

RIVEREAST

# News Bulletin

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Chelsea Benard and Hank Carisio, Jr. married at Lake Pocotopaug on the day of this year's Captain Grizzly Boat Parade. The ceremony took place at the gazebo at the Benards' house on the lake, per Chelsea's late father's longtime wish. Photo by Laura Dee Photography.

## Wedding Honors Late Father's Wish

by John Tyczkowski

This year's boat parade in East Hampton turned out to be extra special for one local woman, but not only because of the decorated boats making their way around Lake Pocotopaug or general good cheer that came with the day; it also happened, by pure coincidence, to be the day she got married – and fulfilled a longtime wish of her late father.

Chelsea (Benard) Carisio said she “was always super-super-close to my dad.”

“We were best friends,” she said. “We thought the same and everything.”

Her parents, Michael and Donna Benard, made East Hampton home in 1992, when they moved from Massachusetts to open their own business, Bobcat of Connecticut. They started out living on Crescent Road, but then moved onto the lake.

In 2011 Michael sold the business with the intention of retiring, but those plans came to a halt when he was suddenly diagnosed with leukemia. He passed away in 2012, but after he'd gone, one of his wishes remained with his daughter.

Chelsea explained her father had said for years that he wanted to have his daughter married by the gazebo at their house on Meeks Point Road.

“It was always kind of like the family joke, he had been saying that ever since we moved

to the house when I was 12,” Chelsea said. “And I wasn't even engaged by the time he passed.”

But then, eventually, she *was* engaged, and it came time to plan her big day. Chelsea chose Aug. 15 as the date for her nuptials – which also happened to be the date for the annual Captain Grizzly Boat Parade.

“I didn't even look at the calendar and see if there was anything going on at the lake,” she said. “It was just a wonderful thing to have happen on the same day.”

In fact, in what she called “a complete coincidence,” she was getting into her wedding dress and preparing for the wedding when she heard the “Jersey Boys”-themed boat go by.

“The photographer came up to me and said ‘get out there and dance!’” Chelsea said. “So I ran out there and started dancing, even though it was when we were about to start the ceremony!”

At first, Chelsea shared the plan was to have the wedding at St. Clements Castle & Marina in Portland. But then, she had a change of heart.

Hank, Chelsea's husband, said he wasn't at all surprised at Chelsea's decision.

“I knew she would go back to the gazebo; in fact I had been telling her she would eventually decide to go back there,” he laughed.

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## Area Residents Discuss Feeding Hungry

by Geeta Schrayter

Over coffee and a light breakfast Wednesday, individuals from Andover, Columbia, Hebron and Marlborough gathered at Gilead Congregational Church in Hebron to discuss ways to help those struggling with one of the very things they were enjoying that morning: food.

Those present are members of the area's Hunger Action Team, a group made up of people from all aspects of the community – from local businesses and churches to town and state government, food pantries, non-profits, civic groups and individual volunteers.

According to Foodshare, a regional food bank serving Hartford and Tolland counties, there are more than 137,000 people in those two counties alone “who cannot be sure where their next meal is coming from,” including one out of every five children.

Hunger Action Teams – of which there are 13 in the two counties – are the essence of Foodshare's approach to solving hunger, according to the Foodshare newsletter.

“They work on the twin goals of increasing the amount of food available and building self-sufficiency so fewer people need food, and they do that by involving the entire community,” Foodshare said.

At Wednesday's meeting, those present included social workers and members from area food banks, churches and senior centers and as

things got underway, each person discussed some of the ways they're working to address hunger in their respective towns.

For example, the Rev. Bob Faulhaber, senior minister at Marlborough Congregational Church, mentioned the church's 50 Meals in 50 Minutes program, which provides a way for people to drive to the church and receive a hot meal that they can then take away to enjoy. In the two years since its inception, Faulhaber said the church has provided hot meals to 1,000 people.

In addition, Joanne Goode from the Marlborough Food Bank shared through the efforts of a local Girl Scout project, the food bank was receiving more produce. The project sought to increase the amount of produce available at the food bank by urging local farmers to plant a few extra seeds with the food bank in mind, or to donate anything extra they might harvest and not use.

Also helping to address hunger in the community is the 24th annual CROP hunger Walk organized by Andover Congregational Church, Columbia Congregational Church and Gilead Congregational Church, which takes place Oct. 11.

The 6.5-mile walk raises money used to provide food, medical care, disaster relief, and self-help development for people around the world.

Donna Wertenbach, a member of the board

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A group of individuals determined to address issues with hunger in their community gathered Wednesday morning for a meeting of the area's Hunger Action Team. Those present to discuss ways they were addressing hunger in their own towns as well as the work of the group were, from left: Joanne Goode, David Wagner, Karen Caputo, Bernadette Derring, Laurel Andrews, the Rev. Betsey Polglase, Stephanie Haines, Monica Gallegos, Beatrice Maslowski, Donna Wertenbach, Bob Owens and the Rev. Bob Faulhaber.



Just as the wedding ceremony was about to begin Aug. 15, the parade's "Jersey Boys"-themed boat happened to float by the Benard house, and both bride and groom took some time out of preparations to dance to the music. Photo by Brittany Gee.

### Wedding cont. from Front Page

"We were talking about it one day, and then we decided, and called, and canceled," Chelsea said. "And I realized I just couldn't imagine just showing up to just any venue and walking in."

So, with only a short amount of time to prep for the wedding, Chelsea ended up custom-designing all of the arrangements and decorations, and then set them all up the morning of the wedding with her bridesmaids, along with the tents in their yard.

And, because of the boat parade, their wedding was 'attended' by some unexpected guests in the form of neighbors and friends out on the lake.

"When I was standing out there I suddenly noticed kayaks and fishing boats that stopped right near the gazebo to listen during the ceremony," she said. "It was a way of reminding me how small and close of a town East Hampton is; they knew my father, and they know me, and they were excited to see the moment."

And, with the wedding back at the gazebo, Chelsea took the opportunity to place a photo of her dad, held in a wood frame she hand-carved for his 50th birthday, on the bench there.

"I felt he was much more present there that day with us because we did it at the gazebo,"

she said. "It was definitely the right choice to have it at home; it was much more memorable and meaningful."

Chelsea is a 2005 graduate of East Hampton High School, and a 2011 graduate of Quinnipiac University's occupational therapy program. Hank meanwhile, is a one-time semi-pro hockey player-turned massage therapist, personal trainer and hockey trainer.

The two founded two fitness centers in Bloomfield and Hartford as part of their individualized fitness brand, Boundless Performance Systems.

And Chelsea said she credits that in part to her father as well.

"We're so alike – he was always an entrepreneur, and he encouraged me," she said. "Everyone said I was crazy, but I followed in his footsteps."

At 24, she had purchased her first set of rental properties in Wallingford. Soon after that, she purchased space that became her first gym business, Simply No Excuses Fitness in Farmington.

"My life has followed his in footsteps," Chelsea said. "I guess deep down I knew I'd end up back [at home] for my wedding."

The Carisios now live in West Hartford.

### Feeding Hungry cont. from Front Page

of missions at Gilead Congregational Church, explained 25 percent of the funds raised stay local, and will be distributed to the Andover Food Pantry, Covenant Soup Kitchen in Willimantic, and Hebron Interfaith Human Services Food Bank. (For more information, go to [cropwalk.org](http://cropwalk.org).)

Along with the above, the Hunger Action Team is also conducting a confidential, free workshop alongside Foodshare – The Getting Ahead Program – which begins at the end of this month and is geared toward helping individuals who are struggling to get by.

According to a flyer on the workshop, participants will identify their goals, explore the challenges they face, the strengths they already have, and be provided with new tools for moving forward.

"The Getting Ahead Program is a framework that explores the challenges of struggling to make ends meet – living in crisis mode all the time, making impossible choices every day, never having the time or luxury of planning for a better future," the flyer shares. "This program will allow you to develop new vision with the confidence and tools to achieve your goals."

Participants will receive \$20 per week for attending along with a \$200 gift for completing the course, which will take place at AHM Youth and Family Services, 25 Pendleton Drive, Hebron.

At the end of the workshop, those involved will also be paired with an ally who will meet with the workshop graduate over a period of months to provide moral support and help with following through with the plans that are made.

Pre-registration is required for the workshop, and space is limited. For more information or to sign up, call 860-228-3077.

Stephanie Haines, minister of missions at Gilead Congregational Church, said transportation and childcare will be available; assistance with said transportation and childcare as well as volunteer allies are still needed, those interested can call AHM at 860-228-9488.

And, moving forward, the group shared Wednesday other goals to help address hunger, such as working to have a breakfast program in place at each of the area's schools, and increasing youth awareness of food banks by offering tours, allowing them to ask questions and working to change their perception as to who uti-

lizes the banks.

Speaking on the importance of the Hunger Action Team and their work Wednesday, Beatrice Maslowski, community network builder with Foodshare said "the thing to understand is that hunger is throughout Connecticut and the country. Hunger is an issue in all the towns Foodshare serves."

The problem, she added, is that hunger is more hidden, especially in towns like Hebron that are perceived as being wealthy.

And so, part of the group's importance was to increase education and awareness, and "letting people know what kinds of resources are available."

Maslowski added, "We're looking to grow the group and have short-term successful programs for the long-term. ... We want local ideas to bubble up."

Also sharing her thoughts on the Hunger Action Team was Donna Wertenbach from the Gilead Congregational Church Board of Missions. She called the team of "significant value."

She explained the collaborative nature of the Hunger Action Team meant the communities would be better served.

"The fact that we're quite diverse, with participants from all the different towns is, I think, really significant in reaching out to the serving communities," Wertenbach said.

She furthered, "In our current economic times, hunger is an issue not just in third-world countries. ... There's a significant number of people falling into the poverty category who never thought they would be there."

She concluded, "I think it's really important that as a caring community, we continue to come together and find meaningful ways to address hunger."

Wertenbach added she joined the Hunger Action Team after joining Gilead Congregational Church.

The church, she said, was "unbelievably committed to service – and that's what this life is all about."

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The Hunger Action Team is open to anyone interested in joining and working to help solve the community's hunger problems. For more information, contact Haines at 860-228-3077. The team meets the second Wednesday of each month; its next meeting is Oct. 14. Call for the location.

## Andover Field Plans Ping-Pong

by Geeta Schrayter

The Board of Selectmen last week authorized First Selectman Bob Burbank to send a letter requesting the Small Town Economic Assistant Program (STEAP) grant funds the town had received for the creation of a new recreation field in town be reallocated and used to renovate the fields on Long Hill Road – the location they were originally intended for.

The town was awarded a \$200,000 STEAP grant in September 2010 for what was originally supposed to be the design and construction of a recreational area on Long Hill Road.

The year before, the town was awarded another STEAP grant in the amount of \$250,000 for the construction of a new senior center in town. However, after it was determined a new senior center would cost too much – even with the grant – the decision was made to try to combine both grants and use them for the recreation field.

The state approved that request in October 2010, and the two grants were combined following a town meeting in 2011. Following those efforts, an engineering firm was hired to create the plan for the field. It was then that the original site on Long Hill Road was found to be unsuitable due to wetlands. In response, land behind Andover Elementary School was examined as a possible replacement location – a location eventually determined to be the best option.

And so, in July 2013, a letter was sent to the state Office of Policy and Management requesting the location for the project be moved; that request was also approved.

Plans were then drawn up for the construction behind the school, but those would cause

concerns as well; last December, numerous residents mentioned issues with the proposed plan including the size of the field and the slope of the land in the proposed area.

Vice First Selectman Jeff Maguire shared last week, "It just comes down to that site does not do justice to spending the money. ... You can try to stuff a field there but it won't end up getting used because the amount of money it would take to get utilities there would be greater than the money we have."

Following the issues raised with the design behind the school, things seemed to halt on a project that had already seen plenty of delay. But in May of this year, the selectmen voted to form a new Field Recreation Subcommittee to look at the project and hopefully – finally – move things forward.

In July, the subcommittee discussed design features of the project, to include multiple fields to accommodate multiple age groups and sports, a walking/running track, an area for the town's farmers market with a pavilion, additional and improved parking, walking and riding trails to connect with existing and future biking trails, irrigation, and lighting and bathroom facilities.

These plans however, weren't for behind Andover Elementary School; they were back on Long Hill Road. Another change in location would mean Burbank needs to request approval from OPM once again – which led to the draft letter Maguire provided last Wednesday. Maguire said he wanted the selectmen to approve the change of location, and for Burbank to submit the letter requesting said change.

But Burbank expressed concern at the meeting with the way the letter was written, since it

didn't mention the grant would now be used for renovation work, instead of a completely new construction.

"The grant is for putting an additional field, that's why we received the grant in the first place," he said. "What's proposed now is a renovation of an existing field and not an additional field."

Burbank added he also had a problem with a field being geared primarily toward soccer, since there were kids who enjoyed other sports in town too.

"So I'm not in favor of requesting this," he said.

Maguire however, told Burbank the field would be multi-use, and would benefit all the children in town. He added, "It's time to take action."

But, Burbank furthered, "I don't want to write a letter saying we're moving the field down to a new area, then [the state finds] we didn't make a new field" and end up wanting their money back.

In response, selectwoman Cathy Desrosiers suggested adding a line that said "Long Hill Field will be changed and improved into a multi-use field which will allow Andover to effectively utilize the grant funds to provide recreation options for all residents."

After that proved agreeable, the board voted 4-0-1 – with Burbank abstaining – to have him submit the letter.

Following the meeting, Maguire said, "All I'm trying to do is use some common sense and use the funds we have available to create an oasis in Andover."

He added, "Maybe we can get [the field con-

struction] over with. That would be ideal. It's been way too long."

But this week, Burbank said he'd like to hold a public hearing to receive input from the public prior to submitting any letter. He also said he'd added discussion on the field to the agenda for the special selectmen's meeting scheduled for next week.

"It's my feeling we should go to public hearing and get the feeling of the public, because when we took that money from the senior fund we went to public hearing and they understood we couldn't build a senior center and they agreed – or the majority agreed – that we should use it for a new recreation field" Burbank explained. "So I think it's only prudent that we go back in front of the public prior to submitting that letter for approval, rather than submitting it and all of a sudden there's an outcry."

Burbank added he didn't want to continue going back and forth with the state.

"We already had it transferred from Long Hill to the back of the school," he said. "Now we want to go back to Long Hill, and I certainly don't want to be in a position where I'm requesting it go from Long Hill to the school [again], so I think all these details need to be ironed out, and I'd like to get the pulse of the taxpayer."

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The special selectmen's meeting, where discussion will be held on the recreation field as well as an easement over town property voters decided to grant to two property owners at a July referendum, is scheduled for Monday, Sept. 14, at 4 p.m.

# Marlborough Hosts Seventh Health and Safety Fair

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

The largest Marlborough Health and Safety Fair yet kicks off Sunday, Sept. 20, bringing a wide variety of tools and information to the community.

This is the seventh edition of the fair, which is held every other year. It's something of a "greatest hits" event this year – as all of the activities at the fair had been featured in the past, but never in the same year.

The fair, an entirely free event hosted by the Marlborough Fire Department and the Roy B. Pettengill Ambulance Association, runs from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Station 1, located in the center of town at 7 Hebron Rd.

The event is one-stop shopping for those looking for public safety information.

"It's all the questions you might want to ask, but don't know who to ask," said one of the event's organizers, Mark Merritt, rescue captain for the Marlborough Volunteer Fire Department.

The event will offer a variety of demonstrations, such as a Mashantucket Fire Department interactive fire escape trailer; the state police bomb squad, including a bomb-sniffing dog and a bomb-detecting robot; live fire extinguisher training; the state police Seat Belt Convincer, which allows people to simulate the feeling of what it's like to be involved in a car crash without a seat belt on; an interactive smoke trailer, where kids can dress in fire gear and go put out the fire; and a Jaws of Life demonstration. Also, the state police SWAT truck, the LifeStar state police helicopter, Middlesex Hospital paramedics, and the entire fleet of Marlborough fire trucks will be present at the fair.

Information will be in abundance from other sources well, as there will be booths from such organizations as: the CHIP program for child identification; the Birth to Three state program, which offers parents information about child development; Middlesex Hospital; the Connecticut Safe Kids program, which will offer booster seat information and also have a car

seat giveaway at the fair; the Alzheimer's Foundation; AHM Youth and Family Services; the File of Life program, which offers magnets people can fill out and put on their refrigerators, listing pertinent health information; and Poison Control.

In addition, the fair will offer blood pressure screenings and mammograms, offered by Hartford Hospital's Digital Mobile Mammography unit.

Merritt said he is particularly excited to have the mobile mammograms back. At the 2013 fair, part of the machine was broken and no mammograms could be offered. The mammograms will be available between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m., to women over 40 who have not have a mammogram in the past year. Mammograms will be offered on a walk-in basis or by appointments; to schedule an appointment, call Merritt at 860-916-9577.

Included free in the event is also snacks and lunch served by the fire department.

"Our goal is to educate as many families about all of the people, organizations and tools available to them in their community regarding health, protection and safety," Merritt said. "I have been in the fire/EMS system for 25 years and I continue to meet people that have no idea what is available to them until it is often too late."

One of the biggest issues Merritt has found parents do not know is how to correctly put booster seats into their cars. This year, Connecticut Safe Kids is giving away 25 booster seats along with demonstrations of how to correctly install them.

Merritt added that "there's so much stuff" the Birth to Three program offers, and "unless they are pointed in the right direction at the hospital," parents often never even know the program exists.

On the fire side of things, Merritt said the department works to teach families about fire alarms, how to use a fire extinguisher, and the importance of setting a place to meet if a fam-



**The Jaws of Life will return to the Marlborough Health and Safety Fair this year. At the 2005 fair, the demonstration was a hit as onlookers saw how firefighters would use the Jaws of Life to rescue a person from a car after an accident.**

ily has to vacate their home in case. During the event, participants will be able to put out a live fire with a fire extinguisher, Merritt said.

"You hear about [fire prevention], but don't [practice] it as a family," Merritt said. "It's a good place to hear about it and learn about it as a family."

Merritt also mentioned the CHIP program, run by Connecticut Freemasons. The program gives each parent a picture, video, dental records and fingerprints about their children. Nothing is stored in a database and the parent is the only

one with the information.

At noon, LifeStar will land at the Marlborough Clinic – located next to Station 1 – and families will be able to take pictures with the helicopter.

In 2013, the event had between 750 and 800 participants. At its peak, Merritt said, the fair in the past has hit almost 1,000 people.

"It's great to interact with all of the families that come through," Merritt said. "It always seems to be a hit and the firefighters and EMTs are happy to be a part of the experience."

# East Hampton Lake Health Problems Bring Major Turnout

by John Tyczkowski

Tuesday evening, in a meeting packed with more than 50 attendees who flowed out into the hallway, the Town Council heard from half a dozen concerned residents about algae problems facing Lake Pocotopaug.

Dennis Jenks was the first to comment before the council.

"My whole life I've been on the lake, and no one is in the water as much as I am," he said. "And what's been happening to the lake seems to be progressing, and it's not getting better."

This year, the public beaches were closed down at the beginning of August due to a cyanobacteria, or blue-green algae, bloom.

The bloom was classified as a category 3, which closed the beaches and necessitated posted signs detailing the possible health risks of swimming and consuming water with the algae, at both Sears Park and Schoolhouse Bay.

Blue-green algae can secrete toxins, the consumption of which can cause kidney and liver damage. Though not every type of blue-green algae secretes toxins, the town has historically shut down beaches out of caution when blooms occur.

While the bloom has become an annual occurrence over the past few decades, this year's bloom was the earliest in recent years.

Though not the major deciding factor, the hot, sunny and dry summer has aided in algae bloom growth.

However, Town Manager Michael Maniscalco said the lake's algae bloom status was downgraded to category 2 – in which the beaches are open, though people are told to "swim at your own risk" – in time for this past Labor Day weekend.

The trend is that the bloom is dropping off,

he said, citing test results.

Jenks also emphasized the need for the town to be more open about its efforts to help the lake.

"People around the lake just don't think anything's being done," he said.

To that end, he also pushed for the town to hold a separate meeting on the problems the lake faces and to hear feedback directly from residents, similar to the townwide facilities meeting in January.

"It definitely takes a lot more than just a couple of minutes in a meeting like this," Jenks said to applause. Subsequent speakers during public comment also said they supported a town meeting along those lines.

Susan McFarland, another lake resident, advocated for the town to implement a fertilizer ban to combat the lake blooms.

"Increased runoff, and phosphorous and nitrogen loading, is the problem here," she said. "We know that, and we need more action now."

Phosphorous and nitrogen, key organic elements, help to fuel the growth of algae colonies in the lake. Oxygen content in the lake then drops due to the increased algae mass, and eventually, the algae bloom reaches a critical point where it grows too large for its oxygen and nutrient supply, and dies off.

Then, the phosphorous and nitrogen in the algae falls to the bottom of the lake and is locked up in sediment. However, the depleted oxygen levels allow the nutrients to be released back into the water, which can fuel future blooms, in a process known as internal loading.

In spring 2008, the Town Council considered passing an ordinance banning fertilizer use within the Lake Pocotopaug watershed, but then

voted it down.

Several reasons cited at the time were anchored on a perceived inability to enforce such a ban in town.

Town Council Chairwoman Barbara Moore reminded residents that this year's town budget included funding for efforts to help the lake.

Specifically, in addition to regular testing and monitoring, the funding would go toward collecting additional data which would be used to apply for a federal watershed management plan grant in order to combat the lake's problems.

"[The Conservation-Lake Commission] is working very hard on this to keep us moving forward," she said.

She also reminded residents to attend their meetings, held on the second Thursday of the month at 7 p.m. in the town hall meeting room.

In addition, councilor Mark Philhower said he wanted the town to create a list of which efforts have been made so far to help the lake, and which ones are still in progress.

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The council also received an update on the status of the Christopher Brook project, which would replace a collapsed culvert on North Main Street near the brook.

Maniscalco said he needed the council to direct him to proceed with the next stage of the project by signing a letter to the state Department of Transportation.

Public Works Director Phil Sissick said the state has listed the cost of the project as \$662,000.

"It's important to understand that's not the full project cost," he said. "When the DOT estimated their original figures, they estimated them based upon the road being closed."

Closing the road, construction would take 45 construction days, but "that's only assuming there are no issues," Sissick said.

Keeping North Main open, however, as the council decided, the project would take 180 construction days and would cost more, including \$53,000 to create a pedestrian bridge in the area and costs to keep a lane open for vehicular traffic.

Including those extra costs, project would total about \$1.16 million, and while administrative, design, inspection and pedestrian bridge costs would be "100 percent borne by the town," they may be eligible for state reimbursement, Sissick said.

However, Councilor Ted Hintz, Jr. disagreed about the costs involved in keeping the road open, questioning whether they doubled from around \$150,000 to around \$300,000.

"That's not the number I had heard when we discussed this before," he said. "I want to look at that again before we direct the town manager to sign the letter."

However, Maniscalco informed the council that there was a deadline attached to the letter, and that to avoid the town having to pick up the cost of the project study, the letter would have to be signed and sent back to the DOT before the next council meeting.

Councilors voted 7-0 to direct Maniscalco to sign the letter, but Republican councilors were visibly perturbed.

Construction is slated to begin in the spring of 2016.

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The next Town Council meeting will take place Tuesday, Sept. 22, at 6:30 p.m., in the Town Hall meeting room.

# East Hampton Focus Groups Discuss Desired Superintendent Qualities

by John Tyczkowski

Last week, East Hampton Public Schools held a series of focus groups to glean from residents exactly what qualities they desire in the next superintendent of schools.

Both days, Mary Broderick of the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education, the organization working with the Board of Education on the superintendent search, talked to parents and other community members in the district.

Over the four public focus groups held at the middle school over both days, around 10 people turned out. Those in attendance included parents with children in the district, and former educators in the district.

East Hampton is currently looking for a new superintendent, following the departure of Diane Dugas earlier this summer. The East Hampton school board has said it hopes to have a new superintendent hired by Jan. 1, 2016; Mark Winzler is serving as superintendent in the interim.

Broderick, who has 22 years' experience serving on the Board of Education in East Lyme, a doctorate of education and who also has several previous executive-level searches under her belt, said she encouraged those in the focus groups to speak honestly so "there wouldn't be any surprises" for prospective applicants, and so they would have a clear picture of the district.

The data to be collected involved a combi-

nation of what residents were proud of regarding their schools, what they felt were weaknesses and what they would want a new superintendent to know about the district when applying.

The residents present at the focus groups universally praised the dedication and talent of the teachers at all schools, as well as the leadership of the administrators at each of the schools.

Chief among the present parents in what they wanted in a superintendent was the ability to communicate clearly with parents, and the ability to let the community know the accomplishments of its school system.

That tied directly into what the gathered residents saw as a major weakness of East Hampton Public Schools: its inability to communicate with parents, residents and the media.

"We need a superintendent who's a good PR person," one parent said. "We need someone who can really get the word out about our schools."

In addition, another point mentioned as crucial was the ability of the superintendent to communicate to the community as a whole what the exact components of the school budget entail, and why increases to the budget are necessary as student enrollment drops.

"The schools have definite needs every year, but they need to be more clear in communicat-

ing them, especially to the residents who don't have children in the schools," a parent said. "We need someone who can bring the town together for the schools."

Also, a key message was for the new superintendent to be able to "surround themselves with talent," one of the parents said.

Specifically, the superintendent should be able to effectively bring together all of the existing talents in the district, and to not be afraid to ask for help from those in the schools more familiar with East Hampton, parents said.

Parents also said the new superintendent should have a balance of professionalism and "being able to have fun."

An example that resonated throughout multiple parents was a superintendent who would be willing to show up in a T-shirt and jeans and help out with the elementary PTO's annual pasta dinner at Memorial School.

"The new superintendent needs to be one of the community," a parent said.

Also important was the ability for the superintendent to be able to connect with parents on a friendly level, one parent said.

In particular, that parent shared a story about how Dugas had "gotten her hands dirty" and helped her out when her daughter became sick while performing at one of the schools' winter concerts.

"That's what I want to see: a superintendent

who understands and can empathize with parents," she said.

In addition to these four sessions for the public, there were also focus groups for students, faculty and staff, administrators, elected officials and town employees, for a total of 11 focus groups.

From here, Broderick will present the conclusions of the focus groups to the Board of Education, who will have the final say in how to use suggestions gained from the groups.

Also, the district had posted an online survey, closed Sept. 4, for residents to take regarding what they would want to see in a new superintendent, which had received nearly 100 responses as of Sept. 3, Broderick said.

This is the district's second superintendent search in three years, beginning with the retirement of superintendent Judith Golden in June 2012, who had been in that position since 2007.

She then served as interim superintendent through December 2012, and Winzler took over as interim superintendent from January 2013 until Dugas started in July of that year.

Winzler then returned to East Hampton in two years to the month after he last worked in town to serve as the interim superintendent one more time.

The application process closes Monday, Sept. 14.

## Colchester School Board Analyzes State Test Results

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

The Board of Education Tuesday reviewed the district's scores from the Smarter Balanced Assessment – and deemed the results fairly positive.

Barbara Gilbert, Colchester Public Schools' director of curriculum, presented the scores in a PowerPoint template prepared by the state, stressing that the Smarter Balanced is a new test with new results.

The scores presented this year are considered each district's baseline to then analyze if the schools grow in performance in the coming years. The levels ranged from one to four, with one being does not meet the achievement level and four being exceeding the achievement level. Level three was meeting the achievement level.

For grade three, 67 percent of 168 students achieved a three or above in English language arts (ELA) while 66 percent of 167 students achieved a three or above.

For grade four, 66 percent of 195 students achieved a three or above in ELA while 48 percent of 196 students met or exceeded the achievement level in math.

For grade five, 78 percent of 215 students met or exceeded achievement in ELA while 62 percent of the students achieved a three or above in math.

For grade six, 80 percent of 202 students achieved a three or above in ELA while 57 percent out of 200 students met or exceeded achievement in math.

For grade seven, 76 percent of 196 students achieved a three or above in ELA while 43 percent achieved a three or above in math.

For grade eight, 74 percent of 229 students achieved a three or above in ELA while 52 percent of 227 students achieved a three or above

in math.

"There's a lot to celebrate," Gilbert said. "We thought we'd be in the 40th percentile and we were between the 60th and 80th percentiles."

These percentiles come from how the district compared to other schools in the state.

"Compared to the state in ELA and math, we were almost 20 percent higher in grades three through eight, except grade 11," Gilbert said. "We had significantly good scores compared to the state."

Out of 200 grade 11 students who took the ELA portion, only 46 percent achieved a three or above. Out of the 198 students who took the math portion, only 30 percent met or exceeded achievement.

The board questioned whether the grade 11 students were truly invested in taking the test. The state has already announced grade 11 will not take the Smarter Balanced Assessment this coming spring, but a college prep test such as the SAT.

Education board chair Ron Goldstein said the grade 11 results were "striking."

A parent in the audience during the meeting spoke up to say that the grade 11 students were told it was only a baseline and wouldn't count. The parent also stated the math was multiple choice and students could simply click randomly on answers.

"The teachers tried hard for the students to recognize it was an important measure for the school," Gilbert said.

Overall, Gilbert said, the test is about growth, and she said schools will be ranked in terms of growth in three years.

Looking forward to help increase ELA growth, the district will work on: improving

computer skills for grades three and four; honing listening skills; focusing on each student's strengths and weaknesses; and continuing the Teachers' College Reading and Writing Professional Development.

For the math portion, the district will be making sure the new math program is aligned to all of the grades, honing concepts and procedures, and setting up a new math program at the middle school.

The biggest problem the district had implementing the test, Gilbert said, was kids who needed extra time. She suggested bringing on a substitute teacher in the spring to help take those kids to alleviate the classroom teacher's time.

"All things considered, it went amazingly smoothly," William J. Johnston Middle School Principal Chris Bennett said. "We told the students give us your best and the kids did."

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Director of Pupil Services and Special Education Kelly McNamara then presented the education board with an update. McNamara had given out a survey to parents and is organizing the first special education PTO meeting.

Of the 129 respondents to the survey, McNamara reported that a little over half were interested in participating. Of those that said they would like to, 23 participants left emails for McNamara to contact them.

McNamara set a tentative date of Sept. 28 for the first meeting, with a non-school location to be announced, along with an agenda.

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Also at the meeting, three eighth grade boys asked for middle school basketball and soccer to be reinstated. The sports' funding was cut

during this past budget season.

"School-based sports teach leadership, teamwork and time management," one boy said. "It helps prepare for life after school."

The boys stated that travel or recreation sports don't focus on the team concept and do not offer as much practice time as school-based sports. The boys also offered to fundraise to help bring the sports back.

One boy pointed out there is no freshmen girls' soccer team at Bacon Academy this year and suggested reallocating the funds to middle schools sports.

"Our fear is once the precedent is set, it will be too easy to cut in the future," one boy said. "This year's middle school theme is stand up and that is what we are doing."

Mathieu said he will look into the situation with the freshmen girls' soccer team.

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Also Tuesday, the board recognized Faithe Petty, who was given a Lifetime Achievement Award for working in the district for 40 years most recently as the Food Services Supervisor. The board also recognized Jan Shorts as Classified Staff Member of the Year, Cathy Lewis as Paraeducator of the Year and Jen Totten as Teacher of the Year.

The board then welcomed Tony Tyler as its new junior student board member from Bacon. The board also said goodbye to Bacon assistant principal Linda Iacobellis, as she leaves Colchester for Manchester High School.

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The next Board of Education meeting is Monday, Sept. 28, at 7 p.m., at Jack Jackter Intermediate School.

# Colchester Decision to Bag Mugshots Proves Unpopular

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

A decision to pull mugshots from the Colchester Police Facebook page has not gone over well with the community, but First Selectman Stan Soby said the move is a way to make the page more helpful to the community without upsetting people.

The page, located at [Facebook.com/colchesterctpolice](https://www.facebook.com/colchesterctpolice), formerly posted recent arrests along with mugshots of the people arrested. The page also posted pictures of robbery suspects or other people of interest the police are watching out for.

But a post by the Colchester Police page on Labor Day, Sept. 7, read that the department has been directed by the first selectman's office to cease posting all mugshots of arrests made.

"We will continue to post written press releases of arrests we make," the post read. "We will also continue to post photographs of suspects we are attempting to identify. All currently posted mugshots have also been removed. This post is intended to make our followers aware of the change so that it does not appear that any special treatment is being given to any particular individual."

However, not everyone was thrilled with the decision – with some speculating on Facebook perhaps someone Soby knew had been arrested and this was a way to cover it up. Others voiced

their opinions that if people don't want their picture public then they should not get arrested in the first place.

Soby, in a Facebook comment on the Colchester Police page made Tuesday, Sept. 8, said there has been miscommunication for which he will assume responsibility.

"I have had a discussion with the Police Commission and another with the Resident Trooper Supervisor about how to make this page more informative of all aspects of the great work our officers do, as other town's police departments do, not only arrest information," Soby wrote. He offered as an example a recently-posted picture of a thank-you note officers had received, as well as information about "what drug paraphernalia looks like, photos of individuals being sought in connection to a crime, and the like."

Soby explained to the *Rivereast* Wednesday that when the page launched in March 2014, the official policy on what would be posted – devised by the Board of Selectmen, Police Commission and the Resident State Trooper's office – was not overly elaborate.

"We said we would evaluate how we're using the Facebook page and how people were responding to it," he said. "It has been some time since that's been done with the Police Commission, and we received some concerns

from folks about what was posted."

For example, Soby said, a relative of a person arrested said the arrestee had "significant mental health issues," and was struggling through treatment and "self-medicating the wrong way" – and then the arrest and picture was posted publicly on the Facebook page.

"One of the discussions we [also] had was to what level of charges get posted," Soby said. This may mean different felonies or levels of misdemeanors are or are not posted.

In some situations, Soby said, posting the information is helpful because it can solicit information from citizens that is helpful to the police.

"We're going to focus on less of it being a police blog with pictures and instead be more helpful, preventative and interactive kinds of things," Soby said. "It will be in line with community policing with still the opportunity to get information on what may have happened in a neighborhood."

While looking at other police departments including Glastonbury and West Hartford, Soby said those departments don't post as much.

"We will continue to have discussions and work on it," Soby said. "One of the things some police departments do is aggravate stats and report those."

Soby said these stats would be similar to how the Colchester Hayward Volunteer Fire Department reports its incidents in the *Rivereast*.

Among the complaints on the Facebook page made about the decision to pull the mugshots was that the decision was enacted on Labor Day – when the town offices were closed. Some speculated this meant Soby made the decision unilaterally.

But Soby said this was just a coincidence. Resident Trooper Supervisor Sgt. Martin Martinez was working that day, Soby said, and Town Hall was closed for the holiday. "There are times I do things when Town Hall is closed," he said.

Soby denied the allegations that the photos were taken down because someone he knew had been arrested.

"This is nothing to do with anyone in my family or anyone I know," Soby said. "I am as concerned about crime in neighborhoods as anyone is. No neighborhood in Colchester is free from these kinds of crime."

Soby reaffirmed the change in the Facebook page came following feedback he'd received, prompting a discussion with Martinez and the Police Commission, which in turn led to evaluating how to improve the page and continue to meet the various interests of the community.

## Subcommittee Formed, New Colchester Senior Center Rolling Along

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

The Board of Selectmen last week officially formed a Senior Center Building Subcommittee, as the board explores options for a new senior center.

In a written statement approved at the meeting, the selectmen board said it "recognizes that we have a growing senior population in Colchester. ... With a change in demographics come additional requirements to meet the needs of seniors as well as the population of our community as a whole."

The current senior center is located at 95 Norwich Ave., in the former Bacon Academy Arts and Sciences building. The senior center has been housed there since the early 1980s – but, with the town's elderly population growing and the fact the building was designed for students and teachers, not seniors, the consensus among residents and town officials has been that a new building is needed.

The board said it is committed to three things: to establish a subcommittee with two members from the Board of Selectmen, Board of Finance

and Commission on Aging to define a suitable location for a new senior center as well as program specifications; to develop a new senior center facility; and to keep the public and respective boards apprised of developments and progress through the process.

From the selectmen, Rosemary Coyle and First Selectman Stan Soby were chosen for the subcommittee. From the Board of Finance, Art Shilosky and Thomas Kane stepped up to serve on the subcommittee. The Commission on Aging representatives hadn't been chosen yet, as the commission isn't going to meet again until Sept. 21.

Selectman Kurt Frantzen motioned to accept the statement with selectwoman Denise Mizla seconding. The vote was unanimous to accept the statement and form the subcommittee.

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Also at last week's meeting, the selectmen voted unanimously to name the Town Hall meeting rooms after former town official Jenny

Contois.

Contois was a longtime selectwoman who served as first selectwoman for 15 years and also served on the Board of Finance. She left the position of first selectwoman in January 2007 to become district director for U.S. Rep. Joe Courtney. She retired from that position last year.

"She brought the town from a sleepy bird with a few stop signs to one of the fastest growing towns in Connecticut," Soby said. He called her work in town "fundamental." Contois was involved in building the current Town Hall.

When the opportunity to recognize Contois came up, Soby said the idea of naming the meeting rooms was mentioned.

"Jenny is the kind of person no matter who you were, she would explain an issue and be part of it," Coyle said. "Her great love is the Town of Colchester. It doesn't matter where she is or how she's feeling on any given day, she knows what's going on in Colchester."

Coyle said Contois cares about the town and the people and she couldn't think of a better way to honor her.

Mizla agreed that Contois was deserving of the honor, mentioning how much time and effort goes into getting re-elected alone and all of the work Contois did for the town.

Soby said even though Contois was a strong Democrat, she never let that get in the way of bettering the town.

"There isn't anyone who is a fiercer partisan than Jenny, but [she is] also someone willing to put all that aside to bring people into town to move things forward," Soby said.

"She is a model citizen in the largest concept," Frantzen said.

The selectmen will hold an official dedication Monday, Oct. 5, at 6:30 p.m. at Town Hall.

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The next Board of Selectmen meeting will be held Thursday, Sept. 17, at 7 p.m. at Town Hall.

## Bacon Senior Chosen for State Council

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

Starting later this month, a Bacon Academy senior will serve on the State Student Advisory Council on Education.

Lauren Hickey, the senior student member of the local Board of Education, will begin attending meetings Sept. 21 for the council.

Hosted by the Connecticut Association of Schools, the SSACE consists of state students who voice their opinions on education planning and give high school students' perspectives on key issues to the state Board of Education, the commissioner of education, the state Department of Education, the governor and state legislators. The council is led by CAS staff member David Maloney.



Lauren Hickey

Hickey said she was "very surprised" when she heard in August that her application had been accepted.

"There's only around 10 kids" on the SSACE, Hickey said. She said that, during the 2014-15 school year, Bacon's then-interim principal Don Gates encouraged her to apply as a student member for the state Board of Education, "but that's a lot of pressure."

Hickey explained the state education board only has two student members and very long meetings.

The SSACE, on the other hand, "is a group of kids and is interactive," Hickey said. "The [application] letter mentioned meeting the governor and lieutenant governor. I'm really excited."

In her application essay, Hickey said she spoke about meeting people she otherwise wouldn't get to meet and meeting kids like herself. She also discussed being on the local Board of Education and starting Colchester's Farm-to-School program which works to bring fresh,

local vegetables to students for lunch.

"The issue I talked about was being able to apply 21st century knowledge and critical thinking," Hickey said. "A lot of kids don't get those real-world skills."

Hickey said although she doesn't foresee herself going into education like both of her parents, she is a "lover of learning" who enjoys taking opportunities to become a better-rounded person.

"It's not just for the college application," Hickey said. "I'm excited to meet these other top notch kids and hear what they do, and take a lot away from the experience learning about government, inside education, and politics in government."

She said she has unique opinions to express and will absorb it all with hopes of getting a lot and giving a little.

The one downside, she joked, is having to drive through Hartford to get to the CAS building.

Superintendent of Schools Jeff Mathieu

stressed the uniqueness of Hickey's achievement; he said he could only remember one other Colchester student, about 10 years ago, who served on the SSACE.

Mathieu shared a recent experience when he was driving with current Bacon principal Matthew Peel, and the two spotted Hickey.

"Lauren was outside harvesting a carrot from the Academy garden," he recalled, "and Matt said, 'Isn't it something that someone that young is already a better person than we will ever be?'"

"I'm so proud of my school and our town," Hickey said. "I feel I can represent that and how proud I am of our teachers and how we educate. We're a small town, but a good example."

"Lauren has been a valuable student member of our Board of Education," said Ron Goldstein, chair of the local education board. "The state is fortunate to have her voice" on the SSACE.

During the 2015-16 school year, Hickey will attend seven meetings, from now until May.

# Hebron Selectmen Move Ahead with Gas Station Rehab Plans

by Geeta Schrayter

At last week's Board of Selectmen meeting, the board decided to move forward with efforts to take ownership of, and renovate, an abandoned piece of property at 501 Church Street.

The property, which used to be a gas station, has been abandoned since 1991.

Prior to coming before the selectmen, both the Economic Development Commission and the Planning and Zoning Commission held meetings where they discussed the property.

At its July meeting, the EDC discussed the dilapidated property as well as new state legislation that removes liability from towns that take over brownfield properties, which 501 Church St. happens to be. According to the Environmental Protection Agency, brownfield properties are properties where "the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant or contaminant."

The commission also discussed a change in the property's ownership status, new state grant programs that can assist in the clean-up of brownfields and, ultimately, approved a motion recommending the selectmen utilize some of those programs, apply for grants and "commit to a municipal role in the clean-up and re-use of this property which would eventually include a tax foreclosure action," it's written in an Aug. 3 memo from Town Planner Mike O'Leary.

Over \$80,000 in taxes is owed on the property, but the last member of the corporation that owned 501 Church St. – Hebron Service Center, Inc – has passed away, leaving no one to take any action on the owner's side. As such, the property is now a forfeited corporation, and any dealings relating to it go through a Marlborough attorney who serves as the agent of service.

At the Aug. 18 meeting of the Planning and Zoning Commission, discussion continued on the property and potential options for the town moving forward.

In a letter sent to the selectmen, PZC Chairwoman Natalie Wood wrote, "The PZC believes that it is in the town's best interest to now take affirmative action on this property" which she called "a blighted property negatively affecting the surrounding neighborhood."

She added the PZC was recommending that the town "actively work with the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection to seek the liability protection offered under state law"; seek funding for brownfield cleanup; be pre-

pared to initiate a tax foreclosure on the property and assume ownership; and set up a Town Brownfields Task Force made up of EDC, PZC and town staff "to guide this overall effort and to determine what is the town vision for the best use of this property" which may include using it for town use, or making it a potential economic development site. Whatever "best benefits the surrounding neighborhood."

At last week's meeting the selectmen were presented with information on the property by Town Attorney Ken Slater and O'Leary and, after holding some discussion of their own, they ultimately decided to move forward with the recommendations made by the commissions.

This week, Board of Selectmen Chairman Brian O'Connell added, "I think it was a general consensus between the three of us that were there [himself, Dan Larson and Gayle Richmond] that it's a good idea to get moving and trying to bring that, basically problem property, to hopefully a good conclusion in that it'll be cleaned up. And hopefully we can figure out what to do with it in the interim while we're going with the approval process for the money."

Town Manager Andrew Tierney added this week, "The town needs to take this appropriate action or nothing will continue to get done on that blighted property, it will remain in disarray and the town will not receive any financial benefit unless we take action and move forward with this plan."

The item will be on the agenda for the Sept. 17 selectmen's meeting.

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Also at the meeting, the selectmen voted unanimously to authorize Tierney to apply for a \$2,000 grant from the state Office of Policy and Management's Neglected Cemetery Account Grant Program to reclaim and maintain neglected cemeteries.

OPM explained in an Aug. 7 letter to the town that the funding can be used "to clear weeds, briars and bushes; to mow cemetery lawn areas; to repair fences and walls; to straighten memorial stones and to keep neglected cemeteries in an orderly and decent condition."

The deadline for the grant application is Sept. 30. If approved, the funds would be used at Old Cemetery on Wall Street and Gott Cemetery, located on the north and south side of Niles Road.

Specifically, the grant application states the funds would be used for projects such as cleaning lichen growth and acid rain black marks



Discussion between various town departments and commissions has been taking place of late, regarding what to do with a piece of abandoned property on Church Street. At last week's Selectmen meeting, the board voted to move forward with efforts to take ownership of, and improve the blighted property, which used to be a gas station.

from stones in the two cemeteries, resetting fallen memorial stones and repairing broken headstones. The funds would also go toward creating an inventory of names, the condition of the stones and identifying the carver if possible, as well as taking photographs of the head and foot stone if it's present.

The funds would also be used on maintenance efforts such as mowing the cemeteries two times a year, and removing leaves, fallen branches and brush overgrowth once a year; as well as the purchase of materials for said projects.

Speaking on the importance of the grant and cemetery maintenance, O'Connell shared, "The grant is a good opportunity for the community to cleanup and preserve and keep the cemeteries in a better state, which are important historic sites."

He added cemeteries were "a peaceful place. It's a time of sorrow originally, but long-term it's something we want to hold as historic property for our community and for future genera-

tions and we should take care of it."

Tierney meanwhile, said, "Hebron's historic cemeteries provide a valuable genealogical resource for those researching their family history."

He added, "Gravestones and their illustrations honor the era of the people and their thoughts on life and death. The carvings memorialize not only the departed, but the headstone carving is a distinct art form and the work of many of these artists is easily recognizable when viewed."

Preservation of the stones is one way to respect our ancestors and keep the memories alive for future generations. We are indebted to them for their many sacrifices in their work to support their families and difficult times while working to have the town of Hebron incorporated."

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The next regular Board of Selectmen meeting is scheduled for Thursday, Sept. 17, at 7:30 p.m. in the Hebron Town Office building.

# Hebron Board Agrees to Raises for Non-Certified Staff

by Geeta Schrayter

The Board of Education Wednesday voted to approve a three-year contract for non-certified staff in the district.

The contract became effective July 1 and will continue through June 30, 2018. In year one of the contract, the staff will receive a 2 percent wage increase. In addition, most will receive a step increase mid-year. Employees at step 10 – which is for the longest-tenured faculty in the school system – will only get the general wage increase. The cost for the first year of the contract based on 2014-15 staff numbers is \$36,324, for an increase of 3.23 percent.

During the second year, employees will receive a 1 percent general wage increase plus step and again, employees on step 10 will only receive the general wage increase. The cost for the second year of the contract is \$37,891 or 3.26 percent based on 2014-15 staff.

(Finance Director Rich Huot explained the agreement will be reopened to negotiated wages and benefits for the 2017-18 school year.)

Regarding benefits, during the first year of the contract both the Preferred Provider Organization plan and the High-Deductible Health Plan (HDHP) will be available, however new hires will be required to take the HDHP; in the second year, the only plan available will be the high-deductible plan.

In a letter to Superintendent of Schools Tim Van Tassel, Huot wrote, "At the time of negotiations, 30 members of the bargaining unit were covered by insurance. Based on enrollment for 2014-15 and 2015-16 cost of benefits, the savings to the board is estimated at \$101,000."

The board unanimously approved the contract.

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Also at the Wednesday's meeting, Van Tassel gave a brief presentation to the board on the results of the first Smarter Balanced Assessment. Van Tassel said the district hadn't yet received student level reports, which he expected would be mailed to parents over the next several weeks, "but I just want to get out in front of this and share information, answer any questions."

But rather than focusing too much on any specific numbers, Van Tassel shared his thoughts on the assessment, what it truly meant, and the district's plans moving forward.

"I think the greatest information we're going to get is growth information as it applies to specific students," he said.

The Smarter Balanced, he said, was "providing us with achievement and growth information."

He reiterated this year's results were only to be used as baseline data.

"There's not much else you're going to be able to do with it other than baseline data and some statistical data I'm doing on my end," he stated, adding "Every student's assessment is different. And that's the problem I think we're going to run into. Everyone is going to want to see how their class, grade, school, district did – we can't do that with this assessment because no two are alike."

A portion of the test is adaptive; it changes based on whether or not a student gets an answer correct or incorrect, and adjusts the following question accordingly.

As such, Van Tassel explained, "Every student who took this potentially took a different test."

Two-thirds of questions were the same, and based on a student's grade level. However the remaining third "could be reaching as far as two [grade] levels above, or possibly two levels below."

But, he said, "I do believe we are going to get some great information about how individual students are doing overtime."

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Van Tassel also shared at the meeting that he'd

received news the district would not be receiving any Title I grant funds this year. According to the state Department of Education, Title I funds "are to be used to close the achievement gap and enable disadvantaged students to reach their potential."

Van Tassel said, "This is a significant loss of programing dollars to the district – approximately \$17,000 worth of disbursement we're used to getting every single year."

Qualification for the grant is based on a town's poverty profile estimate, which Van Tassel explained needs to be greater than 2 percent.

"We are 2 percent on the nose," he said, adding, "You never plan on having grant funds but when you have Title I, which is every year, you do begin to rely on that. We will need to make that up some way, somehow."

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It was also shared at the meeting that Hebron Public Schools will now be sharing information on Twitter. The district's account can be found @HebronSchoolsCT.

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The next Hebron Board of Education meeting is scheduled for Thursday, Oct. 8, at 7 p.m. in the Gilead Hill School music room.

# Hebron Democratic Candidates Fined for Late Filing

by Geeta Schrayter

It hasn't been smooth sailing for this year's Democratic candidates.

After failing to provide adequate notice, the Hebron Democratic Town Committee was unable to hold its caucus in July. And, as a result, the committee had to fill out a Primary Petition Form for those interested in becoming candidates, acquire signatures from 5 percent of the registered Democrats in town, and submit it to the town clerk's office by 4 p.m. on July 12 – something they ultimately did.

But now, the candidates are responsible for remitting a \$100 late fee to the state for failing to submit a required candidate form to the State Elections Enforcement Commission (SEEC) in the required timeframe. According to the 2015 Municipal Election Campaign Overview, available on the SEEC website at [ct.gov](http://ct.gov), “each candidate is required to file SEEC Form 1, ‘Registration of Candidate,’ with the town clerk in their respective municipality within ten days of becoming a candidate.”

However, Town Clerk Carla Pomproicz said that didn't happen.

“There's a requirement for [candidates] to fill out an SEEC form from the State Election Enforcement Committee – it has to do with cam-

paign finances. It has to be filled out, signed by the candidates and remitted to my office within 10 days of their officially becoming candidates; this is what did not happen,” Pomproicz explained.

She added the date she was using as the date they became candidates was the date the Registrar of Voters certified the candidates' petition. The SEEC form, she said, needed to be in by Aug. 21.

“So when that did not happen, and when it came to my attention, I had the job of sending certified letters that are required by law” to the candidates.

A letter, she said “that basically says that they have seven days to remit their forms and the \$100 late filing fee.”

Pomproicz stated she's required by law to report anyone who doesn't submit their paperwork and pay the fine within the seven days to the state elections enforcement officers.

“It's very distressing for a town clerk to have to do this in a small town where we know everybody and the candidates are our neighbors,” Pomproicz said. “And it's just an unfortunate set of circumstances that have come this way.”

Speaking on the situation this week, Demo-

cratic Town Committee Chairman Bill Rudis said he felt there was a lack of communication from the state in regards to SEEC regulations.

“The SEEC provides a time parameter,” he said. “However, if you're not a student of the SEEC – which none of our candidates are – we're left to believe that as a candidate we should somehow be educated about the SEEC, but we don't necessarily agree. There was no connection.”

As a result of what happened, Rudis said the committee was looking into whether or not there was a specific entity at the town level that should be responsible for notifying candidates about the SEEC regulations, “and we can't find one.”

He furthered, “The SEEC, in dealing with all the towns and cities it deals with, probably has an excellent rationale for wanting to make sure candidates are filing forms in whatever time parameter they determine. The problem with that is that in the sense in which it occurred [in Hebron], the Democrats, because of the four-day instead of the [required] five-day notice, didn't go to caucus so they had to go through the petition process. Ultimately, when

you look at that, there's no connection between the validation of signatures on the petition forms, which has to be done by the registrar” and learning about the SEEC regulations.

The SEEC, Rudis continued, “is absolutely silent in how candidates then become responsible for their parameters.” He added, “We've reached out to the SEEC to understand what the process is and why there's such a disconnect. We're waiting for answer.”

But in the meantime, Rudis added some of the candidates had already filed their paperwork and paid the fine, and “we'll be trying to coordinate with our candidates to make sure that everybody does comply.”

He added Pomproicz had done her job by notifying the candidates of their noncompliance.

“The SEEC advised her to communicate and she did that. So in my opinion, she's done now what the SEEC required in terms of complying; so now going forward, we want to make sure each of our candidates comply appropriately.”

And, ideally, have a smoother journey leading up to the elections from here on out.

## Portland Football Player Arrested, Coach Suspended

by John Tyczkowski

A student has been arrested and a coach suspended following recent allegations of hazing on the newly-combined Cromwell and Portland high school football team.

Cromwell Superintendent of Schools Paula Talty announced Tuesday afternoon that Cromwell High School's head football coach would be suspended without pay for one week, beginning that day, in connection with an alleged hazing incident on Aug. 25.

This means the coach, Chris Eckert, will miss the Cromwell-Portland Panthers' first game of the season, on Saturday, Sept. 12, at Coginchaug Regional High School in Durham.

This is the first season of the new football team, which was formed earlier this year, combining the football programs at Portland and Cromwell high schools.

Allegations of hazing were first made public last week when parents contacted local media, but Eckert had been on paid administrative leave since Aug. 25, when Cromwell Police received hazing complaints from the parents of two freshmen players.

Talty said Cromwell Public Schools' investigation, which Eckert cooperated with, determined Eckert had left the players alone and unsupervised in the locker room.

Eckert also apologized for his actions, Talty said.

In an earlier statement, released last Thursday, Talty had said Cromwell Public Schools and Cromwell Police had each completed their separate investigations that same day, Sept. 3.

“However, we are not in a position to provide any further information until the Department of Children and Family Services has con-

cluded their findings,” she said. “They tell us it could be any time from now, up until 45 days from the time in which they were contacted. The DCF findings will dictate what further steps and or disciplinary actions will be taken.”

Along those lines, Talty also said Cromwell Public Schools “reserved the right” to adjust Eckert's disciplinary action if new facts surface from that investigation.

In addition to the coach's suspension, a member of the team was also arrested in connection with the hazing incident.

On Aug. 26, Cromwell Police charged a 16-year-old player, who cannot be identified publicly due to his age, with breach of peace and hazing.

According to Cromwell Police Captain Denise Lamontagne, the 16-year-old hit four other players with a belt in the locker room, after another player had turned the lights off.

The victims suffered minor injuries including “minor redness and/or welts,” she said.

Police were unable to establish probable cause to charge any other players due to conflicting statements from the team, Lamontagne said, though “it appears other members of the football team were actively involved in the incident.”

Lamontagne also said police could reopen their investigation into the incident “if someone came forward with more definitive evidence of other students' involvement.”

The 16-year-old has been referred to Juvenile Court, which will decide the severity of any penalty.

For reference, a hazing conviction can lead to a maximum fine of \$1,000.

## East Hampton Police News

8/27: Thomas E. Einsiedel, 18, of 6 Edgerton St., was arrested and charged with first-degree criminal trespass and interfering/resisting arrest, East Hampton Police said.

9/2: Cara Burke, 20, of 54 Jacobson Farm Rd., turned herself in pursuant to an active warrant for her arrest stemming from an incident that occurred at the end of July. Burke was charged with first-degree criminal mischief and sixth-degree larceny, police said.

9/3: Kimberly Darlene Krieger, 50, of 241 Arch St., New Britain, was taken into custody pursuant to an active arrest warrant and charged with two counts of second-degree forgery, two counts of issuing a bad check and third-degree larceny, stemming from incidents that occurred in July, police said.

## Colchester Police News

9/1: Colchester Police said Derek Morell, 26, of 9 Wilson Ave., Quaker Hill, was arrested and charged with DUI, possession of narcotics, and having narcotics not in its original container.

9/3: Colchester Police said Nicholas Traficanti, 29, of 40 Dogwood Ln., was arrested and charged with failure to respond to an infraction.

9/3: State Police said Tiffany Menendez, 26, of 101 Vanblock Ave., Hartford, was arrested and charged with failure to appear.

9/3: State Police said Augusto Rodriguez, 37, of 353 Windham Rd., Windham, was arrested and charged with violation of a restraining order.

9/3: State Police said Blake Ford, 54, of 18 Willow Dr., Hebron, was arrested and charged with DUI and failure to drive in the proper lane.

9/5: State Police said Christopher Vining, 24,

## Marlborough Police News

9/3: State Police said Javier Castro, 24, of 144 Stonington St., Hartford, was arrested and charged with speeding, operating under suspension, possession of a controlled substance, criminal impersonation, and interfering with an officer.

9/6: State Police said Vincent Glorioso, 68, of 157 Burritt St., Plantsville, was arrested and charged with DUI, failure to drive in the proper lane, and operating under suspension.

## Obituaries

### East Hampton

#### Vincenza Brown

Vincenza Brown, 88, of East Hampton, passed away Monday, Aug. 31. Born March 27, 1927, she was the daughter of the late Dominic and Nunzina Reale. She was the wife of the late Thomas Brown.

She leaves behind four sons, Louie DiPace of Middletown, Robert and Penny DiPace of Middletown, Francis and Tammy DiPace of East Hampton and Michael DiPace of Central Village. She has eight grandchildren and three great-grandchildren and many nieces and nephews.

Vinny worked as a nurse's aide at Cobalt Lodge in her younger years. She worked for many years up until retirement at Bevin Bell Company in East Hampton. Vinny's favorite hobbies were watching the Yankees, NASCAR and knitting. She loved spending time with her grandchildren and was ecstatic of her three great-granddaughters.

Vinny also leaves behind her beloved sister and brother-in-law, Thomas and Lucy Nobile of Westbrook.

She was predeceased by her brother, Joseph Reale.

Vinny's family would especially like to thank Cobalt Lodge for their excellent care and compassion to Vinny.

Memorial services will be held Saturday, Sept. 12, at Spencer Funeral Home in East Hampton at 10 a.m., with services at 11 a.m. Burial will be private at Mt. St. Benedict Cemetery in Bloomfield.

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



### Hebron

#### George William Tabor III

George "Bill" William Tabor III, 73, of Hebron, cherished husband of Marion (Burdick) Tabor, passed away at home Friday, Sept. 4, in the presence of his loving family.

Born July 20, 1942 in Lisbon Falls, Maine, and growing up in Manchester, Bill served in the Army Reserves and worked in the advertising industry for over 30 years. Bill is best known for his dedication to youth soccer. What began as a small commitment to coach his daughters' youth soccer teams evolved into a passion to provide quality coaching and competitive playing opportunities for all youth in Connecticut. Bill co-founded the Northeast United premier soccer club in 1999. His contribution to the sport was honored by the UConn men's soccer club in 2005. His legacy will live on through the continued success of the club and the soccer family he helped establish.

Bill will always be remembered for his love and devotion to his family, love for people, passion for soccer, dedication as a coach, stellar dance moves, and his Christmas season flare. We cherish the happy memories: the family gatherings, trips to Maine and Cape Cod, soccer tournaments, wine tastings, and golf outings.

In addition to his loving wife of 41 years, he leaves two children: Jennifer Tabor-Rennie and her husband Matt Rennie of East Hampton; and Karyn Tabor and her husband William Ferguson of Silver Spring, Md.; along with two grandchildren Alec and Andie. He is survived by his mother Hazel (Hayes) Tabor and sisters Janet Rolocut, Susan Tabor, and Terry Kieb and her husband Donald Kieb.

He was predeceased by his father, George W. Tabor Jr. of Harpswell, Maine.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in his honor to the scholarship fund through Northeast United. Northeast United Premier Soccer Club, P.O. Box 387, Mansfield, CT 06268.

A public viewing was held at Potter Funeral Home, 456 Jackson St. (Route 195), Willimantic, Wednesday, Sept. 9. The burial service was Thursday, Sept. 10, at the New Hebron Cemetery.

To sign the online memorial, visit [potterfuneralhome.com](http://potterfuneralhome.com).



### East Hampton

#### Robert Carl Trahan

Robert Carl Trahan, "Rob," lost his courageous two-year battle with melanoma Monday, Sept. 7, at Middlesex Hospital Hospice Care, with his wife Kim by his side.

Rob was born at Windham Hospital in Willimantic Feb. 15, 1974, to Carl and Marie (Robert) Trahan. He graduated from Windham High School where he was honored to be senior class president in 1992, attended the University of Tampa, and graduated from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte with a BA in history in 1996. Rob's love of outdoors led him to his profession as a land surveyor in Colorado and most recently for Fuss & O'Neill Engineering of Manchester.

Besides his parents, he is survived by his loving wife and care giver, Kim Ernst Trahan, and his two best pals – his sons, Zack and John Trahan. Rob leaves behind his sister, Julie Trahan Scaringella; her husband, Mike and children Jonathan, Madison and Jake; his aunts and uncles, including Dotty and Paul Kozelka of Mansfield, Cheryl and Lee Lowe of Coventry, Billy and Fern Darling of Ashford, and JoAnn Easton of Willimantic, and cousin Tom Krug of Essex Junction, Vt. Rob had three lifelong best friends, Doug Theriault, AJ Joslyn and Eric Hansen. Rob also leaves his in-laws, Bonnie and Steve Morris, and sisters-in-law, Kara and Kristen Ernst.

Rob will be missed by his family and all the friends he made on life's journey. Rob enjoyed traveling, music, playing basketball with his sons, the great outdoors, and debating the issues of the day with anyone brave enough to challenge his theories.

The family invites everyone who loved Rob to a celebration of life at the Salmon River State Forest in Colchester Saturday, Sept. 12, at 2 p.m. (Rain date: Sunday, Sept. 13, at 2 p.m.)

In lieu of flowers, make donations to Give Forward Rob Trahan's Cancer Fundraiser or Rob Trahan Benefit Fund c/o Liberty Bank, 2 West High St., East Hampton, CT 06424.

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



### East Hampton

#### Patricia Romero

Patricia Romero (Parys), beloved wife of Douglas Romero, of East Hampton, passed away Tuesday, Sept. 1. She was born June 10, 1953, in East Hartford. Patricia was the daughter of the late Henry and Eileen Parys.

Pat graduated from George J. Penney High School. After graduation, Pat worked at Aetna, Inc. for 33 years. After and during those years she derived great pleasure from making many different crafts for friends, family and for sale at craft shows. She created Country Willow Craft Shoppe in 1986, in East Hampton, where she sold craft supplies and taught classes. She also worked in sales after leaving Aetna, and loved the world of selling and working with clients.

Pat was truly beautiful, had a gorgeous smile, an infectious laugh, and a wonderful sense of humor. She was a most kind and extremely caring person, which extended to her love and care of animals and those around her. She loved to spend time at the beach, and had memorable trips with her husband to Hawaii, Florida, and Hilton Head Island. They were married in Maui in 1984. Pat will greatly be missed by her family and friends.

She is survived by her husband Doug; her brother and sister-in-law, Henry and Sharon Parys of Raymore, Mo.; her sister and brother-in-law, Susan and Lawrence DuPont of Newington; her aunt and uncle, Joan and Walt Clevenger of Florida; her aunt, Cecylia Parys of Manchester; her mother-in-law, Muriel Romero of Hamden; and her sister-in-law, Constance Romero Estades of Puerto Rico. She also leaves wonderful nieces, nephews and cousins.

Funeral services will be private. Donations may be made to the Connecticut Humane Society in Newington, to the Protectors of Animals in East Hartford, or to the charity of one's choice.

### Colchester

#### Graveside Services for Robert and Helen Brown

Graveside services for Robert Brown and Helen (Nelkin) Brown will be observed at 11 a.m. Saturday, Sept. 19, at Linwood Cemetery (at the junction of Route 16 and Linwood Cemetery Road) in Colchester.

Helen passed away July 24, at the age of 89, rejoining her beloved husband, Robert, who passed away Jan. 13, 2004, at the age of 77.

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

### Colchester

#### Robert Jesse Cowen

Robert Jesse Cowen, 71, of Colchester, widower of the late Ellen (Oliveira) Cowen, passed away Thursday, Sept. 3, at the Baptist Hospital in No. Little Rock, Ark.

Born July 24, 1944, in Fall River, Mass., he was the son of the late George and Eleanor (Botelho) Cowen. Robert was a proud veteran of the U.S. Marine Corps, serving during the Vietnam War from 1961-65. He and Ellen wed on Jan. 21, 1967, and shared 42 years of marriage before she predeceased him on July 3, 2009. Robert retired after 42 years as a jet engine mechanic for Pratt & Whitney Aircraft.

He leaves his daughter, LTC Kimberly Corbett and her husband, LTC Damon Corbett, (U.S. Army Ret.), of Sherwood, Ark.; his sisters, Ruby Cowen of West Warwick, R.I. and Tracy Martel of Fall River, Mass.; his brother-in-law, Lawrence Oliveira of Fall River, Mass.; beloved family friend, Lois Wack and her family, Peter and Trever of East Sandwich, Mass.; and many extended family members and friends.

For those who knew him well, he will be remembered for his love of Harley Davidsons and the U.S. Marine Corps.

Visitation will be held 10-11 a.m. Saturday, Sept. 12, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester, followed by burial with full military honors in the New St. Andrew Cemetery, Gillette's Lane, Colchester.

In lieu of flowers, donations in his memory may be made to the charity of one's choice.

For online condolences, visit [auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com](http://auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com).

### Portland

#### Janet L. Sander

Janet L. Sander, 84, of Independence, Mo., formerly of Portland, wife of the late William P. Sander, passed away Monday, Sept. 7, in Kansas City, Mo. She was the daughter of the late Robert and Lulu (Eichler) Morris.

Born on April 24, 1931, in Brooklyn, N.Y., she lived in Portland from 1968 to 2000, and has lived in Missouri for the last 15 years. She was a former Sunday school teacher at Zion Lutheran Church in Portland, she volunteered at the Lutheran Home in Middletown, she knitted Irish sweaters and loved to needlepoint.

She leaves her sons, William Sander and wife, Kimberly of Independence, Mo., Thomas Sander of Madison and Timothy Sander and wife, Jacqueline of Coventry; grandchildren, Bradley, Benjamin, Jessica, Pedro, Bianca, Ryan, Kara and Allison; and several nieces and nephews.

Funeral services will be held today, Sept. 11, at 11 a.m., at Portland Memorial Funeral Home, 231 Main St., Portland. Burial will be in the Swedish Cemetery, Portland. Relatives and friends may call on today from 10-11 a.m.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Alzheimer's Foundation of America, 322 Eight Ave., 7th Floor, New York, NY 10001.

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



### Colchester

#### Salvatore Guarnaccia

Salvatore Philip Guarnaccia, 76, of Colchester, joined his wife Judith Friday, Sept. 4, 2015 when he peacefully died at his home with his children by his side. He was born Jan. 6, 1938, to the late Charles and Mary (Ferro) Guarnaccia.

Sal was an entrepreneur; he owned and operated various businesses throughout the years. He enjoyed boating, cars, gardening and teasing his grandchildren.

Sal is survived by his children, Salvatore C. Guarnaccia of Salem and Christine Hubbard and her husband Carl of Stafford; his sister, Sadie Brady and sister-in-law Carol Guarnaccia, both of Colchester; grandchildren, Brook and Gabriella Hubbard, Dante Guarnaccia, Rachael and Joshua Parlee and their parents Rob and Heather.

In addition to his wife Judith, Sal is predeceased by his daughter, Mary Parlee; brother, Charles Guarnaccia; and sister, Carol Kelly.

Thank you to Suzette Riley and Liliana Garcia for the wonderful care you have given and to Ellen Gustafson for treating Sal as if he was your own father, which was greatly appreciated.

Calling hours were held at the Belmont Funeral Home, 144 S. Main St., Colchester, on Wednesday, Sept. 9, with the funeral service. Burial will immediately follow at New St. Andrew's Cemetery.

Belmont Funeral Home has been entrusted with these arrangements.

**MORE OBITUARIES  
ON FOLLOWING  
PAGE**



### Portland

#### Marcedese Manfredi

On Thursday, Aug. 13, shortly after the awakening moments of a new day, when the sun cast its light and warmth upon this earth, Marcedese Manfredi joined her beloved husband of 60 years, Daniel Vincent Manfredi, leaving behind a 94-year legacy of love, steadfast devotion, and resolute selflessness to her family, friends and those fortunate to have been touched by her heartfelt kindness and sincerity.

Born in Maine on April 7, 1921, Marcedese was the only child of the late John Maximillian Lavigne and Florida Roberge Lavigne. At an early age, her parents fondly bestowed upon Marcedese the nickname of “Toy” which aptly remained with her throughout her lifetime. She carried with her an unwavering strength and spirit, embedded at an early age and during “The Great Depression” of her childhood years. Shortly after her birth, Toy and her family moved to Middletown, where she was blessed to meet the enduring love of her life, Daniel, and together they raised their three children before moving to Rocky Hill where she spent her last 48 years.

The embodiment of a gentle and caring soul, Toy placed her family at the forefront of all she did. Forever the optimist, her encouragement and support instilled confidence and often simplified and eased family and friends through life’s transitions. A tireless and unyielding pillar of strength, Toy devoted her entire life to ensuring that Daniel and other members of her family were well-cared for and without hardship. For many years, Toy was active in the First Methodist Church of Middletown, as a participant in the weekly Masses, in the growth of the church community, and in dedicating herself to the successful management of many church fundraisers. She and her husband were supporters of the Boy Scouts of America. Toy was successfully employed for many years in the retail field as a Buyer and Service Manager with the former G. Fox & Co. in Hartford. Finding her transition to retirement a bit boring, Toy found gratification in volunteering and offering companionship to residents of the former Elm Hill Nursing Home in Rocky Hill.

Although she was the longtime quintessential matriarch of her own family, Toy was “Gram” to so very many people, many of whom shared a bond with her because their own grandparents had lived lives too short or because Gram, through her warm smile, endless generosity and welcoming affection, so often made them feel as though they were a part of her family. Gram accepted this role and embraced it as her destiny where it evolved to become her very essence, providing happiness for so many others. Gram was a passionate and talented cook, a connoisseur of knowing well the comfort of simple, yet delicious homemade food, and an authority on the true import of sharing family merriment. Forever willing to host a festive gathering, Gram instilled within us all the importance of celebrating joyful and momentous times, of opening our homes and hearts to friends and family alike, of giving selflessly to our children, and of perpetuating timeless traditions that our children’s children will hold dear for many years to come. Her home became the central hub of her many family members.

For many years, Gram’s celebratory nature and zest for life manifested itself in our annual summer vacations at the beach, where she openly relished the opportunity to have her family together and where laughter often heightened her spirits in simpler times. Never once did Gram hesitate at allowing us to find our own providence. Never once did she hold too tight or try to diminish the vigor of her children, her grandchildren, or her great grandchildren; but rather, Gram was always there beside us, believing in us, encouraging us to live life, a champion of our triumphs, and one to temper our stumbles with kind and encouraging words. And as the years passed, Gram was mindful of the growth of her family, was infused with vitality with the arrival of new great grandchildren and yet, always maintained an ability to savor life’s simpler pleasures, be it watching her great granddaughters play hockey, a friendly game of cards, her time reserved to watch *Jeopardy!*, or a simple visit from a loved one.

Our family will remember Gram’s vibrant

spirit, her love of the arts and music, her fondness for reading books and how she enjoyed listening to the Brooklyn Dodgers, sipping good whiskey and glasses of champagne. A smile appears as we recall how her grandchildren would pile into her black Volkswagen Beetle and scramble to cram, one on top of the other, for that infamous rear seat hatch compartment on the way to the beach. We will forever treasure Christmas Days at her home, Easter, Fourth of July picnics, birthday parties and the renowned “kids’ table!” Gram devoted her entire life to providing boundless love to her family and would often, without question, drop everything she was doing to attend to the needs of those she loved deeply. Her loyalty was beyond reproach and her energy the envy of every soul. The countless lives she touched are better for having done so. All who knew her loved her dearly and will cherish her memory.

Gram is survived by her two daughters, Jacqueline McMahon and her husband William of Middletown, Madeline DeVellis of Westbrook; her grandchildren, Michelle McMahon of Middletown, Sean McMahon and his wife Nancy of Newington, Pamela Roe and her husband Timothy of Berlin, Kirk Rettberg of San Francisco, Calif., and Eric Rettberg and his wife Heather of Higganum; and loving great grandchildren whom she adored with all her heart, Patrick Dabrowski, Dakota and Keegan McMahon, Rachel, Lauren and Benjamin Roe, and Carly and Tyler Rettberg.

In addition to Daniel, Gram was predeceased by her son, Ralph Debari.

The family expresses their heartfelt gratitude to the caregivers at Portland Care & Rehabilitation Center and to Sue Gilbert. As were her final wishes, services will be private.

When Gram was at her happiest, she was always heard to say, with a broad grin and a twinkle in her eye, “Ring-a-Ding!” We say now Gram, “Ring-a-Ding,” as we know you are ringing a bell in heaven for us.