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Portland High School Class of 2015 graduate Sean LaMalfa brought a selfie stick with him to chronicle his high school graduation, to the delight of his fellow Highlanders and of those in attendance.

Graduates Reflect on Highlanders Community

by John Tyczkowski

Friday evening, the 85 graduates comprising the Portland High School Class of 2015 gathered in the middle school parking lot to the sounds of a bagpipe, staying true to their Highlanders name.

Before receiving their diplomas, the graduates listened as various speakers spoke about the community at the school, the friendships formed, and all that lies ahead.

As things got underway, class advisor Krista Karch, the keynote speaker, shared an ode to their small-town life.

She spoke about "Portland's Common Core" which "was established in town decades ago."

"It is a core that is comprised of values and is sustained by community and family," Karch said. "It is reflected through friendships, work ethic, celebrations, brother and sisterhood and above all, by pride and love."

She continued, "It is a set of ideas and guiding principles that has been passed down in this town from generation to generation. This core is what makes Portland unique."

In her welcoming address, class president Brooke Marconi spoke about her class's camaraderie.

"I believe we are one of the closest and friendliest classes that has ever walked the halls of Portland High," she said. "And even though we have a tight bond, we are a diverse group. Our different personalities and interests comple-

ment each other."

And ultimately, Marconi said that's what will endure for years to come.

"That's how we'll ultimately measure the time we spent here," she said. "Not in periods or terms or years but in the friendships we made and the times we shared together."

Salutatorian Kayla Hardesty also built upon that sense of community by talking about how easy it is for students from the Class of 2015 to identify each other.

"Not only do we know faces and names, some of us even have the wild ability to identify a person by their voice or hair or handwriting – or even sneezes" she said, adding with a smile, "since sneezes practically echo through the entire building anyway."

Hardesty said one of the things she enjoyed most was how the small class size – and simple-to-navigate hallways – allowed for a close community.

"I hope everyone remembers the little things and appreciates them because some of the best things are wrapped in small, perfectly square packages" Hardesty said, referring to the high school's shape.

Next, valedictorian Emilie MacKinnon used chemistry to help those in attendance understand the class's growth together over the years.

In the beginning, she explained, the class

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'Greatest Class' Graduates from RHAM

by Geeta Schrayter

Last Thursday, the RHAM High School Class of 2015 gathered on the baseball field amid a sea of family and friends, anxious and eager to take their turn walking across the stage to receive their diploma – a symbol of the completion of their four years at RHAM and the end of a chapter in their lives.

But before that chapter closed, before the graduates celebrated with hoots and hollers, tossing caps and beach balls, and a seemingly endless supply of silly string, words of wisdom – as well as plenty of praise – were shared by the evening's speakers.

Among them was class president Jackson Collins, who was by no means modest or lacking enthusiasm when speaking about his fellow graduates.

"Behold – the Class of 2015, the greatest class to ever walk the halls of RHAM High School" he began, before explaining why that was true.

"We've got heart," he said, mentioning students such as Kali Lower and Colin Fitzgerald who could be found at any RHAM sporting event "cheering themselves hoarse and spilling their blue and gold blood over the bleachers."

The class also had talent, he said, as exemplified by the artwork of Jayme Oberhausen and Becky Trouen-Trend; athleticism, as seen in part by "the blinding speed" of Maddy Mondo

and Mari Larcheveque; and brains, as seen in Harrison Dalton "the king of calculus" and Matt Cryer, who knows four languages.

In addition, he said the class also knows how to give back, as seen through Camden Mund who volunteers with the Hebron Fire Department; and Kelly Whitesell and Maeve Howard who volunteer with the RHAM Leos Club.

Then there were students like Connor Griffin and Ryan Knapp, whose humor "made every senior's life a little better."

"While these individuals are exceptional, they are not rare," Collins stated. "The Class of 2015 is full of people who would blow your mind."

Following Collins, salutatorian Maeve Howard and valedictorian Tim Breckel imparted words of wisdom.

Howard admitted, "I can't come up here and pretend I've got any sort of insight on how we should be living our lives. I'm 18."

But, she furthered, "We've accomplished a really great thing. After four years, and a whole bunch more before that, we've finally finished high school."

Yet despite that, the learning isn't over. In fact, she said, "We don't really know all that much. Armed as we may be with the knowledge of the quadratic formula and that the mitochondria is the powerhouse of the cell, we

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As soon as they received their diplomas, the RHAM Class of 2015 erupted: beach balls and caps were tossed in the air, silly string flew all around, and excited exclamations mixed with the cheers of the audience – they did it!

‘Greatest Class’ cont. from Front Page

haven’t finished learning. We’re not *complete*. But that is such a good thing.”

Howard elaborated, saying the class had the freedom to decide who they are and who they will be – a decision they get to make for the rest of their lives.

“Each and every day, we get to keep learning and growing, creating new dreams and watching them come true. And what a beautiful privilege it is for us to have.”

As for Breckel, he reflected on his four years at RHAM, all the changes that had taken place – and would continue to occur.

“Things will change,” he said. “Friends will change. And yes, even you will change. Although this may seem intimidating at first, once this humbling fact is acknowledged, you no longer need to wait until some specific time like New Year’s to make a resolution; every day becomes a new opportunity to reinvent yourself and create the life you intend to lead.”

“Whoever you are,” he furthered, “whatever you are planning to do, go out there and accomplish it. The world isn’t going to wait for you and, like it or not, you are entitled to nothing. Put in the hard work and prove to everyone that you and your dreams are worth it, for, when it comes down to it, you are the only one that can make those dreams turn into realities.”

Breckel concluded, “The time has come to see what the RHAM Class of 2015 is made of. And frankly, I can’t wait.”

This year’s commencement address was given by state Rep. Gayle Mulligan (R-55th District), who urged the graduates to celebrate the success they’d already had, to continue to give, and to seek out new challenges while remembering “that with all those challenges come heartache, disappointment – and yes, failure.”

But even amid those things, “don’t get discouraged” she stated.

“Don’t let them define you,” Mulligan said. “Take these challenges as lessons learned, as catalysts for things to come. Embrace them, for these are the times that make us strong.”

Mulligan shared one of the major challenges in her own life, which was being diagnosed with a rare form of lymphoma seven years ago. She was given a 10 percent chance of living.

“I took a hard look at what I would be giving up,” she said. “I had a choice. I good give up or I could fight. I thought of my friends and my family, all of the daytrips to the beach that I’d be missing, the soccer matches, the graduations, and possible weddings down the road. ... There was just so much that I hadn’t experienced. I had a lot more life that I wanted to live.”

And so, she continued, “I fought. It took every ounce of energy that I had but it was all worth it. It was hard. It was really hard. But seven years later here I am with all of you, proud to be with my cancer in remission, and have the good fortune of standing before you today celebrating this wonderful day in your lives.”

One of the keys, Mulligan furthered, and the motto she lives by, is to believe.

“That’s what I live by and that’s what I want you to leave here today with – to believe,” she said. “To believe in yourself. Believe in the possibilities and the vast opportunities that lie ahead for you. Believe that you can set goals, you can aim high, and when you have setbacks – which you will – believe that you can start again; don’t retreat and don’t ever give up. It won’t be easy. As you know, life isn’t always going to be easy, but boy is it worth it.”

The members of the RHAM Class of 2015 are:

William Zachary Albin, Austin Vincent Alexander, Michael James Alfano, Tristan Joseph Allen, Rebecca Anastasi, Ravyn Taylor Andrasik, @ Drew M. Angelo, Colby Ryan Archambault, Adam Michael Arnold, @ Lauren Nicole Ayer, @ Amber J. Baig, Thomas Barone, Sarah Kay Barton, Katjen Batchelder, Sabrina Christine Bell, Maryrose Betz, Ryan Bienkowski, Samuel Raymond Boushee, Emory Faith Bowen, Joshua Michael Boy, *@ Brittney Nichole Brault, #*@ Timothy Connor Breckel, Tyler J. Brett, Samantha Briscoe, @ Chace Dora Brokaw, * Adam Richard Brown, *@ AriaRay Brown, Catherine Elizabeth Brown, Alexandra Burgess, Kara Burke, Andrew Ryan Burton, Adam Joseph Busa, William Henry Cadenhead, Daniel Seamus Callaghan, Kellie Noel Cama, Briana Unique Camp, * Jessica Marie Cascio, Griffin R. Cassata, Patrick Campbell Catenzaro, Branda Elise Cavanna, Kailee Anne Chanski, Cheyenne Nicole Ciarcia-Abrams, Terrence Michael Clark, Brenda

Lynn Clemens, @ Emma Marie Coffey, Amber Ann Colantonio, Jackson Martin Collins, @ Meghan Jane Consadene, Andrew George Corliss, Jacob C. Cotzin, @ Matthew William Cox, Brandon Alexander Cruz, Matthew Alan Cryer, @ Nora Anne Czepiel, Angelica Janina Czercowy, Justin Michael D’Amicol, Gabriela Dabek, * Harrison Anthony Dalton, Kaylee Rose Danaher, Jacob Cole Delaware, Jered Delventhal, *@ Jason Peter DePersia, Joseph Jon Desjardins, Jenna Rachel Dickinson, Olivia Christine Duncan;

Jared Scott Eaton, Patricia-June Cecile Edwards, Randal C. Edwards, * Christopher Philip Epps, *@ Lauren Marion Escott, *@ Emily Reanne Everlith, Justin Michael Farnham, Jake Filthaut, @ Colin Wilson Tucker Fitzgerald, Ashley Ann Fochi, Matthew Foote, *@ Abigail Mary Forsyth, Sarah Emily Francks, Jakob Edward Fritz, Jack Gilmour, Kaitlyn Gonsor, Sierra Marie Goodwill, Ashley Rae Gosselin, Nicole Yu-lan Gostanian, Sierra Bysshea Graham, Harrison Parker Gray, Andrew Devin Greenlaw, Jacob Aaron Greenwald, Connor Matthew Griffin, Matthew Christopher Guevara, Justin Alexander Gurry, Anthony Joseph Hale, Emily Lynn Hall, Jeffrey Hallbach, @ Alexandria Marie Hallin, Sarah Kathryn Hannon, Alyssa Michelle Hansen, Andrew William Hawes, James Edward Hayden, * Megan Taylor Heline, Madelyn Alyssa Hemberger, *@ Emma Kay Cecilia Henderschedt, *@ Callum Noel Henderson, @ Taylor Marie Heneghan, Hecyaell Hernandez, Ashley Meagan Hitchcock, Kelsey Hodgdon, Caleb James Holbrook, Alexander David Hovey, #*#* @ Maeve Norinne Howard, Ryan Thomas Howard, Kyla Mackenzie Huestis, Danielle Elise Humphreys, William David Jacques, Robert Anthony James, *@ Ashleigh Kincaide Jepson, Daniel Richard Kaminske, Michael Peter Kasper, Nolan Kelly, Scott Killelea, Douglas Cassius Kimball, Ryan Thomas Kirkpatrick, Trevor Klock, Daniel James Kmetz, Ryan Knapp, Joshua Charles Kramer, Jake L. Kratochvil, Theodore Richard Krystopa, III, Avery Scot Kuhn, Edmond Henry Kureczka, III, Peter Kvietauskas;

@ Kenton Nicholas LaFleur, @ Joanna Lynn Lagasse, @ MyKenzie Lyne Lanagan, Danielle Martha Langlois, Thomas Joseph John Lanza, Mari L. Larcheveque, Luke Larson, John Owen Lavenburg, Benjamin Anthony Lawrence, Quinn Mairead Leary, *@ Jayne Lauren Lemire, Ashley Julia Linn, Taylor Anne Little, * Daniel Salvatore LoBello, Nicholas John Lord, Kali Grace Lower, Sean Blake Luddy, * Anna Catherine Mackay, Collin Evan Madore, Stephanie Mager, Alexander Peter Maneggia, *@ Samantha Rose Marinelli, Kelly Ann Martin, Brendan Michael Masi, Janine Triana Alforte Mateo, Tyler Ryan Matuszko, *@ Michael Thomas Mawson, Trevor Daniel McBrine, * Kelby Elizabeth McCooey, Duncan Phillip McLean, Samantha McManus, @ Julia Kathryn Meadows, Tori Ann Meli, Scott Lucas Mocko, Madeline Grace Mondo, Austin Donald Monteiro, Rebecca Elizabeth Moody, * Elizabeth Guy Moore, John Daniel Moore, *@ Megan Sarah Moquin, *@ Shannon Mary Moquin, *@ Julia Mary Moreland, @ Lauren Abby Morency, Amanda Souripon Moundraty, Karly Ann Mulligan, Camden Harcourt Mund, Madyson Flory Murdoch, Gabriela Anne Napolitano, Andrew Paul Naumec, Joseph Thomas Naumec, Holly Kay Neubauer, Thomas William Nevins, @ Kyle Patrick O’Brien, Megan Sara O’Brien, Sean David O’Brien, Eric Roland O’Loughlin, James Thomas Oberhausen, Sarah Hamilton Ott;

Samuel Parade, Kayla Elizabeth Paradie, *@ Nicole Elaine Parenchuck, Gino William Paulino, Ashley Elizabeth Pekarovic, Andrew Perez, Justin Tyler Perez, Austin Quentin Peterson, @ Sara Kathryn Phelps, Joseph Daniel Pilver, Matthew Carl Pina, Jacques Paul Prevost, Mia Santa Prieto, Madison Provencher, Kyle Thomas Purcell, Emily Katherine Quesada, Lucas Rheaume, Delaney Jeanne Rhoades, Celia Marie Rodegher, Zachary Thomas Rodegher, @ Devon MacKenzie Rogers, Trevor Harold Rowe, * Katelyn Marie Royce, Samuel William Rudolph, Rebecca Anne Rumley, Timothy Russo, Benjamin Michael Salafia, @ Ryan Johnathan Schreiner, May Alicia Sciano, Kyle Ryan Scutnik, @ Olivia Hope Seidel, Nicholas Scott Shalaya, William Francis Shea, Eric Michael Shimchick, @ Cory Jean Signor, Francesca Susan Silliman, *@ Mareyna Arin Simon, Victoria Lyn Siracusa, Collin John Slot, Madisen Tiffani Smith, Thomas John Sousa, Bryson Alexander Speagle, *@ Caroline Hannah Spellman, Alexis P. Stagg, Eric Joseph Stewart, @ Benjamin David Stone, Anne Gre Straut, Brendan Michael Sweeney, Kaylee Sue Symonds, @ Ryan Edward Tate, * Wade Michael Titterton, Vincent Anthony Tomasello, Noah Robert Toth, Ryan Kenneth Treat, Rebecca Nicole Trouern-Trend, Carson Samuel Verona, Kylie Isabelle Verrengia, Andrew Benjamin Wallman, @ Kendra K. Walz, Conner Elizabeth Watt, Devin Michael Watt, @ Page Elizabeth Watt, Nicole Olson Wechsler, Alexander James Weir, @ Drew Anthony Whitacre, Sean Tyler White, *@ Kelly Marie Whitesell, Kyle Wright, Connor Michael Laurence Yanicky, * Dana Leanne Zareski and Joshua William Zeiler.

Valedictorian, #*# Salutatorian, * Member of National Honor Society in good standing, @ Green Cord/100 or more hours of community service.



The sun was shining on members of the RHAM Class of 2015 last Thursday as they walked onto the baseball field at the start of their graduation ceremony – a field they would then walk off of as high school graduates.

Graduates Reflect cont. from Front Page

started out like a solid - tightly tied together with no free movement. As they progressed throughout high school, they became like water with freer arrangement. Finally the class became like a gas, with the freest state of movement.

(MacKinnon said she would leave plasma, the fourth state of matter, out of the discussion.)

“Now, after our senior year, we are free to go wherever we want and be whoever we want,” she said. “Senior year prepared us for one of the biggest changes we will ever go through: going to college and then facing the real world.”

However, MacKinnon said the class should see this as a chance to be excited rather than scared, and to embrace all the new possibilities before them.

“As Dr. Seuss once said, ‘You’re off to great places! Today is your day! Your mountain is waiting, so get on your way!’” she stated. “With that being said it is time to depart from Portland High School and go in our own directions.”

Schools Superintendent Philip B. O’Reilly also encouraged the class to go out into the world.

“You are poised, and you are ready to take on the challenges,” he said. “You have goodness at your backs and in your souls.”

O’Reilly began as superintendent in August 2014, and praised the Class of 2015 as an example of why he was fortunate to lead the district.

“I consider myself a lucky man,” he said.

Just before the presentation of diplomas, Board of Education Chair MaryAnne Rode urged students in her address to find the one person who helped them the most, and to thank them.

“And do it directly. Don’t text or email them,” she said.

As graduates stood to receive their diplomas, one graduate stood out in particular: Sean LaMalfa, who brought a selfie stick up with him for the special occasion.

This graduation was an especially poignant one for principal Andrea Lavery, who is retiring after nine years at PHS and after 33 years as an educator.

In her remarks at the beginning of the ceremony, Lavery said Portland was a “wonderful, wonderful community” and said it was “both an honor and a privilege” to serve as PHS’s principal.

After the commencement ceremony, Lavery said it felt “wonderful, scary and exciting” to retire.

“I don’t know what I’m going to do,” she said. “But I do know I don’t have to get up at 5:15 anymore!”

Lavery concluded, “I am absolutely going to miss Portland though, I loved being here” - echoing a central theme of many graduates’ speeches that evening.

The members of the Portland High School Class of 2015 are:

(*Top 10% of the class, #National Honor Society, >Tri-M Music Honor Society, +Valedictorian, ++Salutatorian, ^CAPT Mastery all tests, =January graduate)

Erica Backus^#>, Jordon Balskus^#, Holly Bauer^#, Nicholas D. Benoit, Jacquelyn Bergman, Joshua Archer Bransfield>, Meghan E. Caisse^, Brandon Michael Calvo, Zoe Fae Camp^, Chelsey Rose Cardillo^>, Andrew Sabastian Carta, Deidra Jacqueline Caruso, Daniel J. Cavanaugh^*^#, Jessica R. Carpentier^, Michael Chiasson, William George Cohan^, Marlene Jane Coleman>, Sara Maria Colla, Danielle Suzanne Cote#>, Zachary Jude DiGirolamo^, Emily Margaret Dillon#>, Jonathan Paul Dolan*^#>, Daniel Robert Erickson, Kevin Ferguson*^>, Kelly Ann Flanagan*^#>, Sandra Grace Foley^>

Mason Gaines, Jerry Gaston, Jamie Gauthier, Ashley Joyce Ghent, Connor F. Giveans^, Brian Louis Grady, Kayla Maria Hardesty+^#>, Daniel Thomas Hendershot Jr., Emilie Hernandez*^#>, Holley Marie Hetzel, Cody Higa, Ian M. Hughes, Rita Ambrose Joseph, Grace Kelly, Quiara Michelle King, Mark Andrew LaBella, Michael S. LaMalfa, Sean A. LaMalfa, Airieanna Rosemary Lane^#>, Taylor Lynne Libera^>, Mariela Liranzo>, Emilie Marie MacKinnon+^#>, Brady Sebastian Marconi, Brooke Patricia Marconi*^#>, Dakota Lynn Markham, Cole R. Meckensturm, Erin Murphy, Morgan Emmeline Nadeau, Jeffrey Robert Nolan

Briana Nicole Oakliff^, Cole Strickland Ogorzalek^#, Ryan Zachary Osak^#, Alexander Zachary Paluha, Alina Pantano*^#>, Lauren Pearce-Morin, Thomas Gregory Pelton, Gina Marie Pitruzzello, James Planeta^>, Mason Rambarose^#, Colin Richer, Jose Rivera, John Safflicki, Noah Sanders, Matthew Scrivano, Carli Sienkiewicz^>, Kasey Sienko, Maxwell C. Smith, Mikaela Anne Smith, Kelsey Ann Springer^#>, Jourdan AnnMarie Stebbins, Alexis Paige Sylvester

Travis Tackett=, Nicole Tate^, Lindsey Marie Taylor, Leo R. Thomas, Haley Margaret Townsend^#>, Brooke Unkewicz, Gabriella Giovanna Varela#>, Mark Eric Waldner, Jr.#>, Taylor Lauren White, Collin J. Wilcox, Christie Nicole Williams>, Nikita Willis, Melissa Louise Wysocki^#>

For more photos from the Class of 2015’s graduation, visit [facebook.com/rivereastnewsbulletin](https://www.facebook.com/rivereastnewsbulletin).

Third Time the Charm for Colchester School Budget

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

While the process took longer than school and town officials may have wanted, the Board of Education finally has a budget for the 2015-16 school year.

Voters Tuesday passed the \$39,795,370 education budget by a vote of 1,394-940. The spending package is a \$133,575, or 0.34 percent, increase over current year spending.

The school spending combines with the town government budget – which, unlike its education counterpart, was passed by voters May 28 – to form a \$53.56 million Colchester budget. This is a \$674,000, or 1.28 percent, increase over the current year. The budget calls for a 0.19 mill increase, from 30.57 to 30.76 mills, which translates to a 0.62 percent tax increase.

Storms rolled into town in the late afternoon and early evening, bringing down trees and

power lines. This may have impacted voter turnout, which at 23 percent was down slightly from the 25 percent who voted at the May 28 referendum.

School and town officials this week expressed relief that the budget vote is finally behind them.

“I’m glad we didn’t have to make more cuts than we did, which would have impacted programs and instructional supplies for the students,” Superintendent of Schools Jeff Mathieu said. “If it didn’t pass, we would have gone into a budget freeze and waited for a referendum in the fall.”

Mathieu said he was pleased with the support the community showed toward the budget.

“Many flyers were handed out and people

were sign-waving,” Mathieu said. “There was a real positive feeling in the past couple of weeks toward the middle school referendum and this past referendum. Now we can focus on other aspects and not worry about the budget.”

“I’m glad the budget passed and I’m glad it passed by a significant amount,” First Selectman Stan Soby said. “I appreciate all the voters that came out.”

Soby said the town heard the concerns the voters had expressed – the school budget passed Tuesday is \$200,000 lighter than the one that first went before the voters May 5 – and that he believes the Board of Education put together a solid budget.

“It’s important after passing the middle school project that a budget was passed that will

support what goes on in the buildings in the school system,” he said, referencing last week’s approval at referendum of the \$48.66 million William J. Johnston Middle School renovation project.

Soby said it’s important that the whole community comes together to support children in town.

“It’s a community effort that we’re preparing our young people for the life ahead of them,” Soby said. “We will ultimately be dependent on them being skilled and able to compete in the world market going forward.”

Board of Education Chairman Ron Goldstein said he was grateful for the support.

“I’m looking forward now to starting the new [school] year with the budget in place so that we can move forward,” he added.

Ice Cream Shop Open on the Green in Colchester

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

There’s a new ice cream shop in town named Coneheads – and its owners hope plenty of people stop in and consume mass quantities.

Coneheads Ice Cream opened June 6 next to Hair Magic at 24 Norwich Ave., right by the town green. Mitch Farnham, who co-owns Coneheads with his girlfriend Lisa Ferraro, said opening up an ice cream joint was something the two of them had been considering for awhile.

He said the business is a “stress-free adventure” and added that it’s “happy serving kids ice cream.”

Farnham said he and Ferraro had been looking for a place on the green, found the space next to Hair Magic “and things fell into place.”

Outside of Coneheads is an open patio along with a “dog counter” where owners can walk up with their dogs and order ice cream for themselves and for their dog. Since dogs are not allowed inside of the store, the dog counter allows for the opportunity for owners and dogs to get their favorite treats.

“Everyone who walks by seems to have a dog,” Farnham said. With a sign outside saying “knock or bark,” Coneheads also serves special dog ice cream.

Inside, Coneheads is styled like an old-fashioned, retro ice cream shop. On the walls of the shop are photos of celebrities and presidents enjoying the cold treat.

“Ice cream shops were always fun as a kid,” Farnham said. “We wanted to bring back the nostalgic [feeling].”

Aside from the usual hard ice cream, which the business buys from Praline’s in Wallingford, Coneheads also serves yogurt, sorbet, sundaes,

milkshakes and banana splits. One of Farnham’s favorites, he said, is the orange creamsicle soda float. Other float flavors include Coca-Cola and root beer.

And while Coneheads cannot proclaim its products are nut-free – Praline’s is a facility that also produces products with nuts, and cannot guarantee a completely nut-safe environment – the ice cream shop does have a dairy-free raspberry sorbet. And while he’s not planning on changing ice cream suppliers, Farnham said the shop is working on a nut-safe option to offer at the store.

One of Coneheads’ signature creations is the Conehead Coffee Cooler, which is coffee ice cream blended with black coffee and fresh coffee grounds (for a slightly-less caffeinated drink, people can choose crushed Oreos or crushed Heath bars instead of coffee grounds). For the summer, Coneheads is offering a signature sundae called the Campfire Sundae. The Campfire is Dutch chocolate ice cream with a whole Hershey’s chocolate bar and graham crackers put inside, and topped with hot fudge, marshmallows, crushed Heath bar, whipped cream, chocolate sprinkles and three cherries.

Another summer special is a Tropical Pop Rocks sundae, which consists of scoops of vanilla, strawberry and orange-pineapple ice cream with pineapple, strawberries, Pop Rocks, whipped cream and two cherries on top.

The shop also sells a gourmet Italian blend coffee from Newington and fresh biscotti in various flavors.

For the truly daring ice cream lover, Coneheads hosts the “You Versus Ice Cream Challenge.” Included in the challenge is a bucket with five flavors, five toppings, 12 cher-



Coneheads Ice Cream, located at 24 Norwich Ave., opened June 6 and serves up ice cream, coffee and biscotti.

ries, three cones and a banana. If a participant finishes the bucket in under an hour, they get their picture onto the wall.

Farnham said the shop is also dedicated to giving back to the town. All tips go to the Colchester Fuel Bank.

The shop hopes to host “Acoustic Sundaes” starting in a few weeks, with live entertainment on Sundays. Farnham said the shop will be open

year-round, and he and Ferraro plan to begin a discount card program for the colder months featuring a “winter flavor of the month” club and a buy-five-cones-get-the-sixth-free deal.

Coneheads is open seven days a week from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. On weekends and while there are events on the green, the shop will be open until 10 p.m. The shop can also be found on Facebook under “Coneheads Colchester.”

Colchester Resident Wins First Emmy

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

Winning an Emmy was never something Colchester resident Tom Nelson expected.

But Nelson, a freelance editor, producer and video shooter, brought home one of the coveted gold statues last month, for his part in editing *Made in Connecticut*, a show produced for Connecticut Public Television (CPTV).

“I was excited just to be nominated, but hearing that we won was surreal and crazy,” Nelson said of him and the team of eight who worked on the show.

Made in Connecticut originally began as two- to three-minute segments that appeared between CPTV shows. The segments follow a business in Connecticut and show how it produces different products. Eventually, the segments were compiled into a full half-hour show, and this half-hour version is what won the Emmy.

The businesses featured in the Emmy-winning episode included Pratt & Whitney, Tucci Lumber and Severance Foods among others.

The episode was aired Oct. 28, and the team found out they were nominated in April in the informational/instructional category for the 48th annual Emmy Awards for the Boston/New England Region. The awards ceremony was held May 30 at the Marriott Copley Place in Boston. The Emmys are judged by peers in the industry who have won awards in the past.

“It felt really good; I had played a big role in the show,” Nelson said of winning. “The crew at CPTV is really small.”

Nelson was nominated for another CPTV show as well, *Creative Steps*, in the arts and culture category, although that program did not

win.

Regarding his work with CPTV for *Made in Connecticut*, Nelson said he was a “freelancer in the right place at the right time.”

Nelson began work with CPTV at the beginning of 2014, and said the episode of *Made in Connecticut* only took several weeks.

“CPTV prides themselves on efficiency,” Nelson said. “I wasn’t the only editor.”

But, Nelson said, on the team of eight, he was the “new guy.”

“I worked on the project with people who have Emmys,” Nelson said. “As a freelancer, I’m happy to work with so many talented, experienced people.”

Since he was 16 years old, Nelson knew he wanted to work in video and found himself in college for communications and media.

A graduate of the University of Hartford in 2004, Nelson began work at Essex Television and was there for nine years before transitioning to a full-time freelancer. Now, Nelson has a large set-up in the basement of his home in Colchester, complete with high-tech speakers and multiple monitors.

“I’m editing now an ad for a company in Norwalk,” Nelson said of his work.

Nelson also shoots videos for *Consumer Reports* in Colchester, and is a partner at a production company called Atomic Kids.

“I’m diverse in what I do,” he said. “At any point, someone is looking for [a shooter, editor or producer]. I’m always doing something.”

As a freelancer, Nelson has tackled a variety of subjects, from documentaries about veterans to projects for CPTV, along with commer-



Tom Nelson of Colchester recently won his first Emmy award for editing *Made in Connecticut*, a program by Connecticut Public Television.

cial and corporate work for Hilton. Another interesting project Nelson has been involved in has been creating online curriculum for a New York company called Defy, which helps ex-convicts learn about running a legitimate business.

Winning the Emmy, Nelson said, was “validation for what I do” – and also served as encouragement to continue working hard.

“It makes me feel good that I won it,” Nelson said. “I’m going to keep doing what I’m doing. I’ll keep putting out quality stuff.”

Portland Resident Named Mercy High School Salutatorian

by John Tyczkowski

While many of her fellow Portland residents graduated high school last Friday, Allison Wojciechowski, being a Mercy High School student, got out May 28.

And that's not all. She also was named salutatorian of Mercy's Class of 2015.

Wojciechowski was ranked second out of a class of 143, and received an honors medallion from the school's principal, Sr. Mary McCarthy. She also spoke at the high school's 49th commencement exercises.

"I talked about education and how it was so important that we were able to come to Mercy and learn everything we needed for knowledge," she said this week of her speech that night. "The graduation ceremony isn't just the culmination of high school work. We're going off to college and have to take what we've learned and put it into action."

Wojciechowski was also a recipient of the President's Education Award, given to students with a minimum 3.5 GPA and a score of 85 percent or higher on the SAT or ACT.

In addition, she was also the recipient of numerous academic awards including the Yale Book Award and departmental awards in Comparative Government, Biology, French and Latin.

Also, Wojciechowski has been a member of several societies and clubs at Mercy and in

Middlesex County, including the National Honor Society, the Rotary Interact Club, Peer Ministry, the Mercy Ambassadors and the Middlesex Youth Association for Retarded Citizens.

She credits her involvement in so many causes to good time management.

"You have to really find that balance between studies and extracurriculars and all the other opportunities," Wojciechowski said.

In addition, she said that genuinely caring about the causes she participated in helped as well.

"If I went through a long day of school and I was going to help with three or four things I didn't care about, it would've felt like work," she said. "I loved doing things I was really passionate about and cared about."

"My whole heart was in it," she said.

Wojciechowski was also awarded the Father Butler Scholarship for her "outstanding contributions" to St. Mary Church, her parish.

At St. Mary, she served as peer minister, altar server, lector, religious education teacher and choir singer.

In her role as a peer minister, she helped to plan and promote monthly teen Masses, which specifically "featured ways for young people to be more spiritually involved," she said.

During her sophomore year, Wojciechowski worked with the church's youth group to or-

ganize Feeding Children Everywhere (FCE), consisting of 130 volunteers, which raised more than \$9,000 to provide meals for residents of Portland and Middletown, as well as Haiti.

Only \$5,000 is required to procure supplies, but through a rockathon – where participants rocked in rocking chairs for 24 hours straight – Wojciechowski was able to raise over \$9,000.

"It was pretty mind-blowing, all the support," she said.

And in addition to raising the money, the volunteers helped pack the meals.

"FCE came in with long tables, and we all got in an assembly line to package the food," she said. "I had to get all the volunteers together, get times set, and make sure we were on track."

Wojciechowski will attend Boston College in the fall to major in biology.

"Ever since freshman year I've loved biology," she said. "It's just so interesting to me and I've always wanted to learn more about it."

And that lines up perfectly with her future plans, which she said first involve the pre-med track at BC, eventually leading to medical school to become a doctor.

Lastly, Wojciechowski said she wanted to thank "the whole Mercy community" for their support over the years.

"I've really grown a ton since I entered Mercy and it's because of who was there and the won-



Allison Wojciechowski was the salutatorian of the Mercy High School Class of 2015.

derful community they all are," she said. "I would've had a completely different experience at any other school."

Portland Resident Graduates from West Point

by John Tyczkowski

Eric D. Churchill, a 2010 Portland High School graduate, was commissioned last month as a second lieutenant within the engineers' branch of the U.S. Army, upon graduation from the U.S. Military Academy in West Point, N.Y.

Churchill, who concentrated his studies in civil engineering, said he credits an outing to West Point as a Boy Scout in eighth grade with giving him the idea to apply.

"We didn't actually get to see the campus, but we got to meet some cadets," he said. "I got to see what cadets do for their military training, and talk to them about it."

While attending the academy, Churchill was able to repay the favor.

"It was fun to be on the other side, interacting with the Boy Scouts that way," he said. "They have about 5,000 or 6,000 scouts each year for the weekend, and it's entirely cadet-run."

But before the fun begins, there's the strenuous process of applying to the academy, Churchill said.

To start, applicants must receive a nomination from a senator or congressional representative from their home state. Churchill's came from then-U.S. Sen. Chris Dodd.

However, Churchill's application was not accepted the first time, so he attended the University of Connecticut for one year.

In the meantime, he gathered recommendations and better learned the admissions process from retired Army Maj. Nancy Bates, a 1984 academy graduate and admissions representative.

"She really started helping me with my application and helped me fill in the holes," he said. "It was good to have the inside help."

At UConn, Churchill studied engineering, which he knew he wanted to continue at West Point – which, upon its founding in 1802, was initially an engineering institution, the first of its kind in the United States.

With a nomination from 1st U.S. District Rep. John Larson, and nine letters of recommendation from UConn faculty and scout group mentors, Churchill was accepted into the Class of 2015.

Churchill said his initial six-week cadet basic training at the academy was akin to drinking through a firehose.

"They're pushing so much stuff at you at once and you're just trying to absorb what you can," he said.

There's physical training and indoctrination, Churchill said, as well as getting fitted for gear, and the introduction to the knowledge book, a book from which cadets must memorize passages word-for-word and repeat them back to upperclassmen on demand.

Churchill said the academic years are very focused on schoolwork as well as academy duties and sports, which each cadet must participate in. Most of the military training occurs during summers, he said.

Cadets learn fundamental military skills in the woods during field training in their second summer, and learn about the Army's different branches.

Churchill also took the time then to attend Airborne School at Fort Benning in Georgia.

"I was able to get my five jumps in over there; that was neat," he said.

For the third summer, Churchill served as a squad leader for cadet field training.

"It was a much different experience leading the training instead of being trained," he said. "It was one of my favorite experiences at West Point."

Churchill also went to New Orleans and observed the Army Corps of Engineers that summer.

For his last summer, Churchill shadowed an engineering lieutenant at Fort Bragg, N.C., and went through "a very grueling" final field training at the academy.

In particular, Churchill said he was proud of



2nd Lieutenant Eric D. Churchill (second from left) stands with his father Glenn (center), mother Leona (right) and brother Steven.

his participation in the academy's annual Sandhurst Military Skills Competition.

The two-day event includes 36 companies of cadets from the Coast Guard, Naval and Air Force academies, as well as ROTC cadets and a number of international military academy cadet teams.

They're judged on physical skills such as marksmanship and land navigation.

"For my junior year and senior year I trained teams in my battalion for the competition," Churchill said. "I put a lot of work into helping them, and my teams did really well."

Both years, Churchill's teams scored silver.

Next week, Churchill will marry his fiancée Katie Dillon; the two started dating in high

school. Following that, he will report to Fort Leonard Wood in Missouri for further officer's training with the Army engineers.

Then, after some time at Fort Benning, Churchill will report to his first assignment in spring 2016 – at Schofield Barracks in Hawaii.

Though he's committed to five years' active service and three years' reserve service, Churchill said he's open to a variety of career paths, not all of which include military service.

"I want to feel it out, see what me and my wife want to do," he said. "If I want to stay, there are lots of job options. If I want to get out, I'll be an engineer."

"It's hard moving around with a family, so I'm keeping my options in mind," he added.

Dugas, East Hampton School Board Agree to Part Ways

by John Tyczkowski

Diane Dugas is out as East Hampton's schools superintendent, a position she's held for the past two years.

The Board of Education and Dugas "have mutually agreed to rescind her contract," Board of Education Chairman Ken Barber said Monday, following a lengthy executive session meeting of the board.

The exact details of the how and why have not been released, but Barber said "both parties are currently negotiating the end of her contract."

Assistant Superintendent of Schools Tim Van Tassel will serve as acting superintendent of schools through June 30, when he departs for his previously-accepted job as Hebron schools superintendent.

The board voted Monday to authorize Van Tassel to be paid at the superintendent's salary for two and a half weeks, ending June 30; the payment is retroactive to the middle of this month, when Van Tassel began handing Dugas' duties after she went on vacation. However, Dugas did attend and speak at the EHHS Class

of 2015's graduation Sunday evening.

Dugas' departure and Van Tassel's appointment as acting schools chief were only two of several topics the board tackled in a two-and-a-half hour executive session Monday night.

The board also discussed, and later approved, rehiring Karen Asetta as school business manager. She had previously indicated she would resign "on or about" June 30 for a new opportunity.

In addition, the board also authorized Barber to begin a search for an interim superintendent of schools.

However, Barber requested the board table motions that would have immediately begun the search process. The board is expected to revisit those motions at a June 29 meeting at the middle school, with a 6 p.m. executive session and a public portion anticipated at 7 p.m.

After the meeting, Barber said he expected details surrounding the entire process would be available as of the board's upcoming meeting.

"I would imagine we'll have an agreement by next Monday," he said of the board's nego-

tiations with Dugas. "There'll be a statement as well."

During public comment, former Town Council member and current Chatham Party head Kyle Dostaler called the board's actions "disheartening."

"I know [Dugas] is not leaving voluntarily. The question is why? What happened?" he said. "And the fact that you did these things so quickly and out of the public eye is just so amazing to me."

Dostaler also referred to an earlier motion from a meeting two weeks ago to review Dugas' performance (first stated as "conduct") to be "horribly written and unprofessional."

"Rumors were all about town as to what that 'conduct' could have been," he said. "It should've said 'performance' from the start."

In addition, Dostaler said along with the still-uncertain reimbursement status of the \$51 million high school renovation project, these latest personnel actions gave him pause about the soundness of the budget, which had not been voted on at the time (it went to referendum

Wednesday, and was rejected).

"I'm questioning now why people should vote 'yes' on the budget when all these things are up in the air and all these costs associated with your actions tonight are still unannounced," he said.

Dostaler said that while he understood "these negotiations have to be done," he also pressed the board for a statement to "logically explain" the process surrounding Dugas' end of employment, and the reasons and costs for such a process.

After the meeting, Barber responded to Dostaler's words.

"A person with his experience on the Town Council with transitions of high-level officials should know better than to make such irresponsible and inflammatory comments," he said.

Dostaler served on the Town Council during the years-long search for a permanent town manager that culminated in the hiring of Michael Maniscalco in July 2012.

The search followed the resignation of town manager Jeffery O'Keefe in September 2010.



The East Hampton High School Class of 2015 graduated Father's Day, June 21. At left, graduating seniors Erin Provost, Alex Balletto and Dan Klemonski share a light moment with Superintendent of Schools Diane Dugas and Board of Education Chairman Ken Barber. At right, a few of the many students who decorated their mortarboards with art and words indicating where they'd be heading after graduation, or that looked back on their time at EHHS.

Belltown Class of 2015 Sent On its Way

by John Tyczkowski

This Father's Day, 119 Bellringers were able to give their dads more than the usual tie and greeting card.

"There is no greater gift today than to see your child graduate," Superintendent of Schools Diane Dugas said in her greeting, directing her comments to the fathers in attendance.

The Class of 2015's graduation took place last Sunday at Memorial School, due to the high school renovation construction upsetting the usual graduation schedule and location.

And despite a rainy start to the day, the sun came out in full force and 77th high school commencement occurred on Memorial School's front lawn.

Class president Alex Balletto in his speech characterized the class's time together as a novel.

"If there was a page for every day, the novel would be 2,340 pages long," he said of the 13 years the class spent together within the district. "I couldn't imagine spending 2,340 days with a better group of people."

He also urged his fellow Bellringers to follow the simple maxim of "live, laugh, love" every day.

Class essayist Erin Provost spoke next, focusing on the uniqueness of the Class of 2015 and the promise of all of those students.

"There's no way our Class of 2015 could fit in any prescribed mold," she said. "As I look around, I see our future. I can't help but smile when I think about the potential of all of us."

"And we couldn't do it without one another," she said.

Next, salutatorian Dan Klemonski spoke about how the day's commencement was only a beginning for the Class of 2015.

"Commencement is about new beginnings. Graduation can't be the end, because we're still ignorant," he said.

To that end, he told his fellow students to be explorers and to be adventurous.

"Explore because you want to, because of the thrill of discovery," Klemonski said. "The more intelligent you become, the more understanding, aware and interesting you are as well."

After a musical interlude, "Seasons of Love" from *Rent*, courtesy of the chamber choir under Ehren Brown, director of choirs, valedictorian Abbott Price spoke.

"We have laughed, played, and grown together, we have stood together making new friends and building stronger bonds," she said. "I am proud to be a part of this group."

Price also talked about the potential of the latest Bellringer graduate class to positively impact others.

"We as a class have so much to give to the world," she said. "And we will do it all in many diverse ways."

Dugas then spoke and, given the commencement's location of Memorial School, offered her perspectives on Robert Fulghum's essay, "All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten."

Some of these bits of advice included "share everything," "play fair," "don't hit people," "say you're sorry when you hurt someone," "wash your hands before you eat," and "warm cookies and cold milk are good for you."

Dugas also reminded the graduates that the only fear they should have "is of missed opportunities."

"Life is a learning journey that is just beginning. Look for opportunities and take risks," she said. "The time is now, and the time is yours."

"East Hampton gave you the wings to soar," she said.

Board of Education Chairman Ken Barber then offered in his remarks a recipe for suc-

cess, which began with the 13 years of education in East Hampton, and apply "a great big dose of love and support from your family," and lots of personal motivation.

"Each of you now has the recipe for success," he said. "Now, just continue doing it every day of your life."

EHHS Principal John Fidler was the final speaker before the presentation of diplomas, and said each graduation class has its own personality, like children.

"Also like children, parents are not supposed to have a favorite," he said. "But the Class of 2015 is one of the greatest classes to come through the East Hampton school system."

From there, the graduates received their diplomas row-by-row before the customary cap-throwing, a standing ovation and processing to the Memorial School pavilion to be received by their family members and teachers.

For more photos from the Class of 2015's graduation, visit [facebook.com/rivereastnewsbulletin](https://www.facebook.com/rivereastnewsbulletin).

The members of the East Hampton Class of 2015 are:

(* Top Ten Students, + Ferrigno-Bell Chapter National Honor Society)

Rebekka Elizabeth Agnello, Madison Elizabeth Aiken, Brianna Marie Akerley, Julia Lorraine Anderson, Alyson Lee Augenstein, Katherine Baker-Carver, +Alex Balletto, Matthew Paul Barber, +Nicholas Scott Barber, Alexander C. Barney, Kimberly Francis Bartone, Evin K. Bell, Alyssa R. Bergeron, +Allyson Mae Bolton, Nicole Karena Bosse, Annelise S. Bouchard, William Joseph Bowers, Madison Leigh Boyce, McKenzie Rae Boyce, Justin D. Brady, Alison C. Bristol, Jordan T. Buonocore, Lissandra Cartagena, +Jordan Steven Casey, McKenize E. Caso, Caleb Patrick Cavanaugh, +Makaila Marie Cerrone, John Michael Clark, Jr., Evan B. Cohen, Amber Rose Congdon, Christopher

Michael Consta, Alexander Vincent Costen, Leah Nicole Coughlin, Cameron Cronin, Brandi Jean Cyr

Alec Thomas deBrito, Taylor Rose Caroline DeLeon, Rob DiStefano, Christopher Alan Dziarkowski, Cassandra Elizabeth Easter, Mary Louise Echeandia, Nathan Gary Edwards, +Jennie Catherine Eurburn, Sara Nicole Fries, +Jacob Quentin Gagliastri, Pavlo I. Galenko, Eric R. Gamberale, +Eli Collins Gates, Steven John Gilbert, Dylan Joseph Godwin, Shane Hart Goodson, Christopher David Guerin, Nathan Richard Hall, Kiara Elizabeth Hanlon, +Reanna Morgan Holmes, Bryan Keith Hurlbert, Mitchell Stephen Jacinto, Zachary Robert Johnson, Jacob David Joslin, Brittany Sage Kearney, +Elizabeth Grace Kelpen, +Daniel Gregory Kelmonski, Brandon Michael Kochuk, +Demitra Katherine Kourtzidis, Tedford James Kreder, Gregory Paul Krutzky

Tyler Joseph LaChance, *Yanyi Lam, +Elizabeth Marie Lambert, Danny Steven Lee, Julie Lynn Llacer, Patrick J. Lynch, Carter James Marrow, Jessica Ann Measimer, *+Katrina L. Messerschmidt, *Andrew James Morse, Sara Moyles, +Taylor Jackson Muncy, Christian W. Nichols, Andrew Norton, Ruby Joanna Olson, *+Emma Pellegrino, Pearl Josephine Phelps, +Cole W. Phillips, Daniel Steven Pickup, +Nicholas Mark Piscatelli, Shannon Erika Pitman, Katherine L. Player, Brianna N. Poulin, *+Abbott Olivia Price, *+Erin Frances Provost, Shannon Nicole Pugh

+Cullen Bleser Quinn, +Morgan Reed, Glenna N. Reilly, Samantha Lynne Rinaldi, +Haley Marie Anne Rivard-Lentz, Lindsey Michelle Roberson, Juan Daniel Robles, +Whitney E. Rubega, Kaylie Ann Ryan, Evan Alan Salisbury, Zachary Miguel Sabastiao, Matthew RP Sherer, Michelle Elaine Siena, Grace Ryan Snyder, Ashtin Marie Solis, Dakota Wil Spencer, Kyle David Stiano, Noelle Renee Strzalkowski, Jamie William Suchoski, Angela Therese Tallberg, *Samantha Lynn Terry, Samantha L. Torres, Jacob Benford Turner, +Abigayle Elizabeth Tuttle, Elisha Rose DeGuzman Valencia, Cindy Velez, Jake Carter Vickery, Carli Elizabeth Villa, Alex Michael Vingris, +Connor Raymond Wall, Dylan T. Wall, *+Emily Jean Weber

East Hampton Budget Defeated A Third Time

by John Tyczkowski

The answer was still 'no' Wednesday night – and this time, it was a very loud 'no.'

Taxpayers voted against the third proposed 2015-16 budget, which totaled \$41.38 million. The budget failed by a 1,230-1,076 tally.

The voter turnout reached a new high for this year, however, with a total of 2,306 votes cast, including hand-counted votes. That outstripped both the 2,193 total from the second referendum and the 2,273 total from the first referendum.

And the turnout wasn't the only thing higher. This time, the gap between the 'no' votes and 'yes' votes worked out to 154 – a much larger number than the 11 votes separating the second referendum, as well as the 39-vote separation from the initial referendum.

The budget rejected Wednesday would have been an increase of 2.71 percent, or \$1.09 million, over current year spending. The spending package also called for the mill rate to climb

by 0.93 mills, bringing it to 28.07. This would have translated to a 3.42 percent increase in taxes.

The third budget did not feature any budget reductions from the June 2 referendum defeat, but instead applied budget impacts in the form of state revenues and lower than expected expenses in some areas, which led to a net reduction of \$46,511.

Board of Finance Chairman Ted Turner said he was disappointed with the vote.

"But, we will adjust," he said.

Board member Mary Ann Dostaler simply said, "We need to be very thoughtful with what we do next."

Turner also said possible reductions the board might consider could be further reductions to the Board of Education budget, as well as the elimination of the half-year police officer position – a position that represents an additional \$47,000 in the budget.

"My guess is that they'll be the first to take a hit," Turner said.

That board will meet Tuesday, June 30, at 6:30 p.m. in Town Hall, to discuss the next round of reductions to the budget.

After the tallies were announced, the Town Council held a special meeting to set a temporary mill rate in order to be able to mail out tax bills July 1.

That mill rate was set at 27.14, the same as the current mill rate.

"It's something to get the tax bills out and to have the money start coming in," councilor Ted Hintz Jr. said.

Once the budget passes, the town will mail out supplemental tax bills to cover the difference.

Town Council Chairwoman Barbara Moore said the people have sent a clear message to the town with this latest vote.

"We definitely need to reduce the budget,"

she said. "But I'm somewhat baffled as to where we can reduce it."

Moore had previously stated she was unwilling to eliminate the half-year police officer position, and was not in favor of deeper reductions to the Board of Education budget.

By contrast, the Town Council's Republican minority has been consistently calling for significant reductions to the Board of Education budget, to the tune of \$200,000 each time the budget was revisited.

In addition, she said this third proposed budget represented "what [the town] thought was the best possible budget for East Hampton."

"I think the cuts need to be deeper this time," Moore said. "You can't please everybody, and we need to do what's best for the town."

The 2014-15 budget cycle featured three referendums, but a four-referendum budget cycle has not happened in town in recent years.



Camp Hemlocks is back in business. The camp opened June 14 and is now bustling with campers after closing for financial reasons in 2013. The following year Oak Hill LLC, a private provider of services to the disabled, announced it was becoming a controlling partner of the camp and would not only reopen but renovate Hemlocks; so far, \$2.3 million in work has been done.

Camp Hemlocks Back in Business in Hebron

by Geeta Schrayter

Camp Hemlocks is once again open and active.

The camp came back to life Sunday, June 14, after a near-death experience in October 2013 when Easter Seals Coastal Fairfield County announced it planned to close the camp amid a declining number of campers and a lack of resources to continue to fund the maintenance and operational costs of the camp.

But last August, Oak Hill LLC, a non-profit based out of Hartford with services available throughout the country, became a controlling member of Easter Seals and Camp Hemlocks and announced plans to not only save the camp, but hopefully expand it.

Located on 160 acres, including a 22-acre lake, Hemlocks has provided a place for individuals with disabilities to experience camp life since 1950, when it was established in Trumbull (the camp moved to its current location in Hebron in order to accommodate more campers).

And now, those experiences can continue.

Oak Hill President and CEO Barry Simon – who has also lived in Hebron for over 21 years – said of the opening this week, "It's just been an absolutely wonderful and amazing thing."

He furthered, "I was out there the other day and to have campers who have been there for over 20 years literally crying and saying how happy they were that they were able to have this wonderful opportunity to go back to a camp that gave them a sense of belonging – a feeling that they could just enjoy themselves – that's

our mission. That what we're about."

"It's such a wonderful thing for us to be able to do, but the reality is it's about the people that they're serving there."

Camp Hemlocks is barrier-free, meaning it's designed to allow people with disabilities "complete access and optimal independence, while permitting maximum participation," explained a recent release about the opening.

Facilities at the camp include an indoor pool, a large meeting room, dining room capacity for 150, overnight accommodations for 100, an open-air pavilion and three lodges.

And some of those facilities have received renovation work leading up to the camp's opening; Simon shared the pool was leaking and needed work, as did the camp's heating system. Work was also done to the locker rooms, to the carpeting, and Wi-Fi was installed.

"There's still things that need to be worked on but frankly it's going to be both a matter of our ability to raise the funds to do it and people attending and being able to build improvements into the cost of doing it," Simon stated.

Last week was the first full week of camp – and it was sold out, with 50 campers attending.

"So it was just a great way to start off the season," he said, sharing there would be a different theme each week, including a week for the multiple sclerosis society, autism, developmental disabilities and a kid's week for younger children.

"But the overall theme is that it's a camp designed to embrace people who have all kinds

of disabilities to be able to not feel a sense of being different, but to have a sense of inclusion, and to be able to experience camp the way everybody else does," Simon continued.

According to the release, the camp "offers maximum participation for Connecticut's youth, adults, veterans and seniors with physical or developmental disabilities along with their families, friends and caregivers. Community programming and meeting spaces will be offered to the community at large and civic groups. Early programming considerations include: summer camp, programs for veterans and seniors, adaptive sports, educational opportunities and potential partnerships with organizations like Special Olympics."

Also pleased with the camp's opening was Town Manager Andrew Tierney, who had been working to solve the issue of Hemlock's closing since he first got word they'd be closing.

"I think it's great," he said of the opening. "It was something we were very sad about when we heard Easter Seals was closing. And along with some of the departments and myself, we worked very hard to get that reset in some sort of capacity that it used to serve in and I think we accomplished that."

He continued, "I think it's a good thing for Hebron and the people that [camp] used to address. Oak Hill is a great organization and the leadership of Barry Simon is second to none; we're happy we were a part of helping them open up."

Likewise, Board of Selectmen Chairman Jeff

Watt said, "I think it's fantastic that we were able to get the opportunity to have an organization like Oak Hill actually come into town and be able to take over the facility. I think it's going to be great for Hebron and the local community."

"I'm very excited about it," he concluded.

Similarly, Camp Director Jen Merkent shared in the release, "The gap left in recreational services for kids with disabilities when Hemlocks closed was extensive. To say we are thrilled to be back providing services to our campers is an understatement!"

Next month, the community will have the opportunity to explore and learn about the camp during an open house hosted by Oak Hill Friday, July 17, from 1-5 p.m.

During that time, attendees will be able to celebrate the reopening of the camp, tour the newly renovated facility and, "more importantly," according to Chief Development Officer Ruth Hayes, "to share in the excitement and happiness being experienced by campers who have been reunited with their Camp Hemlocks 'family!'"

For more information about the camp, to RSVP for the open house or to learn how to support the camp or provide a camper scholarship contact Hayes at 860-550-0391 or ruth.hayes@OakHillCT.org.

For information on receiving camperships, contact Merkent at 860-242-2274 ext. 4068 or jen.merkent@OakHillCT.org.

Gilead Hill Teacher Named HES Principal

by Geeta Schrayter

When the new third-graders arrive at Hebron Elementary School in the fall, they'll see a familiar face – Kate Uriano, a longtime teacher at Gilead Hill School, will be the new principal.

The Board of Education recently appointed Uriano as principal at Hebron Elementary, starting July 1. Uriano follows the tenure of Amy Campbell, who is retiring after five years in the district (and 34 as an educator); she was among 30 candidates who applied for the position and were viewed in part based on feedback received on the desired characteristics of the new principal by faculty, staff and parents at the school.

Six candidates were brought in for an initial interview with a committee made up of teachers, parents, non-certified staff, Board of Education members and administrators. Three can-

didates were then asked back for a second interview, after which finalists were reviewed for a third time by interim schools superintendent Mark Winzler and incoming schools superintendent Tim Van Tassel before they were brought before the school board for a fourth and final interview.

And at the end of it all, it was Uriano who stood out.

Uriano received her bachelor's degree in psychology and her master's in elementary education: reading and language arts from the University of St. Joseph in West Hartford. She also received her sixth-year diploma in educational administration from the University of Connecticut.

She's been at Gilead Hill School – which houses pre-kindergarten through second grade

– her entire educational career, beginning as a first- and second-grade teacher and currently filling the role of a math specialist.

According to a recent release sent out by the board, "In this role she coaches fellow teachers on best practices in math, collects and analyzes and presents mathematical data and designs and provides professional development for teachers among other duties."

Uriano has also served as head teacher, master mentor, a Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports coach and summer school director, among other roles.

"We could not be more pleased with the appointment of Ms. Katie Uriano as principal of Hebron Elementary School," Van Tassel stated in the release. "For the past 13 years, Katie has demonstrated a deep commitment to the dis-

trict of Hebron as both a classroom teacher and a curriculum leader. She is homegrown talent and a rising star for us."

He added, "Her collaborative leadership style and knowledge of curriculum and contemporary learning theory make her a great fit for the principalship of Hebron Elementary School. I look forward to our work together in the years ahead."

Board of Education Chairwoman Maryanne Leichter was likewise pleased with the appointment.

"We're just delighted to have her on board," she said this week. "It's very exciting to have her with us. She knows the school system, she's ready for the position and is already actively working in the school."

AHM Program Preps Girls for High School

by Geeta Schrayter

Don't take people at face value. That's just one of the various lessons taught to participants of GPC, a summer program with AHM Youth and Family Services meant to help girls in eighth grade prepare for high school.

It's a lesson that could also be learned by anyone who judges the name of the program: Girl Power Camp. On Wednesday, AHM Social Worker Bevin Perry shared it was a name people sometimes scoffed at.

"One girl said her brother still gives her a hard time, [mocking] 'oh you're going to *Girl Power Camp*'" she stated.

Sometimes dubbed "cheesy" by participants as well, Perry and Social Worker Aquila Beach said each year they give the girls the chance to change the name if they want, but by the end of the four-day program they wind up admitting, "that's what [the program] is – it needs to stay."

And that the program fits the title – or the title fits the program – isn't a bad thing. Indeed, GPC, which is possible through grant funding, is all about empowering the girls and helping them feel confident about their upcoming transition from middle school, by providing a place where they can ask questions, talk about issues or concerns and learn some helpful tools "to relieve some of their nervousness about high school," Perry stated.

In addition, the program provides the opportunity for the incoming freshmen to meet some

upperclassmen: girls who attended the program in past years often return to help.

"I think it's nice for the eighth grade girls because it gives them the opportunity to actually talk to high school girls," Beach shared. "There are questions we can certainly answer, but it's not the same as talking to a peer."

Perry added the upperclassmen become "someone they can totally relate to because we talk a lot about issues that we've all been through, some of the ups and downs in life [and] things life tends to throw at us."

She continued, "The girls who've already gone through [the program] and are now upperclassmen really kind of share some of their insights; things they wish they had known as well as some of the lessons they've learned along the way. Like Aquila said, we can certainly do that, but coming from a peer is much better."

Beach added the presence of upperclassmen also "provides a familiar face for them in the hall" when they start at RHAM, which often means a lot in terms of comfort.

This year, 10 girls participated in the program and Wednesday afternoon they were getting ready to spend the night at AHM and working on scrapbooks – which will contain pictures from the week as well as some of the discussions that were held, thereby creating a kind of "handbook" they can always refer to, Perry

shared.

The week involves activities like jewelry making – hemp necklaces this year - yoga, self defense, the scrapbooks, and an activity where the girls bring in a song they feel describes them. In addition, Perry said there's "a lot of personal reflection and journaling" where themes such as acceptance of self and others and the aforementioned "don't judge people at face value" are discussed.

"We look for a lot of activities for teens that have messages in them," Perry added, explaining, she head to the store with Beach the day after school ends for supplies and, "We have the high school girls kind of give us ideas on what's trending now."

This year, those "high school girls" include Amanda Speano who will be a senior in the fall, along with Shilo Hollister and Amanda Toce, who will both be juniors.

Speaking about the program Wednesday, Speano said "I think that the big thing about it that we can all agree upon is that it helps girls transition from eighth to ninth grade by at least knowing a face in the high school if they didn't know one before. Also, the big thing I would think is they kind of realize... they're not really alone."

She added, "Eighth grade was a hard time for us and the big hop between middle school and high school can just be really threatening."

Hollister added the program also shows "it's amazing how much you don't know about a person and how similar they can be to you."

Meanwhile, Toce said at first, coming into the program "we all felt a little awkward and uneasy about it, but afterwards we all kind of connected as a family and had a lot better feeling about going into the high school than we did before."

All three said they chose to come back and help with GPC to be role models for the girls currently participating.

Toce added, "It feels good to be looked at as a role model. Sometimes it's hard for eighth graders to open up to a teacher or counselor but easier for someone our age."

Hollister furthered, "It just feels good to be able to share our past experiences with these girls and try to help them."

And Speano said it was likely the other girls would find them relatable.

"Yesterday we said 'we've been through probably everything you've been through so there's really nothing you can throw at us that's gonna curve us,'" she stated.

The girls added they all felt the program accomplished its goal and made their own high school transition easier, meaning the GPC – cheesy as some may consider the name – has proved to be yet another successful program for AHM, on an already impressive roster.

Colchester Police News

6/16: State Police said Sarah Phillips, 25, of 96 Silver Ln., East Hartford, was arrested and charged with reckless driving, risk of injury to a minor, operating under suspension and failure to meet insurance requirements.

6/18: State Police said Destiny Ziolk, 32, of 113 High St., Norwich, was arrested and charged with two counts of failure to appear.

6/18: State Police said Nicholas Bobowicz, 19, of 20 Irving Dell Place, East Lyme, was arrested and charged with DUI and making restricted turns.

6/19: State Police said Samuel Estrada, 43, of 56 Bond St., Hartford, was arrested and charged with failure to appear.

6/19: State Police said Ronald Clough, 54,

of 19 Doctor Manning Dr., Lebanon, was arrested and charged with failure to verify address.

6/19: State Police said Kevin Ferreira, 21, of 163 Dara Dr., was arrested and charged with DUI, narcotics not kept in original container, drug paraphernalia and possession of narcotics.

6/20: State Police said Dawn Senesac, 46, of 1 Country Place, was arrested and charged with DUI.

6/21: State Police said Christos Trabakoulos, 19, of 241 Windham Tpke., Franklin, was arrested and charged with third-degree burglary, fifth-degree larceny, and making a false statement.

East Hampton Police News

6/6: Darren Lynn, 49, of 5 Horn Rd., Windham, was arrested and charged with driving under the influence, failure to drive right, traveling fast, failure to have tail lamp illuminated and operating a motor vehicle with a suspended driver's license, East Hampton Police said.

6/13: Robert Thomassian, 60, of 204 Lake Vista Dr., was arrested and charged with driving under the influence and failure to drive right, police said.

6/14: Bryon M. Turner, 40, of 42 Spice Hill Dr., was arrested and charged with failure to drive right, failure to renew registration and operating under the influence.

Andover Woman Injured in Crash

An Andover woman sustained minor injuries after her car flipped on Route 316 in Hebron on June 16.

State police said Jolene Rocks, 53, of 145 Boston Hill Rd., was transported to St. Francis Hospital for minor injuries after the accident. Police reported that at around 4:50 p.m., Rocks was traveling south on Route 316 when her car left the road, hit a stump, overturned and came to a stop in a lane of traffic.

Police said Rocks was issued an infraction for failure to wear a seatbelt and failure to drive right.

Man Sentenced for Role in Portland Murder

by John Tyczkowski

A Waterbury man has been sentenced to 15 years in prison for his role in a 2013 incident in which a man was robbed and shot in Hartford, and then left to die in Portland.

Talib Shaheer, 34, pleaded guilty to reduced charges of second-degree robbery with a weapon and tampering with evidence. The former is a class C felony carrying a sentence of 10 years, and the latter a class D felony with a sentence of five years.

He was originally charged with felony murder, which carries a mandatory minimum sentence of 25 years and a maximum sentence of life imprisonment.

His co-defendant, Madelyne Martinez-Mercado, 23, pleaded guilty in late February to murder. She was sentenced to 35 years in prison in April.

In September 2013, Martinez-Mercado and co-defendant Shaheer set out to conduct a

transfer of marijuana in the back seat of their car with Christopher "T.J." Jefferson, 26, Hartford police said in a release at the time.

Instead of conducting the transaction, Martinez-Mercado and Shaheer attempted to rob Jefferson of his marijuana, the release said. Martinez-Mercado held a gun on Jefferson and, after a struggle, a shot was fired that fatally struck Jefferson in the head.

Martinez-Mercado and Shaheer then drove Jefferson to Portland, police said, and abandoned him. Jefferson was found partially clothed and lying on his back on the side of the road near St. Mary's Cemetery, Portland Police Sgt. Scott Cunningham said in a press release at the time. He was then transported first to Middlesex Hospital and then to Hartford Hospital, where he was pronounced dead the following morning.

Amston Resident Dies in Motorcycle Accident

by Geeta Schrayter

An Amston resident died last week after crashing his motorcycle on Route 85.

According to the State Police, Donald Morin, 53, of 24 Rondaly Rd., was traveling north on Church Street, Route 85, last Saturday, June 20, when he failed to negotiate a right curve.

Police said in the area of 419 Church St., he struck a guardrail, sign post and utility pole with his 2007 Harley Davidson motorcycle.

Morin was pronounced dead at the scene, police said. The case is under investigation. Morin's obituary appears this week on page 9.

Obituaries

Colchester

Virginia Cotoner

Virginia Morales Cotoner, 93, of Quezon City, Philippines, formerly of Colchester, beloved wife of the late Jose L. Cotoner, peacefully went home to our Lord at home, surrounded by her loving family on Thursday, June 4.



Born June 20, 1921 in Manila, Philippines, she was the daughter of the late Gregorio and Martina (Tiguia) Morales. She emigrated to the United States in October.

Virginia, a seamstress by trade, was a single parent to her only daughter and gave up her life in the Philippines to help raise her grandchildren in the United States. She was a strong, hardworking and selfless person, loving, generous and giving to all. She would give up everything just to see a smile on somebody's face. She touched almost everyone she met and was like a mother and grandmother to them. She was a communicant at St. John Fisher Church in Marlborough.

She leaves a daughter, Jocelyn and her husband Marvin Brion of Colchester; two grandchildren, Christine and Matthew; two sisters, Maria Antonio and Herminia Isles, two nieces, Editha Isles and Elsa de Guzman, all from the Philippines; and numerous extended family members and friends.

She was predeceased by her sisters, Catalina Morales and Celia Manalastas of the Philippines, Rosalina Arrienda of Surprise, Ariz., and brothers, Jesus, Vivencio and Ramon Morales.

Private viewing and services were observed in Manila, Philippines on Friday, June 5.

Colchester

Peter Mascaro Jr.

Peter David Mascaro Jr., 39, of Colchester, passed away unexpectedly Tuesday, June 16. Born in Middletown on July 18, 1975, he was a son of Peter and Lisa (Sadlowski) Mascaro of Middletown.



Peter married Michele Martin July 13, 2002. The couple moved to Colchester where they made their home, built their businesses, Mascaro Electric and Mascaro Landscaping, and raised their children, Jordyn and Mason.

He was an avid outdoorsman. Peter loved hunting, fishing, camping and any other activity that would allow him to be outside. He was a member of the Fin, Fur and Feather Club in Chaplin. Most importantly, he will be dearly missed and remembered as a devoted and loving husband and father.

In addition to his beloved wife and children, survivors include a brother, Adam Mascaro; an aunt, Mary Marino; and numerous extended family and friends.

Funeral services were held Tuesday, June 23, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. Burial was private.

In lieu of flowers, donations in his memory may be made to benefit his son: "Mason's Fund," c/o Liberty Bank, 219 South Main St., Colchester, CT 06415.

For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

courant

Portland

Marcia Rush

Marcia (Toft) Rush, 66, of Portland, beloved wife for 36 years of Thomas P. Rush, died Tuesday, April 7, at Hartford Hospital.

Funeral services will be Saturday, June 27, at 11 a.m. at Rocky Hill Congregational Church, 805 Old Main St., Rocky Hill. Burial will follow in Rose Hill Memorial Park, Rocky Hill. There are no calling hours.

Donations in Marcia's memory may be made to the National Kidney Foundation, 1463 Highland Ave., Cheshire, CT 06410.

Funeral arrangements are by the D'Esopo Funeral Chapel, Wethersfield. To share a memory of Marcia with the family, visit desopo.com.

Amston

Donald Steven Morin

Donald Steven Morin, 53, of the Amston section of Hebron, beloved husband and best friend of Regina (Rearick) Morin, passed away suddenly Saturday, June 20. He passed away tragically while enjoying one of his favorite pastimes: motorcycling.



Born Jan. 30, 1962, in Manchester, he was a son of Edward and Germaine (Dumond) Morin of Hebron.

Don was the owner and operator of D+M Masonry in Hebron for many years. He loved all types of motorsports – snowmobiling, go-carting, motorcycling and racing, as he was an avid NASCAR fan. He will truly be missed by all those whose lives he touched.

In addition to his parents and his wife, Gina, he leaves two stepchildren (whom he loved like his own), Brittany Brunelle of Terryville and Jesse Rearick of Amston; two siblings, Terry Brehant and her husband, Fred of Hebron and John Morin of Columbia; five nieces and nephews, Sara Brehant of Brookfield, Kathy Brehant of South Windsor and Victoria, Alex and Christine, all of Columbia; his mother-in-law, Justine Rearick of Amston; and numerous extended family members and friends.

He was predeceased by a brother, Phillip, in 1976.

The family received guests Thursday, June 25, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. The funeral liturgy will be celebrated at 10:30 a.m. today, June 26, directly at the Church of the Holy Family, 185 Church St. (Route 85) in Hebron, with Fr. Michael S. Smith, officiating. Burial will be private.

In lieu of flowers, donations in his memory may be made to the Hebron Volunteer Fire Department, P.O. Box 911, Hebron, CT 06248 or to the John A. DeQuattro Cancer Center (ECHN Community Healthcare Foundation, 71 Haynes St., Manchester 06040).

For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

courant maybe

Colchester

Lucy J. Muszynski

Lucy J. Muszynski, 87, of Colchester, beloved wife of the late Walter S. Muszynski Jr., died peacefully at home Wednesday, June 24, with her family by her side. She was born Nov. 2, 1927, in Hartford, daughter of the late Michael and Josephine (Mangiafico) Misseri.

Lucy grew up in Hartford and in her teens was a model for the Sage Allen department store. She was married in 1946, then she and Walter spent the next 36 years raising their nine children. Lucy and Walter then enjoyed their retirement in Maine, and after his passing she relocated back to Connecticut, where she became a member of the VFW Auxiliary Post 6990 and the Senior Center. She enjoyed playing cards, being with friends and family and her dog Ginger.

She leaves her children, Sherry and Michael Ross of Bolton, Barbara and Bob Bowen of Rocky Hill, MaryJo Clark of Glastonbury, Frances Muszynski of East Hartford, Gail and Jay Dodge of North Carolina, Walt Muszynski of Florida, Nancy and Pat Casey of Colchester, Paul and Stacy Muszynski of Manchester, Joseph Muszynski of Florida; and 14 grandchildren, nine great-grandchildren and one great-great-grandson; and many extended family and friends.

Calling hours will be held Sunday, June 28, from noon-3 p.m., at Newkirk & Whitney Funeral Home, 318 Burnside Ave., East Hartford. Burial is private and at the convenience of the family.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations can be made to VFW Auxiliary Post 6990, Liberty Bank, 219 S. Main St., Colchester CT 06415, Account: Lucy Muszynski.

To leave an online condolence, visit newkirkandwhitney.com.

Colchester

Jose Miguel Mullen

Jose Miguel Mullen, M.D., M.D. (H), M.F. (HOM), of Colchester, passed away peacefully Sunday, June 14.

Born in Buenos Aires, Argentina, he graduated as a medical doctor. He spent the five following years training in oncology at the George Washington University Hospital, Washington D. C., Massachusetts General Hospital, Boston, Royal Cancer Hospital and Chester Beatty Research Institute, London, England.

He returned to Argentina, where he worked at the Buenos Aires University Hospital and the National Department of Health as a cancer researcher. In 1982 he became interested in homeopathy. For three years he formally trained in the accredited Post-Graduate School of Homeopathy of the Argentine Homeopathic Medical Association. Afterward, he took two post-graduate courses in Materia Medica Homeopatica.

Dr. Mullen immigrated with his family to the United States of America in 1987, and they all became American citizens. He was licensed as physician and surgeon, and homeopathic physician in Connecticut and as homeopathic physician in Arizona.

He was appointed by the governor of the state as member of the Connecticut Homeopathic Medical Examining Board. He was also an associate member of the Faculty of Homeopathy of the Royal Homeopathic Hospital of London, England. He was appointed as adjunct member of the Desert School of Classical Homeopathy in Phoenix, Ariz.

He will be greatly missed by his loving family, friends and patients.

Grandson Harrison Burr said, "To my grandfather, Jose Mullen: you are no longer suffering. You were a major influence in my life and will continue to inspire me for years to come. We love you with all our hearts and souls, and I know that you reside in a better place where you can walk once more and allow your mind to flow free. Never lose your brilliant smile or intellect. 'We are luminous beings, and our bodies are merely temporary vessels.' I will also leave those suffering with family members this last quote: 'Time's quill is quick to spill its ink onto a new page.' Make that new page count, and continue the tale. With that, I write my final goodbye to an amazing man and a wonderful grandfather. We love you, and I hope to see you at Christian's graduation."

Another grandson, Christian Burr, said, "For all my life, this incredible grandfather has cared for me, has taught me, and has loved me. I don't have any word to describe his courage and integrity. He brought our family to this country and he never abandoned his passion for medicine. For all his life, he climbed with claws of perseverance and cared for us with hands of compassion. José Miguel Mullen, may you rest in peace with all the angels in Heaven. You will never be forgotten for your magnificent life. I'm your loving grandson, always."

His family wishes to express their heartfelt gratitude to all the staff of Chestelm Health and Rehabilitation Center, for the outstanding care and compassion provided over more than five years.

A Celebration of Life will be held at a later time.

Donations in his memory can be made to Chestelm Health and Rehabilitation Center, 534 Town St. or P. O. Box 719, Moodus CT 06469. Chestelm's phone number is 860-873-1455.



Portland

William P. Long

William "Bill" P. Long, 55, of Portland, passed away Sunday, June 21, at Yale New Haven Hospital. He was the son of the late William H. and Mary (Chiabrero) Long.

Born March 20, 1960, in Middletown, he was a lifelong Portland resident. He worked with his uncles Eddie and Joseph Chiabrero as a logging farmer, shipping lumber overseas and to Canada. He also rebuilt the Brownstone Arch on Main Street in Portland. After leaving the logging business he worked for the Town of Glastonbury school system. He was also a member of the Church of St. Mary in Portland.

Billy enjoyed visiting with his family and friends and liked long car rides on Sunday afternoons. He was also a Red Sox and NASCAR fan.

He leaves his sister, Janet and her husband David Granat of Portland; uncles, Joe Chiabrero and Edward Long and his wife, Shirley; aunts, Ida Stawski and her husband, Tadeuza, all of Portland, and Louise Foster of New York; and numerous cousins.

Funeral services will be held today, June 26, at 9 a.m., from Portland Memorial Funeral Home, 231 Main St., Portland, with a Mass at 10 a.m. at the Church of St. Mary, 51 Freestone Ave., Portland. Burial will be in St. Mary Cemetery, Portland. Relatives and friends called Thursday, June 25, at the funeral home.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Portland Fire Department, P.O. Box 71, Portland, CT 06480.

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

Portland

Claire M. Packard

Claire M. Packard, 82, wife of Herbert M. Packard passed away Sunday, June 21, at Middlesex Hospital. She was the daughter of the late James and Clara (Triblets) McGetrick.



Born Sept. 19, 1932, in Middletown, she was a lifelong Portland resident. She worked as an accounting supervisor for Northeast Utilities and was a devout member of the Church of St. Mary in Portland. She loved spending time with her family and friends. She enjoyed gardening, knitting and baking and enjoyed giving her homemade goods to family and friends.

Besides her husband, she leaves a daughter, Cairy Packard Desmarais and her husband, Rene L. Desmarais of Salisbury, Md.; sisters, Shirley Williams of Huntsville, Ala., Joan Sherrick of East Hampton and Nancy Flood of Portland; grandchildren, Charlotte, Elizabeth, and Aline Desmarais; and many nieces and nephews.

Funeral services were held Thursday, June 25, from Portland Memorial Funeral Home, 231 Main St., Portland, with a Mass that morning at the Church of St. Mary, 51 Freestone Ave., Portland. Burial was in Trinity Cemetery, Portland. Relatives and friends called Wednesday, June 24, at the funeral home.

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

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

courant
Colchester

Margaret Mary Wood

Margaret Mary (McGillicuddy) Wood, beloved wife of Woodrow W. Wood, of Colchester, passed away Tuesday, June 23, in Colchester. Margaret was born Dec. 5, 1945, in Woodstock County, New Brunswick, Canada.

She leaves two loving sons and their partners, Daniel Wood and Donna Bennett of Groton, Michael Wood and Janet Kay of Colchester; a brother, Edward McGillicuddy of New Hampshire; a sister, Darlene Sweet of Colchester; and many other loving family members and friends.

Margaret was predeceased by her parents, Herb and Dorothy McGillicuddy; a sister, Pat Griffin; and a brother, Jerry McGillicuddy.

After moving to the United States, Margaret's family lived in Maine, then Wallingford and finally, Lebanon, where she met and married the love of her life, Woodrow W. Wood on June 5, 1965. They recently celebrated their 50th anniversary among family and friends. Margaret was known for her love of country music, but most of all for her love and devotion to family.

Memorial contributions may be made to the American Cancer Society, as Margaret was a cancer survivor.

A wake will be held at Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester, today, June 26, from 5-7 p.m. The graveside funeral service will be held Monday, June 29, at 11 a.m., directly at the New Lebanon Cemetery, Waterman Road, Lebanon.

For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

courant
East Hampton

Thomas P. Sheehan

Thomas P. Sheehan, 68, of the Warehouse Point section of East Windsor, entered into eternal peace Sunday, June 14, at Hartford Hospital. Born in Middletown, he was the only son of the late Charles and Marian (Lebert) Sheehan.

Tom was raised in Clinton before moving to East Hampton, and later Newington, before finally residing in East Windsor where he lived since 2006. He was employed by the state of Connecticut Department of Energy for 25 years as a purchasing agent. Tom was an avid bowler and attended the Dick Ritgers School of Bowling in Ithaca, N.Y., with his close friends, one whom he called, "Dad," and also Pamela Armando. He started the Belltown Bowlers in East Hampton and had managed Gilletti's Bowling Alley in Middletown. Tom was a member of Falcetti's organ club, which was called the "Play Forever Performers."

He is survived by several good friends whom he considered family, including Jacqueline Taylor, Charlie Gallagher, Pamela and Rich Armando, Jody Hunt, Susie Taylor, and Shauna Thorne, his home nurse and cook, Debbie Kniffen, Charlie Noble, Bill and Cindy Bouchelle, and Judy Buckingham. And last but not least, Andy and Kristen Williams and their son, Reiley.

Besides his parents, he was predeceased by a godson, Samuel Mercurio, whom he adored.

Calling hours were held Thursday, June 25, at Leete-Stevens Enfield Chapels, 61 South Rd., Enfield. The funeral service will be held at 11 a.m. today, June 26, at Leete-Stevens, followed by committal at St. Mary's Cemetery in Clinton.

Donations in Tom's memory may be made to the American Kidney Fund, 11921 Rockville Pike, Suite 300, Rockville, MD 20852.

For online condolences, visit leetestevens.com.

courant
Middle Haddam

Paul Chaplin

Paul Chaplin, 75, of Middle Haddam Road, Middle Haddam, husband of Frances "Fran" (Miazga) Crouch-Chaplin, died Sunday, June 21, at his home, surrounded by his family. He was born in Waltham, Mass., the son of the late Guy and Ruth McKenzie Chaplin.

A veteran, Paul served with the Marines Corps and U.S. Air Force. Prior to his retirement, he was with Pratt & Whitney Aircraft for 29 years, retiring as a supervisor and with Matik North America in West Hartford.

Paul was a lifelong member of the Elks and an avid Red Sox, Chicago Bears and UConn women's basketball fan. Paul and Fran enjoyed their many trips to Maine and enjoyed the fine restaurants they found along their journeys.

In addition to his wife, he is survived by his son, Christopher Chaplin and his wife Julie of Cromwell; his daughter, Kathryn Cyr and her husband Christopher of Cincinnati, Ohio; step children, Jason Crouch of West Hartford, Deborah Shurberg of Morris, and Pamela Zagami of Glastonbury; granddaughters, Madelyn and Avery; step-grandchildren, Sam, Rachael, Sofia, Ava, Joshua and Cameron.

He was predeceased by his daughter, Leslie Chaplin.

Funeral services will be held Saturday, June 27, at 10 a.m., at Christ Church of Middle Haddam, 66 Middle Haddam Rd., Middle Haddam. Burial will be in Pine Grove Cemetery. Friends may call at Biega Funeral Home, 3 Silver St., Middletown, today, June 26, from 5-7 p.m.

Those who wish may send memorial contributions to Middlesex Hospice.

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

courant
Portland

Viola Bozzi

Viola (Cannata) Bozzi, 93, of Portland, died Friday, June 19, at her home, surrounded by her loved ones. She was a beloved wife, loving mother, grandmother, great-grandmother and friend.

Viola was born in Middletown Aug. 4, 1921, the daughter of the late Nicolo and Francesca (Giardina) Cannata. Viola was predeceased by her husband of 50 years, Aldo John Bozzi. She was a Middletown High graduate, Class of 1939, as well as a graduate of the EC Goodwin School of Licensed Practical Nursing. She was employed at Connecticut Valley Hospital for 15 years.

Viola is survived by her son, James Bozzi and daughter-in-law Norma of Maine, and her daughter, Virginia Bozzi Cox of Portland and her partner Douglas laVallee. Viola leaves four grandchildren: Erin Cox Longin of Massachusetts, Brian Thomas Cox of Washington, D.C., Christopher Bozzi and Cathlene Bozzi Townsend of Maine, as well as seven great-grandchildren, Lucas, Nathaniel, Jayden, Dominic, Braelyn, Dexter and Finn.

Viola is survived by one brother, Nicholas Cannata of Portland and was predeceased by sisters Antoinette Spallone, Anna Santavenere, Rose Filetti, Helen Marino, Lena Kalita, and brothers Sebastian (Mickey) Cannata and Emanuel (Nello) Cannata.

Viola is survived by sisters-in-law Lydia Cannata of Cromwell, Nancy Cannata of Middletown and Bianca Cannata of Portland, as well as a brother-in-law, Edward Kalita of Middletown. Viola leaves many nieces and nephews as well as a loving godchild, Lynn Boynton Wilks of East Hampton.

Viola was a member of the Anita Garibaldi Organization, the CSEA 400 Retirees as well as the Middlesex Stroke Club as historian and caretaker.

Funeral services were held Wednesday, June 24, from the D'Angelo Funeral Home, 22 S. Main St., Middletown, followed by a Mass of Christian Burial that morning at St. Mary's Church, Portland. Friends and family called at the funeral home Wednesday morning. Burial was at St Sebastian's Cemetery, Middlefield.

Donations may be made in Viola's memory to St. Mary's Church, 51 Freestone Ave., Portland, CT, or Middlesex Hospital Hospice and Palliative Care, 28 Crescent St., Middletown, CT 06457.



East Hampton

Everett E. Wright Jr.

Everett E. Wright Jr., 87, of East Hampton, passed away Monday, June 22, at Hartford Hospital. Born Jan. 27, 1928, in Meriden, he was the son of the late Everett E. Wright and Ethyl (Nichols) Royce. Everett grew up in East Hampton, having moved there in 1929, and was a graduate of Vinyl Technical School in Middletown.

Everett proudly served his country in the United States Army during both World War II and the Korean War. He worked for 20 years as a welder at Pratt & Whitney Aircraft in Middletown retiring in 1986.

Everett was very active in the town of East Hampton, having served as a volunteer fireman, a life member of the East Hampton American Legion, a life member of the Fowler-Dix-Park Post 5095 East Hampton, a life member of the Chatham Historical Society, a life member of the WWII Tribute To a Generation, and a life member of the United States Constabulary Association. Everett was very proud of his efforts to have a war memorial erected in front of East Hampton High School.

Everett is survived by his three sons, David A. Wright of Hartford, Scott E. Wright of Portland and Shawn E. Wright of East Hampton; his three brothers, Jack Wright of Florida, Paul Royce of East Hampton, and Benjamin Wright of Maine; his three grandchildren, Shawn Vare Jr., Melinda Ketchum and Kyle Wright; his four great-grandchildren, Christian, Josh, Alaina, Tavin; and many nieces and nephews.

He was predeceased by his two brothers, Alfred Royce Jr. and Richard Wright.

A memorial service will be held Sunday, June 28, at 11 a.m., at Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton, CT 06424. Burial will follow with military honors at the Young Street Cemetery, East Hampton. Friends may call at Spencer Funeral Home on Sunday from 10 a.m. until the time of the service at 11.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the East Hampton Volunteer Fire Department, 5 Barton Hill Rd., East Hampton, CT 06424.

To leave online condolences, visit spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

From the Editor's Desk

Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

Some quick thoughts on a few items:

First off, how can I not mention the tragedy in South Carolina last Wednesday night? Just horrific. Of course I feel it underscores – yet again; as if we needed any more underscoring at this point – the need for stricter gun control. Of course I don't expect all of you readers to agree with me. And unfortunately, I don't think a thing will come of it. Hopefully America proves me wrong. But I look at Sandy Hook; 20 first-graders were killed in cold blood. A nation was shocked and appalled. There was a call for change to our nation's gun laws. But at the end of the day, our nation's gun laws, by and large, went untouched. Clinging to what I believe is a basic misunderstanding of the Second Amendment, opponents were loud and, in some cases, quite obnoxious, in their opposition, and nothing got done.

Part of me feels that if no national gun control changes (yes, I keep saying “national” for a reason. Here in Connecticut, thankfully, there were some changes made after Sandy Hook) occurred after the taking of the lives of 20 innocent first-graders, that it'll never get done. Like I said – prove me wrong, America. I'd like nothing more than to be totally wrong about this.

And one more quick thought on the gun thing. Last Friday, I found myself on a conservative website, reading some comments about the shooting. I wasn't surprised – utterly disappointed, mind you, but not surprised – to read the following sentiment: “News reports that he reloaded 5 times. If even one other person had a gun, he could have been stopped after the first round, if not before.”

Ugh. Yes, because people should feel the need to pack some heat when they go to church. You hear similar thoughts whenever there's a gun massacre. I'm pretty sure the solution to gun violence isn't to make sure everybody has a gun. In fact, I'm pretty sure that's a recipe for more gun violence. A lot more.

* * *

Of course, what makes last week's shooting stand out from Sandy Hook, or the Colorado movie theater shooting, or the Gabby Giffords shooting, is the race factor involved. The church is a black church, and everyone killed black. As the shooter, a young white guy who spewed racist views online and wore apartheid symbols on his clothes, gunned down the victims, he remarked, “I have to do it. You rape our women and are taking over our country. You have to go.”

The guy's a racist, and it was a racist attack – no two ways about it.

Well, depending on who you talk to. Some people are, bafflingly, not convinced this is racism at work. South Carolina's governor, Republican Nikki Haley, said last Thursday, “we do know that we'll never understand what motivates anyone to enter one of our places of worship and take the life of another.” The geniuses at Fox News have posited this was an attack on Christianity, not on black people.

And, in an interview with The Huffington Post last Friday, Jeb “Is it my turn for the White House yet?” Bush frustratingly refused to call this a racist act, despite all the evidence. To the Post's question on whether the shooting was racially motivated, Bush said, “It was a horrific act and I don't know what the background of it is, but it was an act of hatred.”

So Bush was asked again – was this shooting because of race? To which he replied, “I don't know. Looks like to me it was, but we'll find out all the information. It's clear it was an act of raw hatred, for sure. Nine people lost their lives, and they were African-American. You can judge what it is.”

Okay, so he comes close with “looks like to me it was,” but geez, Jeb, call it what it is: a racist act. There's a movement by some to act like racism no longer exists in this country, and I get that; I'd love it if it were true, as it's 2015 for crying out loud. But there continue to be racists, and there continue to be

acts of racism. You can put your head in the sand all you want, but that doesn't change matters.

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I was watching *Meet the Press* Sunday and another Republican presidential candidate, Mike Huckabee, made an appearance. It was kind of fascinating in a way. Host Chuck Todd asked Huckabee a series of questions, on everything from the Confederate flag to climate change, and I don't think Huckabee answered a single one directly.

I was not all that shocked. You see this routinely among presidential candidates whenever they go on a show like this. Once they declare they're running, any personal insight is gone. They're so afraid of saying the wrong thing they dodge questions and give a bunch of meaningless non-answers.

But this was a fairly lengthy interview; Todd asked many questions. To see Huckabee not answer a single one was almost impressive. Of course, who was really impressive was Todd himself. He's been through it all before, and is a pro's pro, and so he didn't even bat an eyelash when Huckabee refused, at every turn, to actually answer a question. He'd try a couple of times, Huckabee would stonewall him with an empty non-answer, so Todd would move on to the next question – and get the exact same result. I'm sure many of us would have gotten fairly frustrated; I'd be sorely tempted to, in the final moments of the interview, say, “We're running out of time, sir. Can you please just give me an answer to one of the 10 or so questions I just asked you?”

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Big shock – I watch Mets games on a pretty regular basis. And I'm always struck by one of the commercials often shown during the games. The spot, which is for Cadillac, and it begins with these words: “It is the weak man who urges compromise.”

I get that the point of those words is to try to convince the potential car-buyer to go all in, buy a Cadillac, the car he really wants, and then – and *only* then – will he truly be a man's man. But geez – what terrible advice! I mean, it'd make a great slogan for the national Republican Party, as that's pretty much their M.O., but for the rest of us, that's just no way to live life.

I highly suspected the folks behind Cadillac's advertising didn't come up with that saying themselves, so I looked it up. It was from an American writer and artist named Elbert Hubbard.

It turns out Hubbard, a self-described anarchist and socialist, said a whole bunch of interesting things during his 59 years – and in fact is credited with coming up with what eventually became “when life gives you lemons, make lemonade.” Hubbard's longer but more eloquent original quote was: “A genius is a man who takes the lemons that Fate hands him and starts a lemonade stand with them.”

Other interesting quotes of his included, “Anyone who idolizes you is going to hate you when he discovers that you are fallible. He never forgives. He has deceived himself, and he blames you for it.” “Responsibilities gravitate to the person who can shoulder them” and “The world is moving so fast these days that the man who says it can't be done is generally interrupted by someone doing it.”

Hubbard could be deeply cynical at times (see his quote “Life is just one damn thing after another”), and were he alive today he may not exactly be my biggest fan (he defined the position of editor as “a person employed by a newspaper, whose business it is to separate the wheat from the chaff, and to see that the chaff is printed”).

But the point is Hubbard said a ton of interesting things. It's too bad that the one gaining the most visibility today is that horrid ‘avoid compromise’ line Cadillac is peddling. I feel like that commercial should come with some sort of ‘parental discretion advised’ disclaimer in front. Because it's clearly not advice impressionable young minds need to hear.

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See you next week.