “would have been paid to the superintendent in his annual salary payments...”

Holtsclaw explained the amount due to Siminski had always been reflected in the deferred salaries account.

He added Siminski’s salary increase – at 2 percent – “was in line with the increase to the administrative group” and said the contract was extended due to a track record of excellence in the district.

Prior to the board entering into executive session May 18, Hebron Board of Selectmen Chairman Jeff Watt – who stressed he was speaking as an individual – commented on the positive job he felt Siminski had been doing, but added it might be time to bring a fresh face into the district.

“First and foremost, I think Dr. Siminski has done a very good job for the years he’s been here,” he told the board. But he added, “My feeling is that there’s items going to last four to five years down the road and we’re going to have some new superintendents come in, in two of the three towns; my feeling is it would be good to have a fresh pair of eyes at the RHAM school to work with the superintendents.”

Holtsclaw said Watt’s comments at the meeting were the only such comments made to the board, and “in fact, in my eight years on the board it’s the first time I’ve ever seen a member – or even a selectman – from a town come to the board and suggest that the board not take action on the superintendent’s contract.”

Holtsclaw said “the board agreed to extend Dr. Siminski’s contract through June 30, 2017, because RHAM has, and continues to be, one of the top performing school districts in the state, with a cost per pupil lower than the Hebron Elementary District. The board took action approving the extension on Dr. Siminski’s contract based on that historic level of performance and [confidence] that that success will continue through June 30, 2017.

Like Holtsclaw, Siminski said this week the approval of the contract was a reflection “of the success we’ve been able to achieve here.”

“We’re not perfect and we need to continue to grow but I think one of the successes we’ve been able to achieve is a low per pupil cost. I know some other things need to be addressed like capital [projects] and a myriad of other things, but we do the best we can with what we’ve got.”

In response to some whispers he was planning to retire in the near future, Siminski, who has been with the district since 2005, added, “At one point in time I need to [retire] – I think that’s one of those things that’s a personal and family decision.”

He added, “I will say that the thought has come to mind just because of some very personal issues with my family. ... As we go through the summer that will give me some time to kick back and take stock about what’s going to go on the rest of my life.”

But, for the next few years at least, Siminski will remain head of the district, overseeing the education of students from Hebron, Marlborough and Andover.

East Hampton Assistant Superintendent Takes New Position

by John Tyczkowski

Tim Van Tassel, East Hampton’s assistant superintendent for the past two years, will be resigning from the position effective June 30.

From there, he’ll be heading to Hebron as the town’s new superintendent of schools. (A story on his appointment in Hebron appears on page 33).

“It’s just 10 minutes down the road,” Van Tassel said this week.

Van Tassel, a native of Somers, got his start in the world of education at West Hartford Public Schools, beginning as an elementary school teacher. He stayed there for nine years.

From there he went to Enfield where he worked as a principal, before moving to East Hampton two years ago.

“I’ve been able to serve at the classroom level and the administrative level, and most recently I’ve been getting into district leadership,” he said.

Van Tassel said he’ll miss East Hampton.

“The town is a wonderful district and a wonderful place to be,” he said. “I have greatly en-

joyed my time here.”

Van Tassel said one of the reasons he enjoyed East Hampton was the town’s close sense of community, which is part of what made Hebron so enticing to him.

“I want to be in a place where you get to know everyone and develop those relationships that you need to move the work forward,” he said. “It’s really appealing to me.”

In addition, Van Tassel praised the board for how well it has connected with the district.

“The connection the board has with the district is so pivotal,” he said. “And the fact that the board is so informed and likes to hear about what’s happening in the schools sets the stage for phenomenal opportunities in the future.”

He added, “Public education needs all the support it can possibly have; it takes a team.”

The board accepted Van Tassel’s resignation “with regret” at their meeting Tuesday night, and Board of Education Chairman Ken Barber said of Hebron, “Their gain is our loss.”

Similarly, Superintendent of Schools Diane

Dugas had nothing but positive things to say of Van Tassel.

“He has been a wonderful partner to work with, and has helped to move the district forward incredibly,” she said. “He’s had great relationships with staff and really done tremendous work on the curriculum side as well as the human resource side.”

She concluded, “I concur this is with great regret, but our paths will stay connected with him as a neighboring superintendent in Hebron.”

* * *

Also at Tuesday’s meeting, the board chose new principals for Center School and the middle school after an executive session.

Mary Clark was named principal of Center School and Jason Lehmann, the assistant principal of the middle school, was named as its principal.

Clark is a native of East Hampton who graduated from East Hampton High School. She received bachelor degrees in history and English

from Providence College in Providence R.I., a Master’s degree in teaching from Simmons College in Boston, Mass., and her sixth-year degree in educational leadership from the University of New England in Biddeford, Maine.

She’s taught in private and public schools, and was named Teacher of the Year at Two Rivers Magnet School in 2009.

Lehmann has been the middle school’s assistant principal for the past four years. He received bachelor degrees in math and science from the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill, N.C., and his Master’s in educational technology from the University of Connecticut. Also, he received his sixth-year degree in educational leadership from Sacred Heart University in Fairfield.

He taught math and science in the Willington public school district before coming to East Hampton.

See next week’s *Rivereast* for a full story on both principals.

Contractor Selected for Boiler Conversions in East Hampton

by John Tyczkowski

Tuesday evening, the Town Council voted to award the \$899,500 contract to convert oil boilers in municipal buildings to natural gas to Sav-More Cooling and Heating, Inc. of Southington.

Sav-More was one of three companies that bid on the contract, which includes work on boilers in Center School, Memorial School, the middle school, the town hall, Fire Station Company 1, the public works building, the library and the Board of Education offices.

The need for the boiler work comes at the same time as the town's work with Connecticut Natural Gas to install gas lines in town for municipal, commercial and residential customers.

In addition, there were two options the council voted to add into the work that's being done.

One involved replacing one boiler at the middle school with a high efficiency boiler, and the other involved installing central server software allowing the status of all municipal building boilers to be monitored from an offsite central location, Troy and Gary Karwowski, vice president and president of Sav-More, said.

The first option would total \$96,000, and the second would total \$11,000, town manager Michael Maniscalco said.

Specifically, Troy said the base bid at the middle school would be to remove the oil tanks and convert the school's two burners to gas. However, the first option would instead replace one of the burners with a new model.

"The existing boiler would be upgraded and then kept as a back-up, or redundancy," he said.

Councilor Mark Philhower pointed out that the new boiler with higher fuel efficiency would also carry a higher maintenance cost, and at first advocated for staying with the base bid.

Gary, in response to a question from council vice chair Kevin Reich said that both middle school boilers were "definitely beyond" their life expectancy, citing corrosion in the boilers' pipes from normal wear and tear.

Both boilers are around 25 years old.

After the discussion, Philhower changed his mind.

"You'd save by running at a higher efficiency, and you'd still have the other one for the back up," he said. "And \$96,000 is not a bad price for a boiler of that size."

"As much as I hate spending money, it really isn't a bad option," he said.

Philhower still cautioned the council to remember the higher maintenance cost involved due to the more complex equipment.

The council passed the base contract as well as the inclusion of both options unanimously.

Councilors also discussed the new special events public safety ordinance replacing the one the council struck down in April.

As part of the new ordinance's language, special events, i.e. public gatherings, that are not part of a normal organization's regular business and which exceed a certain number of persons, require the organization to apply for a permit for that event.

Family events and reunions are exempt, the

revised ordinance states.

An application for a permit must be filed with the town manager's office at least five days before the event happens, for no fee.

If an organization holds such an event without filing an application, penalties are as follows: first offence, written warning; second offense, \$50 fine; third offense, \$100 fine; and fourth offense, denial of any future application for one calendar year from the date of the event.

However, organizations may appeal fines before a committee consisting of the town manager, one council member from each of the parties represented on the council, and the police, fire and ambulance association chiefs.

Councilors decided on 1,000 as the number of persons that an event must exceed in order to require an application.

In addition, the special event provision was clarified so that businesses that regularly handle large crowds, such as Nelson's Family Campground and Markham Meadows would not have to apply for permits for normal operations, Maniscalco said.

The council scheduled a public hearing on the proposed ordinance for 6:15 p.m. before their regular meeting on June 9, and encouraged business owners to attend.

Hintz also read a resignation from Lori Wilcox, who said she is stepping down from the Board of Finance at the conclusion of the current budget cycle, on July 1.

"I regret that personal matters dictate that I must submit my letter of resignation," he read. "I enjoyed my time on the Board of Finance and hope to serve my community again in the future."

The council unanimously accepted the resignation.

Hintz nominated Janine Jiantonio to take Wilcox's slot on the board on July 1, and the council voted unanimously to do so.

As the meeting concluded, councilor Patience Anderson talked about how she wanted "a more public response" from Superintendent of Schools Diane Dugas and the Board of Education about what she called a "bullying" note that was found in the mailboxes of four teachers at the middle school.

"Even though I had requested a public response, I was told a full investigation has occurred and that the superintendent would like to keep the results of that investigation private and not make public remarks about it," she said.

Dugas told the *Rivereast* two weeks ago that "a full investigation was done" and that the conclusion was that the distribution of the note "was an isolated issue that was related to a personnel matter, and not related to any broader issue."

The next Town Council meeting will take place Tuesday, June 9 at 6:30 p.m. in the Town Hall meeting room.

Man Charged in Connection With 2014 Assault in East Hampton

by John Tyczkowski

A Portland man was arrested last week in connection with the severe beating of his mother-in-law at White Birch Horse Farm in East Hampton last September.

Matthew Frick, 28, of Sand Hill Road in Portland, was arrested May 21 and charged with aiding and abetting to first-degree assault, aiding and abetting to commit home invasion and aiding and abetting to commit first-degree burglary, state police said.

On Sept. 16, Lisa Rader, 59, co-owner of White Birch Horse Farm, was severely beaten and was transported to St. Francis Hospital in Hartford in serious condition.

Detectives from the State Police's Eastern District Major Crime Squad assisted the East Hampton Police Department in an investigation. Police said that, after a lengthy investigation, they applied for and received an arrest warrant for Frick - who co-owns White Birch Farm in Portland with his wife, Amy Rader Frick, Rader's daughter.

The affidavit for the arrest warrant is sealed due to the fact that the investigation is ongoing. State police said there is the potential for further arrests as well.

Lisa Rader said this week she was "very relieved" to hear of Frick's arrest.

"It really was a horrible thing," she said of the assault. "I'm finally sleeping again."

Rader also has a protective order from

Middletown Superior Court.

Rader said the attack happened very quickly, when she was in the lounge at night in the barn on her property. She said she defended herself from several open-handed blows before falling off her bed, where she got stuck between the bed and the wood stove.

"I had my hands covered my head, and said 'Okay, that's enough, you can stop,'" she said. "Then I woke up in St. Francis, and I don't know how many days I was out of it."

"Apparently I called 911 myself," she said. "The police said they found me with the phone in my hands," she said.

Rader underwent surgery for her injuries and then spent three months in a nursing home after spending nearly a month in the hospital.

She also said she wanted to thank the State Police for their help in the eight months since the attack.

"The detective from the State Police has gone above and beyond the call of duty," Rader said. "He always returns my calls and checks up on me."

Amy Rader Frick was unable to be reached by phone for comment.

The assault and burglary charges are Class B felonies. Both charges' penalties can range from one to 20 years. The home invasion charge is a Class A felony carrying a mandatory minimum sentence of 10 years.

Frick is next due in court June 18.

East Hampton Woman Charged in Fatal Crash

by John Tyczkowski

East Hampton Police have arrested Jennifer VanWycke, 35, of 14 Myrtle Rd., in connection with a car crash last fall that led to the death of a local pedestrian.

VanWycke was charged May 20 with second-degree manslaughter with a motor vehicle, risk of injury, operating an unregistered motor vehicle, failure to carry a license, failure to drive right, driving on a sidewalk, operating a motor vehicle under the influence, misconduct with a motor vehicle, possession of a narcotic substance, failure to keep a narcotic drug in the original container and possession of drug paraphernalia.

According to court records, VanWycke pled not guilty to all charges that same Wednesday.

The charges stemmed from a motor vehicle and pedestrian accident on Oct. 17, 2014, police said.

Shortly before 10 a.m. that day, VanWycke's vehicle, traveling southbound, veered into the northbound lane of North Main Street and onto the sidewalk and struck Jim Morris, 79, which resulted in his death.

VanWycke was next due in court today, May 29.

East Hampton Budget Referendum - Take Two

by John Tyczkowski

Belltown voters will head to the polls again next Tuesday, June 2, to vote on a reduced \$41.42 million overall town budget.

That new number represents a 2.83 percent increase over current year spending. The revised budget includes a \$200,000 reduction to Board of Education spending, and an \$82,374 reduction to the general town government budget.

The Board of Education has yet to decide where it will cut from, but some ideas discussed at a May 18 meeting included summer school programs and possibly a single teacher.

The Town Council voted two weeks ago to spread out its town government reductions among Center School maintenance funds, and fire department vehicle maintenance funds.

As part of a compromise, the council shifted funds to the fire department operating

budget, and agreed to make an emergency appropriation for Center School maintenance in the future if the need arises.

In the midst of the proposed reductions, the updated projected mill increase stands at 0.99 mills, which would increase the mill rate to 28.13. This would translate to a 1.04 percent tax increase.

For reference, a mill is \$1 tax per \$1,000 of assessed property value. If the budget passes, under the new mill rate, if a house is assessed at \$200,000, then taxes paid on it for the 2015-16 fiscal year would be \$5,626.

The revised budget passed the council with a 5-2 vote, with councilors Ted Hintz Jr. and Mark Philhower holding out for a lower mill rate.

Polling will once again take place at East Hampton Middle School, from 6 a.m.-8 p.m., on June 2.

Portland Selectmen Set 32.34 Mill Rate

by John Tyczkowski

In light of the approval of the town budget at referendum earlier this month, the Board of Selectmen last week unanimously agreed to set the mill rate for the coming 2015-16 fiscal year at 32.34.

Passed along with the budget on the first try at referendum two weeks ago, this new mill rate represents a .56 increase over the current year's 31.78.

This translates to a 1.08 percent tax increase. For reference, a mill is \$1 tax per

\$1,000 of assessed property value. Under the new mill rate, if a house is assessed at \$200,000, then taxes paid on it for the 2015-16 fiscal year would be \$6,468.

Deputy First Selectwoman Kathy Richards last week noted the recently-approved \$32.12 million town budget factors in an estimated \$4.58 million the town will receive from the state of Connecticut. "Without this, the mill rate would be 38.12 mills," she said.

Two Flee East Hampton Crash, Arrested

Two men were arrested May 10 after fleeing the scene of an early-morning crash, East Hampton Police said.

At about 3:40 a.m., police were dispatched to Route 66 at the intersection of Keighley Pond Road for a two-car motor vehicle collision. En route, police said, officers were advised that two people were fleeing on foot down Keighley Pond Road. Upon arrival, officers discovered that the occupants of one of the vehicles had indeed left the scene, police said. However, the two were located a short distance away from the collision.

After a brief investigation, Osvaldo Rodriguez, 31, of 26 Lawrence St., Hartford, was arrested and charged with failure to drive right, driving under the influence, operating under suspension, evading responsibility and possession of paraphernalia, police said. Rodriguez also sustained minor injuries, police said, but did not require medical transport.

Rodriguez's passenger, Ivan Vega, 21, of 124 Bartholomew Ave., Hartford, was arrested and charged with possession of drug paraphernalia, police added.

Majority of Sibiga Charges Dismissed

by Geeta Schrayter

All but four of the charges against a Marlborough resident charged with hosting an underage drinking party in August 2013 that led to the death of a Hebron teen were dismissed Wednesday, the Hartford Superior Court confirmed Thursday.

Paul Sibiga, 51, had been charged with 49 misdemeanor counts of permitting minors to possess alcohol and first-degree reckless endangerment in relation to a party held on his property that allegedly led to the death of Hebron resident Paige Houston, 17, in a drunk-driving accident in the early morning hours of Aug. 6, 2013.

Houston was the passenger in a pickup truck driven by Hebron resident Connor McKee. According to McKee's arrest warrant, he and Houston, along with two other friends, left a party on Sibiga's property prior to the crash.

Police said McKee was traveling over 80 miles per hour on a 35 miles-per-hour road when he drove through a stop sign, lost control of the vehicle, went off the road and struck a tree.

As a result of the crash, Houston, who was sitting in the back seat of the truck and had removed her seatbelt because she wanted to get out, was thrown from the vehicle. She struck a stone wall and was pronounced dead at the scene.

(McKee had a blood alcohol content of 0.11 percent at the time of the crash and pleaded guilty to second-degree manslaughter with a

motor vehicle last September. He was sentenced to five years in prison and five years of probation.)

Police investigations following the crash determined the group had come from Sibiga's property where he allegedly allowed his sons to host multiple parties. The investigation ultimately led to his arrest and the above charges on Dec. 12, 2013. He rejected a plea deal last year.

According to published reports, Sibiga's defense attorney Paul Melocowsky made a routine motion for a judgement of acquittal following six days of evidence presented by Tolland State's Attorney Matthew Gedansky, who rested his case Tuesday. Melocowsky argued the state had not presented adequate evidence for the jury to find Sibiga guilty, reports stated.

Judge Jose A. Suarez granted the defense motion Wednesday, and dismissed 45 of the 49 counts against Sibiga. Gedansky then conferred with appellate lawyers and asked the judge to dismiss the remaining charges, after which he asked for permission to appeal Suarez's ruling, according to reports.

Whether or not Gedansky can appeal will be decided by Judge Joan K. Alexander, the presiding judge for criminal cases at Hartford Superior Court, according to reports, which added that Gedansky has until June 30 to file a motion on his request.

East Hampton Police News

5/6: Doreen St. George, 50, of 525 River Rd., Lisbon, was arrested for DUI and failure to drive right, East Hampton Police said.

5/9: Reginald M. Jordan, 53, of 316a Brick Top Rd., Windham, was issued a summons for failure to drive right, operating an unregistered and uninsured motor vehicle and DUI, police said.

5/16: Jennifer VanWycke, 35, of 14 Myrtle Rd., was charged with two counts of second-degree failure to appear, police said, stemming from two separate incidents.

5/17: Drew F. Funk, 20, of 16 West St., was charged with first-degree failure to appear, police said.

5/18: Miquel Quiles, 29, of 163 Airline Ave.,

was charged with two counts of third-degree identity theft, conspiracy to commit identity theft, two counts of receipt of goods obtained by illegal use of a credit card, two counts of sixth-degree larceny, two counts of credit card theft and two counts of illegal use of a credit card, police said.

5/18: Frederick Nichols, 55, of 37 Clark Hill Rd., was issued a summons for operating an unregistered and uninsured motor vehicle, police said.

5/21: Frank W. Kennedy, 43, of 671 Squaw Rock Rd., Moosup, turned himself in pursuant to an outstanding warrant for his arrest, and was charged with second-degree larceny, police said.

Marlborough Police News

5/22: State Police said Punjab Surinder, 31, of 89 Norris Ave., Westbrook, was arrested and charged with DUI, reckless driving, and failure to drive in the proper lane.

5/22: State Police said Jonathon Wilcox, 25, of 9 Lakeview Rd., Terryville, was arrested and charged with DUI and reckless driving.

5/24: State Police said Dawn Lennox, 53, of 5 Blish Rd., was arrested and charged with third-degree assault and disorderly conduct.

Hebron Police News

5/22: State Police said Richard Heil, 51, of 125 North Pond Rd., Amston, was arrested and charged with DUI.

Andover Police News

5/23: State Police said Eric Santese, 39, of 109 Long Hill Rd., was arrested and charged with violation of probation.

From the Editor's Desk

Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

As I suspect was the case with a lot of you, last Sunday night, May 17, I watched the finale of what had become one of my very favorite shows of all time – AMC's *Mad Men*. I felt the series' final season was a strong one – but, really, in my eye the show never had a bad season – and the last episode was terrific.

Okay, so obviously there are going to be a few spoilers here, so you may want to jump ahead. The episode wrapped up the storylines for many of the characters we'd come to know and – sometimes against our better judgment – love over the years. But the character's storyline that was discussed the most in the days after the finale – and for good reason – was Don Draper's.

While the other characters had clear endings – and, in the case of Betty Draper, a very sad one – Don's was a little more ambiguous. Not nearly as ambiguous as, say, Tony Soprano's, but still – it was definitely left for interpretation. Don, having seemingly finally found peace, was sitting atop a California hillside doing yoga. A smile crossed his face as the scene dissolved to the famous 1970s Coca-Cola ad, the one that featured a group of people, of many different nationalities, gathered together and singing, "I'd like to buy the world a Coke."

In the days that followed the finale, I learned the majority of people took that ending to mean Don created the legendary Coke commercial. But, I was watching the episode with a friend of mine, and at the time, neither of us read it that way. As a fan of TV history, I've seen that ad many times over the years, and have always liked it. It's a happy, peaceful ad, with an uplifting message. One way to look at the placement of the ad at that point of the episode is that it showed Don was, indeed, at peace – and, for a show that was about the advertising industry, what better way to drive that point home than showing one of the most famous, peaceful ads of all time?

Anyway, like I said, my interpretation seems definitely in the minority. A lot of people read it to mean Don Draper goes back to McCann Erickson and creates the advertisement – a claim helped by the fact that, in the early 1970s, McCann Erickson in real life had the Coca-Cola account, and one of the company's ad men, by the name of Bill Backer, created the "I'd like to buy the world a Coke" spot. Both interpretations, in my mind, work. It's probably a little better that Don return to New York and take care of his family, but I didn't mind the idea of him staying out in California either – where he'd finally found the peace that had eluded him for so much of his life. I'm not sure how long it would last if he returned to New York, found himself surrounded by the same people, the same temptations, the same life, that had made him so unhappy before. Maybe his tranquility would have remained with him – but I'm not so sure.

* * *

Anyway, the final shot of *Mad Men* left me thinking about Coca-Cola. (No big shock, since that Coke song was all over the Internet for a few days after the finale.) And one of my favorite Coke stories is that of Coca-Cola Classic. In the past couple of years, the company has quietly dropped the word "classic" from bottles and cans of Coca-Cola – a move that only makes sense, as there's an entire generation of Americans now who likely have no clue why "classic" was ever part of the name to begin with.

It's – to me, anyway – a pretty interesting story.

In the mid-1980s, Coke was still the top-selling cola in the country, but it wasn't the giant it once was. Pepsi was gaining, and fast. So, the Coca-Cola Company felt a change was needed – and altered the formula of its legendary cola. Now, while I'm sure I had New Coke (the company didn't really call it this; it was simply called Coke. But "New Coke" has become the unofficial name for it and, to avoid confusion, that's how I'm going to refer to it), I'm too young to really remember the taste. But, from what I've read, it was a pretty substantial change in formula. It was apparently much sweeter than classic Coke, sweeter even than Pepsi. And interestingly, in initial taste tests, before the product was introduced, people said they liked the new formula.

All that changed, though, in April 1985, when the Coca-Cola Company launched New Coke.

The company didn't just introduce the new formula; it discontinued the old formula at the same time. That led to an uproar among consumers. For while Pepsi might have been "the choice of a new generation," it just didn't have the brand power Coca-Cola did. Coke had been around for 100 years, and was more than just a soft drink. It was a piece of Americana.

While the Pepsi logo had undergone plenty of changes over the years, Coke really hadn't. So its image, with the classic white script writing on a red background, and that contour bottle, is nostalgic. Coca-Cola was the soda people grew up with. It was comfort food – and all of a sudden it was gone.

It turned out people didn't like having their Coca-Cola taken away from them, especially when you consider it was replaced by a product that, by all accounts, didn't really taste the same. People wanted their Coke back, and were quite vocal about it. In July 1985, the Coca-Cola Company caved, and started producing the old Coke formula again – under the name Coca-Cola Classic.

And that's the part I remember best. I still remember a couple of the ads, and the stories that ran on the nightly news. Here was this big company basically giving a giant mea culpa: "Look, we know we screwed up. Here's your original Coca-Cola back."

Of course, there's debate over just how much of a screw-up New Coke really was. Conspiracy theorists (because there are always conspiracy theorists) have suggested the whole thing was a giant marketing ploy. As I said before, Coca-Cola was losing ground to Pepsi. By publicly taking away the Coke people had grown up with, the company created a higher demand for the product than was there before. Thus, when Coca-Cola then reintroduced the product a short time later, there was a greater interest in it than there had been; people knew what they were missing, and they wanted it back.

I don't really buy this theory. The Coca-Cola Company spent several years researching and developing a new formula, and there was a multimillion dollar marketing campaign pushing the New Coke. That's an awful lot of effort and money to spend just on the chance that people's attachment to the Coca-Cola brand was really that strong.

Another theory says the New Coke fiasco had been planned to cover up a change that was going on with the original Coke. The Coca-Cola Company, to save money, was planning to replace the sugar it used in Coke with high fructose corn syrup. However, if they had simply made the change, people would have noticed the taste difference and there would have been an uproar. But by taking Coke away for a few months, and only having this New Coke available, people would be so happy when the original was reintroduced they wouldn't notice that it wasn't really the original at all; it was flavored with high fructose corn syrup.

This theory's even less believable. Yes, Coca-Cola Classic was made with high fructose corn syrup and not sugar. Remember, it was only three short months from the time New Coke was launched and the time Coca-Cola Classic was reintroduced. If the high fructose corn syrup produced such a discernable taste difference so as to generate an uproar, wouldn't people have noticed the Coca-Cola Classic they were drinking in July wasn't the same Coca-Cola they'd been drinking in April? It hadn't been years; it'd been three months.

Back on the shelves, Coca-Cola Classic proved to be a big hit, and helped the Coca-Cola Company get back some of the market share it had lost to Pepsi, New Coke got less and less popular. It was renamed Coke II in the early 1990s, but the product was still unsuccessful; I guess folks knew what Coke II really was, and wanted no part of it. Today, it's unavailable in the U.S., although apparently it's still sold in a few foreign markets.

And yet, up until just a couple of years ago, the word "classic" remained part of the Coca-Cola label. I always found its presence a little nostalgic – a reminder of a brief period of time when the country was captivated by a soft drink changing its flavor.

But, like I said, for a substantial chunk of the population, "classic" Coke was the only Coke they've ever known. So I guess it was time to retire the name.

* * *

See you next week.

Obituaries

East Hampton

Edward A. Markham

Edward A. Markham, 67, of East Hampton and Crystal River, Fla., passed away Sunday, May 3, with his life companion by his side.

Edward was born in Middletown May 2, 1948, the son of the late Helen (Spencer) Markham and William E. Markham Jr. of East Hampton. He resided in East Hampton before moving to New Hampshire and later to Crystal River, Fla., where he spent the remainder of his life.

Edward is survived by his life companion of many years, Sandra Markham of Florida and her four children, his two sisters Mary Louise Jones of New Hampshire, and Rose Desjardins of East Hampton. He was predeceased by his brother, William E. Markham III. He leaves behind his two loving daughters, Lisa Cansdale of East Hampton and Adrienne Kelly and her husband John of Cromwell; his son, Edward A. Markham Jr. of Middletown; several grandchildren, including Amanda Cansdale, John and Erika Kelly, and Edward III and Lexi Markham.

Edward was known by his family and friends for his charismatic sense of humor and for tinkering. He loved to get a good deal and was always looking for the next big project to keep him busy outside. He enjoyed visits from his children and grandchildren.

A casual memorial service welcoming all friends and family will be held Saturday, June 27, at noon, at Salmon River, Route 16, East Hampton. Rain date is Sunday, June 28 (rain or shine). Bring your favorite memory!



Colchester

Hayden Scott Cavallari

Hayden Scott Cavallari, 19, of Lake Hayward, passed away unexpectedly Thursday, May 21, at home. Born Dec. 11, 1995, in Middletown, he was a son of Hollis Block and Dominic Cavallari of Lake Hayward.

Hayden was a 2014 graduate of Nathan Hale-Ray High School in East Haddam. A free spirit, his two great loves were music, especially playing the guitar, and spending time outdoors, hiking and camping.

In addition to his parents, he leaves his girlfriend, Brittany Kinsley of Granby; numerous aunts, uncles, extended family members and friends.

The family received guests Tuesday, May 26, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. A chapel service followed that morning. Burial was private.

In lieu of flowers, donations in his memory may be made to the Green Mountain Club, 4711 Waterbury-Stowe Rd., Waterbury Center, VT 05677.

For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.



Andover

Judith Hutchinson Stotler

Judith Hutchinson Stotler, 72, passed away peacefully Friday, April 24, after a long struggle with primary progressive aphasia, an early-onset form of dementia.

Judy grew up in Andover, and was a graduate of RHAM High School. She went on to attend airline school in Hartford, where she met her husband Mel.

Judy leaves behind friends in the many places where they lived throughout the years, including Long Island, N.Y., Apple Valley, Minn., Bethel, and Cary, N.C. At every stage in her life she was active in community service, and is best remembered for her caring nature, loving heart, and sense of humor.

She is survived by her husband of 51 years, Melvin C. Stotler of Vienna, Va.; her sister Bertha J. Farrand of Manchester; her daughters Kristin Stotler and Trisha Stotler Meyer of Vienna, Va.; and her beloved grandchildren Max, Mick and Dera Meyer and Abby Stotler.

A graveside service will be held for family & friends on Saturday, June 13, at Townsend Cemetery in Andover at 11 a.m. A reception will be held after the service at the First Congregational Church in Andover from noon-2 p.m.

Donations may be made in her memory to the two organizations that helped her the most in her illness: The Triangle Aphasia Project (TAP) (aphasiaproject.org), and the Center for Volunteer Caregiving (volunteercaregiving.org).

Colchester

Stuart H. Fontaine I

Stuart H. Fontaine I, 74, of Colchester, passed away Sunday, May 24, surrounded by his loving family.

He leaves his loving wife of 51 years, Judith (Hussey) Fontaine; two children and their spouses, Debra and Gary Newsome of Niantic and Stuart, II and Kimberley of East Hampton; 12 grandchildren, Jessica Potter, Justin McCarty, Daniel and Tammie Holt, Dalton, Joshua and Reba Greenleaf, Lindsey and Phoebe Fontaine, Dylan and Cody Gonydyke and Rachel Pawloski; five great-grandchildren, Tristan, Ansleigh, Elizabeth, Brayden and Talon; and numerous extended family members and friends.

In addition to his parents, F. Joseph and Opal (Allard) Fontaine, he was predeceased by a daughter, Laura Anne Fontaine, on July 3, 2009; as well as two sisters, Carol Ellsworth and Sylvia Labonte.

Stuart served proudly with the Army National Guard in the late 1950s. He worked as a professional truck driver with Teamsters Local 559 before his retirement.

A longtime resident of Colchester before recently moving to Quaker Hill, he had served as building chairman for both the "old" (1963) Bacon Academy and the William J. Johnston Middle School. Stuart had also been an active Rotarian, Granger and member of the Colchester Republican Town Committee in years past.

A Celebration of his Life will be observed at 4:30 p.m. Friday, June 5, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. The family will receive guests starting at 3 p.m. until the time of the service. Burial will be private.

For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.



East Hampton

Cory Lee Ellis

Cory Lee Ellis, born April 17, 1965, was called to the loving arms of our Lord Tuesday, May 19, where he will join his recently-deceased father, George Ellis Sr. Cory was 50 years old at the time of his death from an unfortunate motor vehicle accident. Cory suffered many trials and tribulations throughout his brief lifetime and was able to overcome them all with grace.

Cory had a great love of motorcycles and a true gift for all things mechanical. He was a certified mechanic by trade. He also carried a great love for his family and he leaves behind his mother, Irene Ellis; his sisters, Sharon Errico, Sandy Anderson, Randi Carreras; and his brothers George Ellis Jr. and Jimmy Ellis; and the love of his life, Kim Mager. He also leaves behind several nieces and nephews.

Cory has lived in East Hampton his entire life and leaves numerous friends behind. He had a large heart and touched many lives. He also loved nature and had quite a green thumb. He had a special place in his heart for animals and in honor of that love we request that in lieu of flowers donations be made to the ASPCA in Cory's name.

He is loved by many and will be missed by all.

We will be celebrating Cory's life along with his father's, George Ellis, who passed away May 8, on Saturday, May 30, at 11 a.m., at Bethlehem Lutheran Church, East High Street, East Hampton, CT 06424.

Colchester

Cynthia L. Ewers

Cynthia L. Ewers of Colchester died peacefully at her home Wednesday, May 13. Cynthia was born June 26, 1963, and raised in Old Lyme, where she enjoyed horseback riding on the beach.

She leaves behind her sister, Lucie E. Forbes of Pennsylvania; her brother, Martin Ewers of Old Lyme; along with eight nieces and nephews and a host of friends.

A memorial service will be held Saturday, May 30, at 1 p.m., at The Christian Life Chapel located at the Homestead Center Plaza, 392 South Main St., Colchester, on the second floor.

Colchester

Gloria McKinney

Gloria "Pat" (Vera) McKinney, 88, passed away Friday, May 22, at Harrington Court after a short illness. Born in Uncasville to Lawrence L. and Amy (Perkins) Vera on March 17, 1927, she attended Chapman Technical High School in New London.

In 1947, she was united in marriage to Edwin H. McKinney Jr., of Montville. He predeceased her in 1993.

Pat is survived by her children and their spouses, Lynne Felciano (Tom), Jeffrey McKinney (Cheryl); daughter-in-law, MaryAnn McKinney; four grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren; and a great-great-grandchild.

In addition to her husband, Pat was also predeceased by her youngest son, James E. McKinney and granddaughter, Christina L. McKinney.

She was a life member of the Montville Lions Club and an active member of the Chapman Tech Alumni Association.

Special thanks go to Harrington Court in Colchester, for making their community her home and to her grandson, Jeffrey McKinney Jr., and granddaughter-in-law, Amy McKinney for always including "Gigi" in their lives and allowing her the great joy of her two special angels, great-grandchildren, Kyla and Gavin, who she loved very much. She especially loved their visits, hugs, kisses, smiles, and the artwork they would draw for her at the hospital.

Church & Allen Funeral Home is entrusted with these private arrangements. To leave a condolence, visit churchandallen.com.

East Hampton

Joan Julia Dobrouch

Joan Julia Dobrouch, 82, of Bethel, formerly of East Hampton, passed away peacefully at Bethel Health Care Saturday, May 23. She was born Feb. 21, 1933, in Danbury, daughter of the late Frederick Foshay Sr and Evelyn (Lattin) Foshay.

Joan is predeceased by her late husband, Robert F. Dobrouch Sr.

Joan is survived by her daughters Linda Belansky (Paul), and Ann Marie Scacco, (Robert), of Bethel, and son Robert F. Dobrouch Jr. (Virginia), of East Hampton. Joan is also survived by her grandchildren, Paul Belansky Jr. (Tara), from Sebastian Fla., Michele Belansky, Bethel, Michael Belansky, Vero Beach, Fla., Janice Anderson (Michael), Bethel, Robert M Scacco (Sarah), Seymour, Rebecca Dobrouch and Robert Dobrouch III, East Hampton; also her great-grandchildren, John Paul, Bailey Ann, Ivy, Elliot and Bobby.

Joan was predeceased by her five brothers, Frederick, Robert, Edward, Burton and Raymond Foshay, and her sisters, Carol Sears and Evelyn Foshay.

In addition, Joan is survived by numerous cousins, nieces and nephews.

Joan and Bob spent their early years in the Danbury area before moving to East Hampton, where they spent many happy years living on the lake. After retiring from Cobalt Lodge as a CNA Joan spent her retirement years in Maine where she enjoyed her many cousins. Joan and her husband were active in the SNYRA Danbury Racearina and were avid NASCAR fans. Joan was a warm loving woman whose home was open to all. She was a nanny to everyone. Loved by all.

Friends may call at Green Funeral Home Saturday, May 30, from 2-5 p.m. Interment will be private at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made in Joan's memory to Community Council of Bethel, P.O. Box 667, Bethel, CT 06801.

Colchester

Debbie Wasylishyn

Debbie Wasylishyn, 60, of Colchester and California, passed away Sunday, May 24, peacefully at home. She was born Jan. 14, 1955, in Windham. She was the daughter of the late William and Emma (Orzulak) Wasylishyn.

Debbie was a 1973 graduate of Lyman Memorial High School. She loved her family, friends, church, and pottery.

Calling hours were held Thursday, May 28, followed by a service that morning at Belmont Funeral Home, 144 South Main St., Colchester. Burial immediately followed at New Lebanon Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, donations made to Praise Christian Fellowship or Mary's Place by the Sea.

Hebron

Brian W. Adams

Brian W. Adams, 72, of Hebron, beloved husband of 50 years to Lonnie (Kempf) Adams, passed away peacefully Sunday, May 24, at Manchester Memorial Hospital. Born in Milwaukee, Wis., the son of the late Louis and Marcella (Schultz) Adams, he grew up and lived in Wauwatosa, Wis., Kansas and South Windsor before moving to Hebron in 2002.

He received a civil engineering degree from the University of Wisconsin at Madison, Class of 1964. Prior to his retirement, Brian was an industrial engineer for J. C. Penney for many years. He was an avid bridge player, and he played weekly in a bridge club in South Windsor. He enjoyed tennis, canoeing, skiing and hiking. Brian was a member of Christ Lutheran Church in Hebron.

In addition to his wife, he is survived by his children, Jarret W. Adams and his wife Heather of Abu Dhabi, UAE, Melinda J. Marques and her husband Robert of Newington, and Justin W. Adams and his wife Susan of Colchester; six grandchildren, Jackson and Felicity Adams, Alexandra and Madison Marques, and Oakley and Benjamin Adams; a brother, Dean Adams and his wife Mary of Franklin, Wis.; a sister, Donna Bergold of Wauwatosa, Wis., and many nieces and nephews.

He was also predeceased by two brothers, Fred and Gene Adams.

His family will receive friends for memorial calling hours Saturday, May 30, from 10 a.m.-noon, at the Samsel & Carmon Funeral Home, 419 Buckland Rd., South Windsor, followed by a memorial service at the funeral home beginning at noon. Burial will be private and at the convenience of his family.

Memorial donations in Brian's memory may be made to the PKD Foundation at pkdcure.com/donate.

For online condolences and guestbook, visit carmonfuneralhome.com.

Portland

William Reiman

William "Bill" Reiman, 91, of Cromwell, beloved husband of the late Marian (Coughlin) Reiman, died Friday, May 22, at Middlesex Hospital, after a full and blessed life. He was born in Portland, son of the late George and Mary (Gritsel) Reiman.

Bill was a veteran who served with the U.S. Navy during World War II. Prior to his retirement, he was a sales representative with Metropolitan Life Insurance Company and later with the State of Connecticut Lottery Division. In his younger days he was a pitcher for the Middletown Giants baseball team, the Hartford Industrial League, the Middlesex County Baseball League, and had earned a tryout invitation from the Hartford Eastern League before enlisting in the Navy to serve his country in the war effort.

He was inducted into the Portland Sports Hall of Fame in 2000 for his accomplishments as a member of the Portland High baseball team and was also inducted into the Cromwell Athletic Club in 2012 for his support of their youth sports leagues.

He was an avid fan of the New York Yankees (much to the chagrin of his wife, who cheered for Boston) and the UConn women's basketball team. He was happiest when surrounded by friends and loved ones at the family cottage "Camp Good Enuf" in Moodus. He loved music, singing, tinkering with handyman projects, and lending a helping hand whenever asked. He was a true "people person."

William is survived by his sons, William S. Reiman and his wife Cindy of East Hampton, Paul Reiman and his wife Nancy of Cromwell; daughters, Ann Reiman of Middletown, Shelley DiMauro and her husband Bob of Middletown; six grandchildren, Laurie, Kenny, Mike, Dan, Steve and Nikki; and one great-grandson, Boden.

Besides his wife and parents, he was predeceased by his brother, George E. Reiman.

His funeral liturgy was held Wednesday, May 27, at St. Francis of Assisi Church, Elm Street, Middletown. There were no calling hours at the funeral home. Burial with military honors was at the State Veterans' Cemetery.

Those who wish may make memorial contributions to the Cromwell American Legion Baseball Team (address: Post 105 RCP Baseball, 13 Cannata Drive, Cromwell, CT 06416).

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

Obituaries continued

Portland

Dr. Robert Riccio

Dr. Robert Riccio, 66, of Portland, passed away Friday, May 22. He was born Jan. 15, 1949, in Hartford, the son of the late Leonard and Catherine (Kerrigan) Riccio.

Bob received his doctorate degree from U.S. International University in 1979 and his American Board of Professional Psychology Degree in 2001. Bob was employed as a child psychologist for 26 years at the Connecticut Children's Medical Center, formerly the Newington Children's Hospital where he was also the director of the psychology internship program. He then had a private practice in Glastonbury.

Bob was an avid golfer and was a member of the Quarry Ridge Men's Club in Portland. He also enjoyed reading, mostly non-fiction, and watching movies. However, his greatest joy was spending time with his family, especially his two children.

Bob is survived by his daughter, Calla Riccio of Manchester, and his son, Alex Riccio of Portland. He is also survived by his wife of 19 years and friend, Jodi Domanic of Brooklyn, N.Y.

A memorial service was held Thursday, May, 28, at the D'Esopo Funeral Chapel, 277 Folly Brook Blvd., Wethersfield. Calling hours were Thursday, prior to the service.

In lieu of flowers, donations in Bob's memory may be made to Cure Pancreatic Cancer, The Lustgarten Foundation, 1111 Stewart Ave., Bethpage, NY 11714.

For online expressions of sympathy, visit desopo.com.