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Middlesex YMCA CEO Michele Rulnick (right) and Membership Director Sue Dionne took a Blues Brothers-style leap into Jobs Pond at the second annual Camp Ingersoll Polar Plunge. The event is a fundraiser for the camp's scholarship program.

Portland Residents Take the Plunge

by Elizabeth Regan

With the water temperature hovering just above freezing, dozens of intrepid swimmers took the plunge into Jobs Pond in Portland on Saturday, so more than 40 children will have the opportunity to experience the pond – part of Camp Ingersoll – under balmier conditions this summer.

The second annual Polar Plunge brought in approximately \$11,500 in pledges, according to Camp Ingersoll Director Ben Silliman. The money will be used to support camp scholarships for families who wouldn't otherwise be able to afford the cost. The camp is operated by the Middlesex YMCA.

The fundraiser is designed to bolster \$100,000 in financial aid the YMCA gives out each year to help make camp an option for more children.

Chris Brooks, a coordinator with the Middlesex YMCA's Kids Korner program, was one of the many plungers wearing costumes to add to the festive tone of the event. Dressed as Rocky in American flag boxing shorts and a thick terrycloth robe, Brooks described the water – not surprisingly – as “very cold.”

“But it was not as bad as I thought it would be,” he said. “The fear leading up to it was the hardest part. But I feel alright. I'll tell you what,

this robe is good. I couldn't wait to get back in this robe.”

Brooks said he brought in about \$700 in pledges by braving the cold.

Linda Cline, a social services professional from Ansonia who started out as a lifeguard-in-training at the camp, is an impassioned supporter of the facility. She earned the Best Dressed award – in the form of a gold toilet plunger trophy – for the second year in a row. This year she jumped into Jobs Pond as the Mad Hatter, losing a bulbous black shoe in the process. Last year, she was an '80s-era Valley Girl.

“When you jump in, it's like needles going through your body. You hit it, you feel the needles, and you want to get out. You don't think about anything else,” she said.

Other fundraisers included Gumby and Pokey, the Blues Brothers, and a pair of hula dancers.

Former Director Henry Coe, who headed the camp for 25 years, watched the scene unfold with the eye of an experienced fundraiser. Several years ago, he led efforts to build the \$100,000 camp amphitheater that now bears his name.

“It costs \$400 for a two-week session of
See Polar Plunge Page 2

East Hampton Council Discusses Heroin ‘Epidemic’

by Elizabeth Regan

The East Hampton Town Council has identified goals for the 2016-17 budget that include several long-standing priorities as well as one that has not been readily acknowledged until now: the town's heroin problem.

At last Tuesday's Town Council meeting, Republican Councilor Melissa Engel classified heroin addiction as an epidemic.

“I truly feel that as a council and community we need to take a strong stand that we need to do something about the heroin problem in this town,” Engel said.

Democrat Councilor James “Pete” Brown agreed. “I want it done,” he said. “I agree with Melissa that we're experiencing an epidemic here.”

Two fatal overdoses occurred over the New Year's holiday within 7-hours of each other. East Hampton Police Department Chief Sean Cox confirmed Wednesday that there have been a total of three heroin overdoses since September; the department is waiting on toxicology results from a fourth overdose.

The council said the police department's budget should include a plan to participate in state or regional programming to combat substance abuse and traffic fatalities.

Cox said he is researching grant opportunities for increased traffic enforcement “that can go not only to greatly reducing the use of narcotics but to reduce DUI, which is an equally deadly problem.”

Cox's search for outside funding sources in-

cludes a focus on initiatives that will allow East Hampton to work with neighboring towns, especially on motor vehicle stops.

But Cox has been clear that law enforcement's efforts to curb drug use require more than heightened enforcement - there needs to be an educational component as well.

“We are going to consider whether or not the DARE program is feasible at this time with our current staffing levels,” he said.

DARE is a national substance abuse prevention education program that brings police officers into the school system. Participating officers must take at least 80 hours of specialized training. The program was halted in 2011 under former Chief Matthew Reimondo due to budget constraints, according to the police department. It had been in place for 25 years.

Cox currently has 14 police officers working for him – and they're spread thin, he said. In addition to enforcing the law, officers serve as first responders in medical emergencies.

“With all the challenges we face, we're going to do all we can to combat this issue in the best possible manner. I don't think we can do it alone,” Cox said.

Engel said she supports efforts to secure a police canine to supplement the department's enforcement efforts – but hiring staff of the two-legged variety is not something the town can afford.

“We'll do everything else we can to help with programming and funding and grants and even

with the dog, but right now, this year, we cannot do it,” she said. “We have a high school to pay for, a teachers contract to pay for, other contracts [to be negotiated] very soon and we just can't. There are times when you just can't. But there are other ways to address this drug issue.”

The council's stance on fighting drug use in town was part of a broader policy document required by charter. Each year, the council must write a statement outlining its budget goals for the coming year. The exercise is meant to provide guidance to the Board of Finance, the town manager, and the Board of Education over the course of the budget process.

The statement also includes a directive that the Board of Education budget “should maintain current spending levels.”

Town Council member Ted Hintz Jr. said at last Tuesday's meeting that the school board budget goes up by about \$500,000 each year. He said the board typically returns between \$100,000 and \$300,000 to the general fund.

Hintz said the council's insistence on a zero increase isn't unreasonable based on those figures.

“It appears worse than I think it is, based on their track record of what they've been getting for an increase and what they've been returning to the town every year. So I don't think it's an unrealistic expectation to have them come up with a zero increase over last year,” he said.

Superintendent of Schools Paul Smith said this week he respects the council's focus on a conservative budget approach, especially since it took four referenda to pass the current year's budget. But a majority of any school board budget is composed of contractual costs that can't be altered, he said.

“Any school faces its biggest increase in its fixed costs: salary increases, benefit increases, etc.,” Smith said. “Those are right on the table and you have to make everything else work.”

In areas where he has more discretion – such as school supplies, equipment and textbooks – he said the proposed budget is at or below zero.

Other variables, such as heating costs, can be hard to plan for, according to Smith. Those types of fluctuations are one of the reasons the district has returned a small amount – from one percent of the total budget to less than a third of a percent – in past years.

“I think that's pretty decent budgeting overall,” he said. “And I'd rather give that money back than say we spent it on things we really didn't need.”

Smith will present his recommended budget to the school board at its meeting on Jan. 25.

Town Council Chairwoman Patience Anderson said the council's budget policy is not an effort to micromanage the process. Instead, it is a way to convey that the council expects departments to do what they can to keep a level budget.

See ‘Epidemic’ Page 2

Polar Plunge cont. from Front Page

camp,” he said. “So every \$400 is a kid coming to camp.”

The 80-year-old lamented his spectator status as he stood on the beach near a small bonfire: “I wanted to jump; my family said ‘no.’”

Portland Fire Department Dive Team Coordinator Mark DeFrancesco oversaw a crew of volunteer divers to ensure safety at the event for the second year in row.

“We do a lot of dive training here,” DeFrancesco said. “So they [the Middlesex YMCA] help us and we try to help them.”

The event was developed by Silliman, a graduate of Portland High School, and former director Tony Sharillo as a way to make the camp more visible in the off season and more accessible in the summer months.

“We’ve been talking about extending our camp family and that’s what this event does,” Silliman said. “It really helps bring more kids to camp and give them that experience that can change their lives.”

The 77-acre Portland resource, tucked away just off Route 66, is something that many people in surrounding towns and even some locals don’t know about, according to Silliman.

“We’re proactively trying to increase the community feel at Camp Ingersoll and the YMCA,” he said. “We really wanted to have an event on the off season so we could keep people engaged at camp and show them what we do at camp and why we do it.”

Portland First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield came out as a spectator with her daughter and granddaughter. She said she used to bring her children to the camp many years ago when it was open to the wider community through a family swim program.

“I like to come here because it’s a little nostalgic,” Bransfield said. “It’s a great resource and we’re very proud to have it here.”

While the camp has been accessible only to summer campers for about 10 years, a community access component was recently instituted in the form of a paid Outdoor Center membership. Cardholders can use the facility year-round from sunrise to sunset, except during camp season when it is available on evenings after 6 p.m. and on weekends.

Sharillo, dressed as a Jedi knight as part of the *Star Wars* theme worn by several YMCA staffers, said he was excited to be there to help raise money to send some kids to camp.

“I don’t really like the cold but it’s easy when you’re jumping for a good cause,” he said.

Middlesex YMCA CEO Michele Rulnick joined forces with Membership Director Sue Dionne under the guise of the Blues Brothers to take the plunge. Rulnick said early afternoon temperatures of about 45 degrees were a departure from last year’s inaugural event, when temperatures were in the low 20s and it took hours to break a passageway through ice 12 inches thick.

“Last year, you were so cold before you jumped that the water felt a little bit warm at first,” she said. “Just at first.”

But Rulnick reiterated the rallying cry of the rest of the plungers when she said it’s all for a good cause. “It’s a little bit of discomfort for a summer of fun for a lot of kids. It’s all good,” she said.

For other participants, costume choice was part strategy and part dare.

Counselors Josh Lake, of East Haddam, and JD Walsh, of Cromwell, wore grass skirts and bikini tops fashioned from fake flowers.

“This was a dare on Facebook, actually,” Walsh said. “They offered me extra pledge money to wear a coconut bra and grass skirt. We figured it’s for a good cause, and we dress like this every other week at camp anyway, so what’s the difference? Just a bit colder.”



The Polar Plunge raised more than \$10,000 for camp scholarships thanks to 30 intrepid fundraisers willing to take a leap into the almost-frozen Jobs Pond.

But Walsh’s mother, Teri, said the costumes made logistical sense. The former Camp Ingersoll nurse, with several polar plunges to her credit, explained that emerging from the pond while wearing a lot of wet clothes makes the experience feel colder and longer-lasting.

The secret is to let one’s body acclimate to the outside temperatures before jumping into the water. “Don’t walk around in your robe and don’t keep yourself warm,” she said. “Let your body’s skin temperature adjust to what’s around

so you don’t have the shock when you get in.”

Shameem Zaman, an employee of the Middlesex YMCA, brought her friend Michelle Butler to support the cause. They wore tulle skirts and matching black shirts with “BRR” emblazoned across the front.

Zaman said she nearly froze – literally and figuratively – when she made the jump: “I didn’t expect the water to be so cold, so I couldn’t move. Michelle caught ahold of me and she pulled me. She’s like ‘you have to get out!’”

‘Epidemic’ cont. from Front Page

She said the council will be meeting with Maniscalco, the school board, and the finance board soon to go over the budget policy. The meeting will serve to answer questions and provide clarification where needed so each party will be prepared to present a budget that will pass muster with the council.

“We’re the last stop before the budget goes to residents,” Anderson said.

The council’s budget policy statement also includes provisions that: the fund balance shall NOT be used to lower the annual mill rate or pay for town operating expenses; every effort should be made to maintain or where possible reduce staff; the Public Works budget should include an appropriate financial commitment and a plan to continue ongoing road improvements; and the Board of Finance and the Capital Committee should update the town’s long-term Capital Plan.

Meanwhile, the council’s goals for itself included: continued support of Maniscalco’s labor negotiations; continued support of efforts to protect, preserve and improve Lake Pocotopaug and the lake watershed; and a commitment to continually replenish sinking funds.

* * *

The next East Hampton Town Council meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, Jan. 26 at 6:30 p.m. at the Town Hall, 20 East High St.

Hebron School Board Approves Budget Proposal with No Increase

by Geeta S. Sandberg

The Board of Education approved a budget proposal for the 2016-17 school year last Thursday that remains flat with the current year's budget, coming in at \$11.99 million.

Last month, schools superintendent Tim Van Tassel presented a budget proposal that came in at \$12.08 million for an increase of .73 percent. The change in the proposal stems from the board's decision to use surplus funds from the current year's budget to address some of the items that had been in the budget.

At the Jan. 14 meeting, the board voted unanimously to transfer \$117,197 in surplus funds to various accounts including \$30,000 for equipment and maintenance, which would allow for the replacement of a dishwasher; \$23,874 in curriculum textbooks; \$23,480 for textbooks at Hebron Elementary School; \$10,000 for textbooks at Gilead Hill School; \$9,200 in part for new choral risers at Hebron Elementary School; and \$8,000 for audio and video supplies.

Board of Education Chairwoman Erica Bromley explained the possibility of using some of the surplus funds had been discussed with the town and "the town is in support of using the funds in a responsible way now... This will allow us to remove them from next year's proposed budget, which will then create a budget the public can wholeheartedly support, and also remove items from [Capital Improvement Plan requests] as well."

Van Tassel explained the surplus funds were the result of "some significant turnover" with staff.

He added the board was "very fortunate" the budget proposal came in flat for next year, and

cautioned that wouldn't necessarily be the case in the years to come.

"We were very fortunate this year," he said. "I think and hope the community recognizes if we do come in this year at a zero that this is because we had some significant turnover... This may be the last time we might see this and I hope the town recognizes that... we're doing everything to be able to help this year and I hope we'll have the town's support next year."

The board unanimously approved the transfers, as well as the budget proposal for next year.

Also at last week's meeting, the board approved a motion to allow non-certified staff members to donate some of their accrued sick leave, vacation time, or personal days to a fellow employee who is currently battling their third round of cancer and has used up all their paid time off.

Before winter break, Van Tassel explained he was approached by members of the non-certified bargaining unit who were interested in the possibility. Van Tassel said there's nothing written in the employees' contract regarding making contributions; but, he added, "I would recommend to the Board of Education that they consider doing what is being requested."

Van Tassel recommended the board authorize him to enter into an agreement with the non-certified union to create a voluntary leave transfer option for the specific employee, with the agreement being exclusive to the non-certified union. In addition, he said the contributions should only be accepted during a set window, with the window opening this week and ending at the end of the month.

In addition, Van Tassel said he recommended capping the total number of days contributed to 20, and anyone who planned to make a contribution should have days in their bank remaining in case they needed any during the year. He also recommended the contributions be accepted on a 2-to-1 ratio, "meaning two days contributed would be equivalent to one day of paid leave" for the employee battling cancer.

His reasoning behind the latter "has to do with how much this particular employee makes in comparison to somebody else and what they may make. ... One person's paid leave is not equivalent to another person's."

Van Tassel said it should also be made clear the donated days are non-refundable, and said, "We have to make it very clear this is not precedent-setting and that this matter should not be brought forward in future complaints or issues. We're doing it for the betterment of an employee in our district, and certainly I know it would be greatly appreciated if it did happen."

However, board member Maryanne Leichter expressed some concern that the decision *would* be precedent-setting.

"I'm just having a hard time because the compassionate side of me says, give this person this opportunity. The other part of me is, I've been involved with quite a bit of bargaining. ... I really feel in my heart that this *is* precedent-setting and that if we, as a board, decide to do this I think we have to look to our other organizations, our other bargaining units looking to do that as well. So that's the part that makes me very uneasy – certainly not the fact that [the employee] could use 20 days. I'm not heart-

less, I'm just concerned how that would affect bargaining units and I probably would not vote in favor of it because of that."

But other board members expressed their support for the idea.

Ramon Bieri stated, "I think this is showing the compassion that I like to see in our school district. I think the recommendations are solid and equitable and I appreciate the efforts."

Meanwhile Carol Connelly said, "So a group of individuals said, 'We're going to get together and out of the goodness of our heart we would like to take *our* sick leave and donate it to an individual who dedicated their life to the district, whose helped our children, and we want to do this out of the goodness of our heart. And we've earned these sick days to do this.' ... And our recommendation would be to go ahead and approve allowing them to do this transfer."

She added, "I would say that I absolutely support that."

Connelly added she had a couple of suggestions: the first being that the cap on the number of days be increased to 30, and that the pay ratio be 1-to-1 instead of 2-to-1.

In the end, the board voted 4-2 in favor of the memorandum including Connelly's suggestion that the cap be increased to 30 days; the ratio remained 2-1. Leichter and Geoffrey Davis voted against – Davis had shared he was in favor of keeping the cap at 20 days.

The next Hebron Board of Education meeting is scheduled for Thursday, Feb. 11, at 7 p.m., in the Gilead Hill School music room, 580 Gilead St.

Marlborough Dispatch Moving to Tolland

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

Tolland County Communications LLC will be Marlborough's dispatch service beginning July 1 after the Board of Selectmen voted to enter into a five-year contract with the organization Tuesday night.

For the past 40 years, Colchester Emergency Communications LLC, commonly known as KX, has handled the town's dispatch services for fire and EMS. However, KX – which services multiple area municipalities, including the *Rivereast* towns of East Hampton and Colchester – is dissolving as of June 30, after the majority of its member towns announced they would not renew their contracts, which expire on that date.

The end of KX was not a complete surprise, as the organization has had financial problems since former member town Hebron left for Tolland County in 2013. A consolidation plan with Montville's dispatch operations fell through last June, and so, in order to continue operating KX, Doug Knowlton, a member of the KX Board of Directors who is also chairman of the Marlborough Board of Finance, said the towns, had they remained with KX, would have each seen upward of a 32 percent budget increase.

For Marlborough, that would have been an approximately \$17,000 increase to the \$55,000 the town is currently paying for operating costs for 2015-16. And that amount could've been even higher had any of the other member towns departed, as the overall operating budget for KX would've remained the same – but there would be fewer towns to split cost with, thus increasing everybody's share.

When First Selectwoman Amy Traversa took over from former First Selectwoman Cathi

Gaudinski last November, there had been a plan in place for Marlborough – along with East Hampton – to join with Glastonbury Police for its dispatch service. However in the first year that plan would have cost the town at least \$51,666 in operating costs plus some division of \$1.2 million for infrastructure upgrades between the three towns. In the second year, operating costs were estimated to be upward of \$105,000.

In response, the Board of Selectmen released a request for proposals (RFP) on New Year's Day for dispatch services and received three options when the bids were opened Jan. 12.

Those three bids came from Valley Shore Communications out of Westbrook, Quinebaug Valley Communications out of Killingly and Tolland County Communications out of Tolland.

Valley Shore, or VS, told the town year one would cost \$68,000 in operating costs and offered to cover up to \$60,000 in capital upgrades. In the second year operating costs would be \$68,000 plus an estimated 2.75 to 3 percent increase tied to inflation and call volumes.

Meanwhile Quinebaug Valley, or QV, offered to cover up to \$100,000 in capital upgrades and a fixed operating cost of \$13,760 for five years.

Finally, Tolland County, or TN, said in its bid that all capital costs would be covered and the operating cost of \$12,860 would be locked in for five years.

Traversa explained the differences in the costs submitted by each organization depended on how many towns the organizations serve and how much they receive from the state in regards to funding. The cost was also related to how much work the dispatch service would need to

do in the way of capital infrastructure to get Marlborough up and running. Knowlton added each dispatch service does a great job and their choice comes down to cost.

After receiving the bids, Traversa said she looked to Marlborough Fire Chief Kevin Asklar and the fire and emergency services personnel to receive a recommendation, and in a letter to the selectmen, Asklar stated the officers looked at the submissions both "qualitatively and quantitatively" and decided that "Tolland County fulfills both needs." The letter stated Marlborough should enter into a five-year contract with TN.

The selectmen approved the recommendation unanimously.

Also at Tuesday's meeting, there was some debate on whether Christopher Corsa, director of public works, could serve on the Capital Non-Recurring Committee.

The CNR committee was established September 2013 to go over and prioritize capital expenses greater than \$25,000 and to suggest them to the Board of Selectmen come budget time.

Corsa, who does not live in Marlborough, was on the committee to aid in the capital needs of town facilities. However Traversa discovered in the charter that a non-resident cannot hold a committee seat and asked Corsa to resign. However she suggested he stay on as an advisor to the committee for facilities questions and concerns.

Selectman Dick Shea, who has been heading the committee, said at the time Corsa joined the committee, the selectmen used the clause

in the charter that says a non-resident can hold a seat on a temporary committee for a specific purpose.

"Chris knows facilities better than anyone else," Shea said. "While I can't argue legally, to raise this issue now [during budget time] doesn't seem like good judgment."

Traversa said her problem was the definition of temporary; the CNR committee is going on its third year.

"Chris is happy to serve as an advisor," Traversa said.

Shea was also upset he was not told about Traversa asking Corsa to resign.

"Having someone cut out of my committee without me knowing, it doesn't sit well," Shea said.

Traversa responded that was an oversight on her part not to discuss the change with Shea.

"It was not intentional," she said. "We need to figure out how we can best communicate without breaking another rule."

According to the Freedom of Information Act, when board members of differing political parties speak about business in private, it is an illegal meeting. Traversa is a Democrat while Shea is a Republican.

The board took a vote on accepting Corsa's resignation from the CNR committee and it passed, 2-0-1 with Shea abstaining.

Traversa is holding a community forum at Town Hall Jan. 26 from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. to answer any questions from the community. The next regular Board of Selectmen meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, Feb. 2 at 7 p.m. at Town Hall, 26 North Main St.

Marlborough Residents' Business Celebrating 30 Years

by Chris Seymour

A Marlborough couple who own a salon in Glastonbury are currently celebrating 30 years in business.

Owned by Mike and Jane Chemerynski, Hair Today, located at 2844 Main St., Glastonbury, is marking three decades with an open house on Saturday, Jan. 30 from 1-4 p.m.

Leading up to the open house, the salon this month has been holding "30 Days of Celebration & Client Appreciation" to mark its 30 years.

That appreciation includes giving customers free tickets – one for each year they have been with Hair Today – to enter into teacup raffles for 30 gift baskets. (Those who aren't current Hair Today clients will receive one complimentary raffle ticket, noted Mike.)

The drawing for those gift baskets will take place Saturday, Jan. 30, during the open house, according to Mike, who has owned Hair Today with his wife, Jane, since November 1985.

"I think it is wonderful," said Mike of the business turning 30. "We are surrounded by a wonderful team of employees who have been with us for a long time and our clients as well. We have very long-term clients and new clients who are coming on now and it's like one big family; it's like our extended salon family."

That extended family includes a total of 15 employees, eight of whom are stylists. Two stylists, in fact, have been with the company for 30 years. "We watched them get married, have kids and one has grandkids; it is pretty neat," said Jane.

The Chemerynskis – who are affectionately known as "the 'Skis" – both grew up in Colchester and raised both of their daughters (RHAM High School grads Rachel, Class of 2005, and Krista, Class of 2007) while operating Hair Today.

"When we started, we kind of had this arrangement – Jane said, 'Let me focus on cli-

ents and cutting hair and you take care of all the business,'" said Mike, who retired from Pratt & Whitney in 2013 after 31 years.

Three decades later, that arrangement is still going strong. "Our brand is 'Look good, feel good, live good,'" explained Mike. "And in terms of looking good, Jane has an exceptional salon team that does awesome, passionate hairstyle. In terms of feeling good, it's just a very comfortable environment and we treat everyone as family. And 'live good' is the whole community support" element."

With respect to that community support, Hair Today has prided itself on supporting charities over the years. "We do a lot of fundraising," said Mike. "It has always been special for us to support the community and do different fundraising initiatives."

To that end, a fundraising effort for the Glastonbury-based charity "Cherish the Children Foundation" – which works to improve the lives of Connecticut children – is being tied into the Jan. 30 open house.

A grand prize raffle – featuring a blow dryer, \$200 gift card to the salon and dinner for 2-4 people made at the winner's house by the Hair Today staff – will be up for grabs, with all the proceeds going to Cherish the Children.

"We have a grand prize and we are selling those tickets, which are five for \$20," said Mike.

"For that larger raffle, it's a minimum of \$5 [to enter] but people can donate whatever – I had someone donate \$50 the other day," said Jane. "That's making a lot of money and we are hoping to make over \$1,000 for that."

The open house will also feature complimentary specialty services such as chair massages, essential oil tasters ("Though you don't taste them," quipped Mike) and hand massages.

As far as the 30 gift baskets go, Mike noted that some 60 local businesses answered the call to contribute to that effort.



Marlborough residents Mike and Jane Chemerynski, owners of Hair Today in Glastonbury, are marking 30 years in business with an open house on Saturday, Jan. 30.

"We reached out to our distributors and the community of businesses that we know and they donated gifts for us to make 30 gift baskets and there are some really, really nice gift baskets," explained Mike.

There are gift baskets from Fred Astaire Dance Studio, Plan B Burger Bar, Healthtrax

and Daybreak Coffee Roasters, along with many, many more.

Hair Today is open Monday from 11 a.m.-5 p.m.; Tuesday-Friday, 9 a.m.-8 p.m.; Saturday, 8:30 a.m.-3 p.m. and closed Sunday.

For more information, visit hairtodayct.com.

Marlborough Officials Find Water System Project Went Over Budget

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

Town officials recently discovered \$101,000 was spent on the first phase of the town center water system project over what was previously approved.

First Selectwoman Amy Traversa reported to the Board of Finance Wednesday, Jan. 13 that more than the \$500,000 Small Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP) grant and the \$50,000 appropriated by voters in July 2012 was used for the project.

Phase one of the water system runs pipes down a portion of South Main Street, East Hampton Road and a small section of North Main Street. Currently no one can hook up to the water system until phase two is completed which includes water storage tanks. Phase two also includes finishing the system's loop to School Drive and Independence Drive.

Originally the plan included work done by Connecticut Water Company with the town funding their portion of the project through the aforementioned STEAP grant and voter-approved funds. Any remaining costs for the project was supposed to be covered by Connecticut Water until the water company backed out in April 2014.

"I have limited information as to what really occurred," Traversa said. "Connecticut Water

pulled out and I don't know in full the reason."

Traversa shared with the board how much has been spent on the first phase, broken down by years and category. In the 2013-14 fiscal year the town spent \$11,650 in engineering; the following year engineering cost \$117,084; and in 2015-16, \$5,039 was spent.

In addition there is still \$5,000 that needs to be paid for the project which Traversa said is either for engineering costs or legal fees, although she was unsure which one.

Project construction cost \$512,345 and in total, phase one has cost the town \$651,123. The additional \$101,123 spent on the project over the \$550,000 amount that was expected was paid for through budget transfers requested by former First Selectwoman Cathi Gaudinski and approved by the Board of Finance.

But during the finance board meeting Jan. 13, the board seemed perplexed as to why the transfers were for the water system project. Members suggested they knew transfers were for engineering, but did not realize they were for engineering related to the water system. Former Board of Finance chair and current Selectwoman Evelyn Godbout said it was not clear to the board what the transfers were for when they were made.

"The transfers were presented in the normal course of business that work had been performed and the transfers were needed to cover the invoices," Godbout said.

Godbout continued that the transfers "lacked the clarity that the transfers were related to the water project." She said there was no clarity on the transfers until the overspending came to light last week at the finance board meeting.

"Certainly it was apparent by the surprise by the entire Board of Finance it was not clear to any of us," Godbout said.

Godbout explained some of the transfers were listed as coming from LoCIP (Local Capital Improvement Program) and usually LoCIP funds are used toward road work, so the finance board did not question them. However in the case of the water project, approximately \$12,000 in LoCIP money was used toward construction costs.

* * *

It is not clear when the town will move forward with the next phase of the water project. Phase two, which would make the system active, is estimated to cost \$630,000 – \$130,000 over the largest STEAP grant amount the town can receive. The town has to have water supply

storage for up to two to three days to make the system active, an issue that would be resolved with the two 15,000 gallon tanks included in phase two.

But Traversa told the finance board although the town applied for another \$500,000 STEAP grant for the next phase she was hesitant to move forward. Traversa explained with the foreclosure of the Robert Elliott properties in the center of town which includes three large plazas, she would like to get a handle on what a developer for those properties would need before proceeding with phase two.

Elliott previously owned the plazas at 3-5 East Hampton Rd., and 1, 3, 5, and 7 South Main Street, a commercial property at 32 East Hampton Road and two homes on South Main Street. A judgment for a strict foreclosure was ruled against Elliott in December and he has until Feb. 9 to pay back the bank over \$7 million or forfeit his ability to reclaim the properties.

Going forward, Godbout said she is not sure of the town's options.

"Work was done, invoices were paid," she said. "Moving forward the water project will be on everyone's mind."

For the Love of Music in Colchester

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

April 20, 2005 was a tragic day for Louanne and Bruce Romaneck. The couple, who were living in Colchester at the time, learned their son Brendan, 24, and an aspiring jazz musician, had died unexpectedly that day in Florida.

But the couple has made sure their son's spirit lives on, performing across the area as BruLou Tunes.

A member of the Bacon Academy Class of 2000, Brendan was also a 2004 graduate of University of North Florida-Jacksonville, and at the time of his death he was pursuing a professorship in jazz studies. He had been accepted for an internship at the University of Tennessee and had aspirations to be a professor at the college level.

Before Brendan passed, he had arranged to record an album of eight songs. It was all scheduled; he had the top names playing with him and a recording studio in Orlando booked. The recording was set for June – Brendan passed in April.

"We wanted to make sure his music was recorded," Louanne said. The couple, along with their daughter Melissa, hired Steve Wilson and Chris Potter to play sax and the recording went on. Bruce and Louanne traveled to Orlando, Fla., for the recording which included Brendan's original eight songs plus three of his favorite songs.

The album, *Coming Together*, was released in 2011, the name exactly as Brendan had wanted.

It's not tough to see Brendan's spirit still guides his parents, who now live in Windsor Locks. This past weekend, while heading to the largest performance the pair has ever done, at a banquet in New London, Brendan gave them a sign. As Bruce turned on the truck to travel to the performance, "I Got You Babe" by Sonny and Cher came out of the radio – a track Brendan loved and his parents love singing.

"I'm not usually superstitious, but I can't imagine that happening," Bruce said. "It was him."

The duet has taken some time to form. After Brendan's passing, his parents didn't know what to do with his saxophone. But Bruce, who

played trumpet in high school, began lessons, and Louanne soon joined him – and the two found peace and solace in playing the instrument their son loved so much.

"By learning to play the saxophone and staying active in music, we were able to stay connected and reconnect with many of Brendan's music educators and musician friends," Louanne said.

However, their skill with the sax only went so far. But Louanne said singing became just as therapeutic as playing the sax. So, eventually the two stopped playing the sax and continued vocally.

About a year ago, after the pair moved from Colchester to Windsor Locks, the two were at a neighbor's birthday party. Up until that point, all of their musical performances had been in their basement in private. At the party, attendees suggested the pair sing in public.

Last October, the two played their first real gig – the Windsor Fall Festival.

"I had emailed the guy and asked if he wanted free music," Louanne explained. "He was hesitant, but said sure."

Bruce added that the organizer came up to them after the event and said that while initially he had his doubts, he was glad they performed. The two were invited to return to Windsor for more festivals this year, in May and October, to sing.

Whenever they perform, instead of asking for payment, Bruce and Louanne ask the organizer of the event to pick a local organization. Since the couple also owns a home in Maine, the two sang for a Toys for Tots fundraiser there last November.

"I said I want to use this for good, not to get paid or for a job," Louanne said.

In January, BruLou Tunes performed at Angelico's Lake House in East Hampton. In lieu of a performance fee, all funds were donated to the East Hampton Lions. The Lions then invited the duo to go to New London for the humanitarian banquet, their largest event.

The pair started with 40 songs and are now up to 100 songs, catering to each audience. Songs range from the 1940s to current pop



Brendan Romaneck, an aspiring jazz musician who was studying to become a professor, passed away April 20, 2005. Now his parents are singing in his honor.

songs by artists like Adele and Meghan Trainor.

"I probably sing two really well," Bruce said. "It was really nerve-racking the first couple of times and it's getting a bit better."

The two's signature song is still "I Got You Babe" and they go all out, wigs and costumes and all.

"It took a long time to get Bruce involved," Louanne said of her husband's hesitation to go public. She joked that the first time she was attracted to Bruce was when he sang in the car.

"You told me it was my good looks!" Bruce joked back.

The two agreed they are simply enjoying performing while it lasts.

"As long as we can help somebody [we'll perform]," Louanne said. "It's a great feeling to give back."

The duet also agreed that performing has been tough and they are not creating a crazy schedule. In 2016, the two have three perfor-

mances booked. Louanne works as a paralegal in Hartford, while Bruce works in the manufacturing industry as a toolmaker.

"Turning to music has been our way of dealing with the loss of Brendan and everything that has transpired since the beginning of our musical adventure has helped us move forward and to make the best of each day as Brendan would want us to do," Louanne said. "Music is the universal language that most everyone understands and it is something that people turn to make them feel better when going through a rough time or to help them celebrate in times of happiness."

Louanne added the thing the couple is most grateful for is the love and support of their family and friends.

To contact BruLou Tunes to set up a performance, organizations can call 860-916-8562, email finfun2@hotmail.com or go to [Facebook.com/bruloutunes](https://www.facebook.com/bruloutunes).

Jack Jackter Students Learn Environmental Awareness

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

Thirty-nine Jack Jackter Intermediate School students are learning what it means to be environmentally conscious through the Keepin' It Fresh Production Company put on by Bacon Academy students.

Running throughout the 2015-16 school year, the production company's mission is to "plant and nurture seeds of environmental consciousness, inspiration, advocacy, and critical thinking in the minds of the young activists in our town."

Production companies are part of JJIS being a HOT (Higher Order Thinking) school. A HOT school is defined as having "practices and strategies [that] stimulate student curiosity, ignite their sense of wonder, empower students so they feel invested in their school and their learning, and steer students toward a journey of life-long learning," according to the state website on HOT schools.

The companies are designed to provide enrichment opportunities to students, while also providing a service or product for others. Students are able to choose their production company from a book with "advertisements," and all students meet with their company approximately once a week.

Lauren Hickey, a Bacon senior, began Keepin' It Fresh last fall after JJIS Principal Deb Sandberg approached her suggesting the idea. Hickey established the Academy Acres garden last year at Bacon while also promoting farm-to-school throughout the district. Farm-to-school works to bring fresh, local produce from area farms into the schools.

"We got speakers and broke the schedule into workshops such as composting, building greenhouses, planting, and garden decorations," Hickey said of Keepin' It Fresh.

Assisting Hickey are 10 other Bacon Academy students including Mary Cugno and Laura Sokoloski. Hickey and Sandberg also got JJIS teachers Gina Konon, Lori Joyce, Jill Thompson and Pam Wrinn involved with hosting the production company.

"It was so awesome to see how excited the adults got as well," Hickey said.

This past Wednesday, third to fifth grade stu-

dents in Keepin' It Fresh were broken up into two groups with two different speakers. Rodney Baran, a third grade teacher at the school, who is also a beekeeper in Lebanon, shared with the students how honey is produced. Darren Cugno of Cugno's Family Farm in Colchester also presented.

Before Baran came in to speak, students were able to try a sample of the honey his hives produced. In his presentation, Baran explained to the students how bees gather nectar and place the nectar in cells.

"The bees fly everywhere to get honey up to what we call the two mile radius from the hive," Baran explained. "[The nectar is] microscopic bits of awesomeness."

He explained the nectar is made of water and some worker bees, which are all girl bees, are assigned to fan the cells with their wings to evaporate the water and all that is left is the honey.

"They get so many [bits of nectar], fill up the cone, put a wax cap on and I steal it from them," Baran said. He explained there are as many as 60,000 worker bees in one hive with 1,000 drone bees, or boy bees, and one queen bee. The number of bees goes down in the winter when there is less food and the drone bees are kicked out of the hive.

As a beekeeper, Baran explained he takes the frames full of wax and peels the wax off with a knife. Baran then uses an extractor to spin the honey out and gather the honey in a bucket. He said he does filter some of the honey to get the wings and such out. The entire process takes approximately a half hour for one batch of honey.

Baran explained as the bees travel to get nectar, their wings sometimes wear out, which caused one JJIS student to comment, "They can't just replace their wings! They have to go to heaven for that!"

In Cugno's presentation, he encouraged the kids to try every vegetable they can and also explained how his farm works.

"We are a small, family farm which is sustainable, organic, and diversified," Cugno said.

The students were asked what they thought sustainable, organic and diversified meant. Sus-



Jack Jackter Intermediate School students in the Keepin' It Fresh Production Company previously made bird feeders and hung them outside the school. Students in the production company, hosted by Bacon Academy students, learn about the environment and the importance of local farms.

tainable, Cugno explained, means the farm tries to not bring in lots of things from around the world; diversified means doing a lot of different things such as raising animals and crops; and organic means they try to not use synthetic chemicals.

Cugno said on the farm they have broiler chickens for meat, laying hens, and hogs. They also have a guard dog named Bubba.

"We work with nature and let the animals express themselves," Cugno said. "We let the pigs roll in mud and dig with their snout. They also eat dirt."

Although some of the students were grossed out at the idea of pigs eating dirt, Cugno joked they should try it sometime.

"There are things in the soil that are vital to a pig," Cugno chuckled.

Cugno ended his presentation encouraging the students to buy local and support their lo-

cal farms.

At the end of the year, Hickey said she plans to finish the production company off with a farmers market for the students. At the market, the cash register would be run by the students and include starter plants, composting manuals and local food for purchase.

After she graduates in the spring, Hickey said she hopes farm-to-school and the movement toward environmentalism continues in the district. In February, she is holding a meeting at Bacon Academy to collaborate and plan for continuity when she's gone so that the many programs she has started can continue. This includes composting at Colchester Elementary School, Academy Acres, and Keepin' It Fresh.

"I hope that the projects I've helped to start continue to flourish and expand, and I hope that I've inspired my peers to advocate for change in their own ways," Hickey concluded.

State Rep. Melissa Ziobron Running for Re-Election

by Elizabeth Regan

State Rep. Melissa Ziobron, R-34th District, has announced her bid for a third term in the General Assembly.

Ziobron represents East Hampton and the Westchester section of Colchester, as well as East Haddam. She made the announcement on social media.

Against the backdrop of a state budget deficit projected to reach about \$500 million in the upcoming fiscal year, Ziobron said she is "committed to developing a solution to this ongoing fiscal crisis and to work in earnest with any Democrat colleague who acknowledges and chooses to reform the state's out-of-control tax and spend habits."

Ziobron is the highest ranking House Republican on the General Assembly's 57-member Appropriations Committee.

Democrats control both chambers of the General Assembly.

While the majority party drives the creation of the budget, Ziobron said she is the kind of ranking member who believes the minority party must be equally invested in the budget process.

According to Ziobron, ranking members on the Appropriations Committee in the past have been content to sit back and wait for the majority party to deliver a budget.

"I stuck a cog in the wheel," she said.

One of her priorities during the 2015 legislative session included making sure Republicans were engaged in the budget process from the start. She kept close tabs on the work done by the Appropriation Committee's 13 subcommittees; she also brought together the ranking Republicans of each of those subcommittees to outline their own cohesive, well-defined bud-

get priorities.

And she went to meetings – lots of them.

"I attended every single subcommittee meeting of every single part of that budget," she said.

In addition to addressing the state's broad budgetary concerns in an effort to keep taxes low for her constituents, she has also carried calls for local budget relief up to Hartford.

She worked with state Sen. Art Linares, R-33rd District, to secure \$7 million in state funding for the East Hampton High School renovation projected after the state Department of Administrative Services failed to fund the maximum reimbursement amount.

Ziobron has a track record of aiding environmental causes in the district, including helping clean up and revitalize Sunrise State Park in Moodus, the Salmon River State Forest and local lakes and streams. She is also a member of the General Assembly's Environment Committee.

She said she is currently waiting to hear the fate of state funds appropriated in the 2016-17 biennium budget to help fight algae blooms in Lake Pocotopaug.

The legislature recently cut \$350 million from the state budget; Gov. Dannel P. Malloy's budget office is responsible for cutting \$93 million more.

The issue underscores the importance of the state budget as the driver behind so many local conversations, according to Ziobron. "At the end of the day, it's really about the budget and it's about taxes."

East Hampton Republican Town Committee Chairman Michael Rose had not yet discussed the re-election announcement with the committee but spoke for himself when he said Ziobron

has been an excellent representative.

"She's been spot on with all her votes and I think she represents the type of folks who live in this area of the state," Rose said.

Rose added he'd be "shocked" if a Republican opponent emerged. "She's given no one reason to run against her on our side," he said.

East Hampton Democratic Town Committee Chairwoman Barbara Moore said Ziobron's announcement was expected. Members of the committee will be working with Democrats in Colchester and East Haddam over the next few months to identify a challenger.

"There are some people being considered," she said. "Not anything I can say publicly at the moment."

East Hampton Town Council Chairwoman Patience Anderson, speaking as an individual, said she will be doing anything she can to aid Ziobron's re-election campaign.

"She's done an outstanding job. She's been a very strong voice for us in Hartford. She's been a great friend to East Hampton," Anderson stated.

In Colchester, Ziobron represents about 300 residents in the Westchester section of town. She said she is committed to protecting the Salmon River Trout Management area – one of the only fishing areas in the region designed to be accessible to people with disabilities – and making it accessible to kayakers with disabilities as well.

She said she works cooperatively with state Rep. Linda Orange, D-48th District, on larger issues in town.

Colchester Republican Town Committee Chairman Brenden Healy welcomed the news that Ziobron is running for re-election. "She has

consistently voted against tax increases, she has a common sense approach to governing, and she's in constant communication with us in Colchester," he said. "We need leaders just like Melissa and we're happy to support her in her bid for re-election."

Ziobron credits her husband, Scott, and their two children, Brittany, 21, and Bryan, 17, with supporting her as she devotes herself to her work in the legislature.

Formerly the economic development coordinator in East Haddam, Ziobron now focuses solely on her elected position. "I'm lucky, and maybe my constituents are lucky too, because I can focus 100 percent of my time on a so-called part-time position," she said.

Ziobron won her seat in 2012 against Democrat Chris Goff of East Hampton upon the retirement of Democrat incumbent Gail Hamm.

The vote to send her back to Hartford in 2014 was a decisive one as she defeated Democratic challenger Mimi Perrotti of East Hampton with about 70 percent of the vote.

In addition to serving on the Appropriations Committee, Ziobron is a member of the Environment Committee and the Committee on Children and belongs to the General Assembly's Sportsmen Caucus. She was also appointed to the Connecticut Alcohol and Drug Policy Council and the Spending Cap Commission.

Ziobron said she will not begin campaigning until after the legislative session ends in May.

"This is far too soon to ask for your vote. I understand that I need to earn your vote as well as the privilege to serve everyone in the 34th District once again," she said in her re-election announcement.

New East Hampton Sports Store Aims to 'Cover All the Bases'

by Elizabeth Regan

Chris Koziel's East Hampton-based sporting good business is focused on safety and convenience.

While he offers traditional items like balls, bats and uniforms, he found that selling safety gear fills a need many athletes and their families may not even be aware of.

"I'm trying to cover all the bases, safety-wise," Koziel said.

Experience as a baseball, football and soccer coach has given Koziel firsthand knowledge about the importance of protecting young athletes from injury.

He cited a gel-filled skullcap designed to fit inside a football helmet or baseball cap to add a layer of protection against concussions. Gel-filled chin straps for football and specially-padded batting gloves are designed to reduce the impact of hits to vulnerable parts of the body.

"I don't think people even realize there's stuff out there," he said. "You play football, you're given a helmet. [You think] that's all you're going to get. Not true."

Koziel operates CMK Sporting Goods out of his home. He sells a wide array of products for baseball, soccer, football and basketball, among others. Items sold through his online site can be shipped to more far-flung customers or delivered or picked up locally.

Personalized local service is a key benefit of his business. He said a trip to the nearest Dick's Sporting Goods or Olympia Sports location takes a customer 35 to 45 minutes from East Hampton. But Koziel can fill some orders on the spot for those on their way to – or already at – a game.

"I've sold in my driveway to people on the

way to soccer games who forgot their socks," he said.

Koziel credits his wife, Kathy, with helping him start the business and with keeping it afloat. He said their 11-year-old son, Miller, is his best salesman. The first initials of each member of the Koziel trio make up the CMK name.

Running his own business has been a dream of Koziel's since he was a kid in Wallingford looking through the window of a local store filled with sports equipment.

"Eventually, you get older and you're thinking, 'Holy crap, I've got to come up with something. I can't be goofing off anymore,'" he said. "I thought, let's just give it a try."

Koziel's professional journey took him from trade school, where he studied electronics, to a job at a manufacturing company fixing the motors that make robot arms work. But it was a part-time gig at a ski shop that gave him the most satisfaction.

"I really liked it," he said. "Talking with the people. And skiing was great. I used to hate skiing until I got the job."

That's where he learned how important it is to know what you're selling, he said – and he's carried that knowledge with him now that he's started his own business.

"The stuff I sell out of my house, I try to have an idea what the heck it is," he said. He cited that level of service as something that's lacking in most of the big box retailers.

Koziel is two years into a five-year plan that he hopes will end with a storefront in the East Hampton village center.

"I don't want to be Dick's. I don't want to be something huge," he said. "Something small, local; if I can make that happen, wonderful."



Chris Koziel, right, runs CMK Sporting Goods out of his East Hampton home thanks to the support of his son, Miller, and wife, Kathy.

Air Line Trail Coming to Portland Under New Agreement

by Elizabeth Regan

A celebratory crowd of nearly 50 people gathered at the Portland Senior Center Wednesday to applaud the signing of a licensing agreement with Eversource Energy for the creation of a 2.2-mile section of rail bed that will become Portland's first contribution to the Air Line Trail.

The original "Air Line," constructed in the latter half of the 1800s to connect New York and Boston while surmounting obstacles like rivers, valleys and mountains, is now the basis for a 50-mile linear recreational trail cutting through 11 towns in Eastern Connecticut from East Hampton to Thompson.

The licensing agreement with Eversource Energy clears the way for the Air Line Trail Steering Committee, formed in 2014, to oversee the preparation of the trail bed and to solicit bids for upgrading the trail.

The steering committee hopes the trail will be open to the public in 2017.

Funding for construction is dependent on a grant from the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, which is in turn dependent on the State Bond Commission to release the money. The next bonding commission meeting is set for Jan. 29 in Hartford.

The upgrade is expected to consist of two inches of gravel and a final coat of stone dust, according to steering committee member Rosario "Riz" Rizzo, Jr.

"Once the stone dust hardens, it really becomes a nice trail for biking, walking, snowshoeing [and] horse riding," Rizzo said. "There's a lot of things you can do on a trail like that. It's less costly than an asphalt trail but it still makes it available for a lot of activities for the town."

A provision in the licensing agreement required the town to be covered for at least \$5 million in liability insurance, according to First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield. She said the jump from the existing \$2 million policy will cost the town about \$7,000 per year.

The town is also working on purchasing the old sand and gravel pit off Middle Haddam

Road, known as the Keegan property, to use as a trail head. An environmental assessment presented to selectmen earlier this month by environmental engineer Amy Vaillancourt from Tighe & Bond did not find any contamination in the soil. Efforts to secure deep ground water samples were not successful despite boring 50 feet into the ground, she said.

A real estate appraisal will be conducted on the property before sending the purchase to voters at a town meeting, Bransfield stated.

A presentation at Wednesday's celebration by steering committee member John Shafer showed the trail will begin on the East Hampton border near Depot Hill Road and will run close to Route 66 for a stretch. Then it will branch off, crossing Middle Haddam Road and Breezy Corners Road on its way to its termination point near the Middlesex YMCA's Camp Ingersoll.

The steering committee used \$10,000 in town funds to hire engineering trail consultant Kevin Grindle of Anchor Engineering. Grindle also worked on developing East Hampton's portion of the Air Line Trail.

Trail proponents would ultimately like to extend the trail to downtown Portland and the Arrigoni Bridge.

Portland is part of a network of trail connections that continues to grow, according to Shafer. He said there is talk of extending the Air Line Trail through Middletown to Meriden and of establishing an alternate connection with the East Coast Greenway that would connect Cheshire to Meriden.

On the East Hampton side of things, the town is hoping to receive state funding to fill in the trail gap between Main Street and the Portland border.

Eversource Vice President Ellen Angley cited the energy company's commitment to environmental stewardship as its motivation for licensing the property to Portland. With a majority of its 43,000 acres of land in Connecticut, Massachusetts and New Hampshire devoted to core business use, the company also sets aside prop-



Eversource Energy Vice President Ellen Angley (left) and Portland First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield sign the licensing agreement that paves the way for 2.5 miles of recreational opportunities along the Air Line Trail in Portland. The signing was witnessed by (left to right) Shri Madhusudhan and Jamie Lintner of Eversource Energy and Chantal Foster and Kathy Herron of the Air Line Trail Steering Committee. Photo courtesy of Rosario Rizzo, Jr.

erty for conservation.

"We're really thrilled to be having this for the public benefit of one of our communities," Angley said.

The company recently renovated the latter half of the trail, according to Angley. They cleared brush and removed leaning trees in and around the trail.

Shafer said the clearing already done by Eversource will make the process much easier for the steering committee going forward.

Committee member Lou Pear thanked dozens of groups and individuals – among them volunteers, corporate partners and civil servants

– for making the trail extension possible.

"It's not just one steering committee," he said. "It's the whole community that's making it work."

State Rep. Christie Carpino, R-32nd District, reiterated the message of thanks for trail supporters, many of whom she has seen at hikes held over the past year to promote the project.

"Whether it was that 14-degree hike many of us took last January or the much warmer hike some of us took in June – and all the hikes in between – it's been a tremendous journey. We are not done yet," Carpino said.

East Hampton Police News

1/1: Scott Jackson, 23, of 242 East High St., was arrested and charged with third-degree burglary, second-degree criminal mischief and third-degree larceny, stemming from an incident that occurred in September 2015, East Hampton Police said.

The following week, on 1/9, Jackson was arrested and charged with possession of heroin, police said.

1/4: A 15-year-old juvenile of East Hampton was arrested for second-degree threatening and second-degree harassment, police said.

1/8: Deja Brown, 20, of 9 Barrie Rd., was issued a summons for failure to drive right and failure to carry insurance, police said.

1/9: Zachary Haney, 23, of 19 Coleman Ln., Marlborough, was issued a ticket for operating an unregistered motor vehicle and failure to comply with standard emissions testing.

1/10: Timothy Smith, 45, of 8 So. Wagonk Tr., was issued a summons for driving under suspension, failure to comply with emissions testing requirements and operating an unregistered and uninsured motor vehicle, police said.

Colchester Police News

1/7: State Police said Shawn Ingram, 52, of 18 Cardinal Rd., was arrested and charged with evading responsibility and DUI.

1/12: Colchester Police said they are investigating after an unknown person stole jewelry from a home on Cabin Road. Police reported there were no signs of forced entry and the theft occurred between 6:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. Anyone with information is asked to call Officer Cyril Green at 860-537-7270.

1/13: Colchester Police said Andrew Bentley, 23, of 46 Woodland Dr., Woodstock, was ar-

rested and charged with DUI and improper turn.

1/14: State Police said Tamara Johnson, 34, of 20 Vine St., Hartford, was arrested and charged with disorderly conduct and second-degree reckless endangerment.

1/14: State Police said Andres Reyes, 53, of 133 Central Ave., Norwich, was arrested and charged with failure to appear.

1/17: State Police said John Spaulding, 53, of 83 Pleasant St., was arrested and charged with third-degree assault and disorderly conduct.

Woman Charged with DUI After Colchester Crash

A Moodus woman was arrested and charged with operating under the influence and failure to drive right after a one-car accident on Westchester Road left her injured Jan. 15.

State police reported Danielle Saunders,

18, of 8 Johnsonville Rd., was transported to Hartford Hospital with minor injuries after her car, a Chevy Cavalier, drifted off of Westchester Road and hit several trees on the right shoulder of the road at 11:54 p.m.

Hebron Police News

1/11: State Police said Nick Christmas, 46, of 695 Talcotville Rd., Vernon, was arrested and charged with second-degree harassment and threatening.

1/14: State Police said Trevor Delaware, 45, of 5 Mathieson Dr., Andover, was arrested and charged with risk of injury to a child and sixth-degree larceny.

1/15: State Police said Michael Small, 24, of 435 Old Hebron Rd., Colchester, was arrested and charged with DUI and failure to give proper signal for a left turn.

Marlborough Police News

1/15: State Police said Abanoub Messiha, 21, of 108 Circular Ave., Waterbury, was arrested and charged with illegal sale of a controlled substance, possession of marijuana, carrying a pistol without a permit, weapons in a vehicle, stealing a firearm, criminally negligent storage of a firearm, misuse of plates, failure to have minimum insurance, speeding and failure to stop on the right side of the road. Police reported Messiha was pulled over due to traffic violations and then police found a stolen firearm, marijuana and hashish pills in the vehicle.

Obituaries

East Hampton

Matthew John Bandecchi

Matthew John Bandecchi, formerly of East Hampton, died unexpectedly at his home in West Virginia Tuesday evening, Jan. 5. He was born in Concord, N.H., on Feb. 26, 1977, the youngest of three sons born to Edward J. Bandecchi and Linda Hitchcock Bandecchi.

He grew up in Deerfield, Mass., and attended schools in New Hampshire and Litchfield. Following high school, Matthew worked in AmeriCorps, where he made many friends while creating handicapped-accessible trails in Hawley State Park in Massachusetts. Matt enjoyed participating in Family Conferences at the Isle of Shoals and Star Island. Matt was a rugged individualist with eclectic interests including cooking, music, sketching and painting natural scenes, inspired by the woods of his boyhood home, the ocean, and the mountains of West Virginia. Matt was a special soul with a beautiful smile, an infectious laugh, and wonderful sense of humor.

He is survived by his wife Grace and his beloved dog Baily in West Virginia, his mother Linda and brother Keith of Naples, Fla., and many other family members in the Connecticut area.

He was predeceased by his father, Edward Bandecchi, and his brother, Michael Bandecchi.

Funeral services were held Monday, Jan. 18, in the Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton. Burial was in Lake View Cemetery. Friend called at the Spencer Funeral Home Monday morning before the service.

To leave online condolences, visit spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

Hebron

Anthony Thomas Sylvester

Anthony Thomas Sylvester, also referred to as "Tony" or "Pops," 90, of Hebron, passed away at home surrounded by family Friday, Jan. 15. A proud, first-generation Italian-American, he was born July 15, 1925 to the late Sabatino and Caroline (DeMarco) Sylvester (late of Wethersfield).



He spent the last 33 years living on Amston Lake with his longtime partner, Millie Doolan.

Tony graduated from Wethersfield High School in 1944 where he was captain of the men's soccer team. He was the successful owner and operator of his custom building company for over 50 years. Up until just a few years ago, he remained very active in his business and enjoyed running his beloved excavator and bulldozer. An avid fan of auto racing, he was a highly-dedicated owner and sponsor to his sons and grandsons. In earlier years, he relished playing the drums with his band, The Nutmeggers. Putting his musical talent to use he spent over 30 years as the superintendent of entertainment for the Hebron Harvest Fair and was a prominent charter member of the Hebron Lions.

He was the treasured patriarch and 'God Father' to his five children that he leaves behind: Elaine Cerna (Luis), Thomas Sylvester (Marylin), Louise Sylvester, Cathyann Schulte (Dave Gardner) and Anthony Sylvester (Diane). In addition he leaves his partner, Millie; 11 grandchildren, Peter Keklak (Jennifer Laws), Tammy Burnett, Patrick Cooney, Sierra Patterson (Frank), Jamie Incontro (Darryl Morin), Michael Thompson (Sarah), Jodie Sylvester (Jonathan Cristofaro), Anthony Sylvester (Allyson Backus), Zachary Sylvester (Karen), Joshua Sylvester and Andrea Sylvester (Matthew Parkinson); 12 great-grandchildren, Angela Fournier (Dan), Frank Burnett (Brittany), Paige McNichols, Rachael Sylvester, Savannah Sylvester, Kerci Cooney, Patrick Cooney, Blake Sylvester, Logan Sylvester, Tony Incontro, Michael Incontro, and Charley Thompson; two great-great-grandchildren, Hunter and Kai Fournier; and his last surviving sibling, Edith Bogus (age 97) of Rocky Hill.

Tony was predeceased by former wife Doris June and 10 siblings (and his parents).

Tony led a busy, fulfilling and exciting life filled with zest. His door was always open to all where you would be greeted with a smile, a hug and humorous conversation. "See you in church!"

His family received friends and loved ones Tuesday, Jan. 19, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Harford Rd., Colchester. The funeral assembled at the funeral home Wednesday, Jan. 20, before the celebration of the funeral liturgy that morning at the Church of the Holy Family, 185 Church St. (Route 85) in Hebron. Burial followed in Rose Hill Memorial Park, Rocky Hill.

Donations in his memory may be made to the Hebron Lions Club, 347 Gilead St., Hebron, CT 06248.

For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

East Hampton

Hans H. Hopp

Hans H. Hopp, 78, of East Hampton, passed away Wednesday, Jan. 13, at Middlesex Hospital, following a short illness. No one wanted him to leave us so soon, but he did have a habit of arriving places sooner than expected.

The son of the late Hans and Frieda (Aweh) Hopp, Hans was born in New York City and grew up in Queens. Hans served three years in the U.S. Army before returning to New York City to work for Eastern Airlines. After marrying Priscilla Keegan in 1965, Hans operated his own saloon in Queens. Daughter Kristine was born in 1968, and in 1972 Hans moved his family to Columbia County, New York, where he operated the Stagecoach Inn for 23 years. Daughter Jennifer was born in 1973. After closing the restaurant in 1995, Hans worked for the Columbia County ARC before moving to Connecticut in 2003 to be closer to his granddaughters.

While in Connecticut, Hans was a regular volunteer at the Portland Food Bank. A New York Giants season ticket holder since 1958, Hans enjoyed telling stories of the old days of the NFL, when he and his friends would drive to the airport to pick up players after away games. In recent years, Hans got most of his enjoyment from his grandchildren and his friends at the food bank. He especially enjoyed his granddaughters' basketball and softball games, and going to see both the UConn and Connecticut Sun women's basketball teams with his friend Mike.

Hans loved watching old movies and reading books of history, politics, and biography. An optimist might call him a cynic, but he would prefer the term 'realist,' and he appreciated good verbal sparring over sports or politics with anyone who held their opinions as strongly as he did. Never outwardly sentimental, Hans had a great appreciation for art and was an accomplished watercolorist.

Besides his parents, Hans was predeceased by his brother John and his sister Jane, by his brother-in-law Jack Curran, and by his nephew Jeffrey Curran.

Hans is survived by his wife, Priscilla Hopp of Middletown; his daughter, Kristine Hopp and her husband Lucian Guilmette of Portland, and their daughters Emily, Isabelle, and Katherine; and his daughter Jennifer Hopp of Loudonville, N.Y., and her son John Berben; as well as his sister, Marlane Curran of Ashburn, Va., and her sons Michael, Christopher and John and their families. He is also survived by his Food Bank family: Ruth, Nunzi, Kim, Stephen, Connie, Mike, Laurie, Dick and all the wonderful people he worked with over the years.

Services will be private; there are no calling hours.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions can be made to the Portland Food Bank, P.O. Box 71, Portland, CT 06480.

Marlborough

Harold E. Sullivan

Harold E. Sullivan, 82, of Marlborough, widower of the late Elizabeth A. (Kiwian) Sullivan died Monday, Jan. 18, at Marlborough Health Care. Born May 1, 1933, in Boston, Mass., he was the son of the late Eli and Rose Sullivan.

Harold proudly served his country in the U.S. Navy during World War II. He had worked in sales for the General Con Industries before his retirement. Harold was a member of the V.F.W., the Marlborough Moose Lodge and the Marlborough American Legion.

He is survived by his son Thomas Sullivan and his fiancée Trish Miner of Mansfield, and his granddaughter Kellie Sullivan of Mansfield.

He was predeceased by his sister, Marge Bragg. Funeral services will be held Monday, Jan. 25, at 11 a.m., in the Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton. Burial will be private in Marlboro Cemetery. Friends may call Monday, Jan. 25, from 10 a.m. until the time of the service.

To leave online condolences, visit spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

Colchester

Donald M. Rahl

Donald M. Rahl, 58, of Colchester, formerly of Smithfield, R.I., passed away at Hartford Hospital Saturday, Jan. 16, after a five-year battle with melanoma.

He leaves his beloved wife, Joanne (Germano) Rahl; his daughter, Jennifer DePiano of Lebanon; his son, Michael and wife Alissa Rahl of Michigan; two brothers, Scott and wife Dale Rahl of Westerly, R.I. and Steven and wife Bernice Rahl of Kennebunk, Maine; five grandchildren, Nicholas, Luke and Alexa DePiano, Audrey and Emma Rahl; and numerous extended family members and friends.

Born in Providence, R.I. on March 1, 1957, he was a son of the late Herbert and Jean (McGrillies) Rahl. Donald was a talented athlete. Beginning in his early years, he excelled in a wide variety of sports and was awarded the prestigious High School Student Athlete of the year in 1975 for the State of Rhode Island by the Providence Journal. He went on to receive a full baseball scholarship at Providence College.

Donald married his beloved wife, Joanne on August 24, 1980. In 1982, the couple settled in Colchester, where they made their home and raised their family. Donald worked his entire career for Johnson and Johnson as a pharmaceutical representative. Donald carried his love of sports to the next generation through his active participation with youth sports in Colchester. He will be remembered fondly for these things and most importantly as a devoted family man and as a friend who could always be called on and counted on.

Friends and family attended calling hours Wednesday, Jan. 20, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. Funeral services were held Thursday, Jan. 21, with a chapel service. Burial was in the Acote Hill Cemetery, 1049 Putnam Pike, Chepachet, RI, that afternoon.

For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

Hebron

Caroline Zachmann

Caroline (Petsche) Zachmann, 71, of Manchester, formerly of Hebron, peacefully passed away Thursday, Jan. 14, at her home. Caroline was born March 9, 1944, in Queens, N.Y. She was the beloved wife of 52 years to George Zachmann, and the daughter of the late Mathias and Anna (Kofler) Petsche.

She grew up in Ridgewood, Queens, and graduated from St. Joseph Commercial High School. She was an executive administrative assistant at Aetna for many years. She volunteered at many places including Manchester Hospital, Malta House and Mercy High School.

Caroline loved her yearly trips with her husband to Bermuda, shopping with her daughter and granddaughters, and spending quality time with her son and family. She was an amazing cook and loved to have her family over for dinners with good food and wonderful conversation.

Caroline always had a wonderful sense of humor, an awesome smile, and was always upbeat and positive. Her positive attitude and demeanor affected everyone she encountered. She enjoyed lunches with her many friends who cared for her dearly. She will always be remembered for her big heart and giving spirit.

In addition to her beloved husband, George, she is survived by her two loving children and their spouses, Michael and Denise Zachmann of New Britain, Eliza and Brian Elmy of Manchester, and her two cherished granddaughters, Rachael and Alyssa Elmy. She is also survived by her sister and her husband, Betty and Jack Boettger of Haberson, De., and many nieces and nephews. Family and friends were requested to wear bright colors in celebration of Caroline's life at all services.

A Memorial Mass of Christian Burial was Tuesday, Jan. 19, at St. James Church, 896 Main St., Manchester, followed by burial in Holy Cross Cemetery, Glastonbury. Family and friends called Monday, Jan. 18, at Watkins Funeral Home, 142 East Center St., Manchester.

Memorial contributions may be made to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, P.O. Box 1000, Dept. 142, Memphis, TN 38101-9908 and/or St. Agnes Home, 104 Mayflower St., West Hartford, CT 06110.

To leave a message of condolence, visit holmes-watkinsfuneralhomes.com.

East Hampton

Norman Scott Godwin

Norman Scott Godwin, 60, of East Hampton, affectionately known as "Stormin' Norman," beloved husband of 30 years to Kathy (D'Angelo) Godwin died suddenly Monday, Jan. 18.

Born March 27, 1955, in Middletown, he is the son of Frank J. Godwin Jr. and Audrey (Burdick) Godwin of Portland. Norman was employed at WESCO Industries where he worked as a warehouse associate. He was also the owner of Cuttin' Edge Lawn Service LLC and had worked at East Hampton Parks and Rec. and Nichols Bus Service.

Norman was a longtime resident of East Hampton and was affectionately known as the Unofficial Mayor of East Hampton. He was an avid fisherman and hunter, a NASCAR fan and a member of the Joey Logano Fan Club. He rooted for the UConn Huskies women's basketball team, and the Tampa Bay Buccaneers. Norman loved watching and feeding the birds and he loved his faithful companion, Smokie Jo. One of his proudest achievements was his 17 years of sobriety.

Besides his wife Kathy and his parents, Norman is survived by his son, Kevin Godwin of East Hampton; his daughter, Kelley Godwin of East Hampton; two brothers, Robert Godwin and wife Nancy of Portland, David Godwin and wife Trish of East Hampton; sister Sharon Purzycki and husband Todd of Portland; brother-in-law Kenneth D'Angelo and wife Toni of Montrose, N.Y.; two sisters-in-law, Karen Begg and husband Alex of Longmeadow, Mass., Kristine David and fiancé Tom Turek of Harwinton; many nieces, nephews, great nieces and nephews and countless friends who will miss him dearly.

He was predeceased by his brother-in-law, Peter David, and his father-in-law and mother-in-law, Roger and Florence D'Angelo.

Friends called at the Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton, Wednesday, Jan. 20, and then again Thursday, Jan. 21, with a funeral service that morning in the funeral home. Burial followed in the Swedish Cemetery on William Street in Portland.

In lieu of flowers memorial contributions may be made to the American Lung Association, 45 Ash St., East Hartford, CT 06108 or to joeyloganofoundation.com.

To leave online condolences, visit spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

Courant

Colchester

Jenifer Latham Dart

Jenifer (Jewett) Latham Dart of Colchester died on Christmas Day 2015. She was born in Baltimore, Md., on Aug. 3, 1936, the daughter of the late Royal F. and Elizabeth (Stocksdale) Jewett.

She attended school in Nyack, N.Y., and for many years ran her own secretarial business, Secretary and 1/2, in Nyack. She married Fred R. Dart May 20, 2000, in Moodus, where they resided until their move to Colchester.

She is predeceased by her husband, Fred R. Dart on April 1, 2015; her parents; and her brother, Royal F. Jewett.

She is survived by her stepson Peter Dart; stepdaughter Jennifer Yuris; sister-in-law, Marlene M. Jewett; her niece and nephews, Kimberly, Jeffrey and Brian Jewett, and their families.

She will be interred privately in Nyack. The Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home of Colchester was entrusted with her care. For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

Courant

Hebron

Vincent Francis Kadelski

Vincent Francis Kadelski, 91, of Hebron, beloved husband of the late Virginia Ouellette passed away Wednesday, Jan. 13, surrounded by his loving family. He was born June 18, 1924, in Rockville, the son of the late Phillip and Alexandra (Szymczyk) Kadelski.

He served in the U.S. Army Air Corps during World War II, where he was a radio operator at the 242nd Air Corps base. He was a family man who always put his family first.

He is survived by his beloved daughters, Sandra Rousseau of Vernon and Wendy Carty and her husband Brian of Rockville; his son, Mark Kadelski and his wife Susie of Virginia; his stepchildren and their spouses, Edmond and Tammy Frennette of Windsor, Shelley and Mark D'Amico of Illinois and Lynn and James Spadorcia of East Hampton; 11 grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

A graveside service was held Tuesday, Jan. 19, at Grove Hill Cemetery, Vernon.

For online condolences, visit pietrasfuneralhome.com.



Obituaries continued

Cobalt

Katherine R. Williams

Katherine R. (Johnson) Williams, 89, of Holiday, Fla., passed away Tuesday, Jan. 12.

Katherine was the daughter of the late Katherine Johnson Ingram and John Johnson of Cobalt. She lived happily there with her 14 siblings, of which, six survive her: Maxine Rittman and Charles (Roy) Johnson of East Hampton; Joyce Grenier of Brooklyn; David and Gary Johnson of Dunedin, Fla.; Carl Johnson of Higganum.

She married her late husband, Albion Williams, in 1944 at the Second Congregational Church in Middle Haddam.

Katherine is survived by two daughters, Kathleen L. Binette of Holiday, Fla., who lovingly cared for her at her home until her death; and Kristine Steiner of Tuxedo, N.Y.; three sons, Stephen Williams of St. Augustine, Fla., Alan Williams of Selina, Texas; and Daniel Williams of Grand Forks, N.D.

Katherine lived many years in Cobalt, Portland and Moodus, before moving south.

Katherine was a loving mother and grandmother of six grandchildren: Michael, Ben, Stephanie, Shanti, Robert and Matthew; five great-grandchildren and many, many nieces and nephews who she loved greatly. Her wonderful sense of humor and generous soul will be remembered and greatly missed.

A memorial graveside service will be held at a future date in East Hampton.

East Hampton

James Ilsley Smith

James Ilsley Smith, 76, beloved husband of 50 years to Elaine Norton Smith, of East Hampton, formerly of Avon, passed away peacefully at St. Francis Hospital Tuesday, Jan. 19, after a long battle with cancer.

Jim was born in West Haven, son of the late Elmer and Marguerite (Ilsley) Smith. He graduated from Guilford High School and served in the U.S. Air Force from 1957-62. He graduated from Western New England College with a degree in mechanical engineering. He started his career at Hamilton Standard and was responsible for new product research on the Apollo Space program and secured a patent for a zero gravity oxygen reclamation system. His career then took him to the General Electric Co. for over 25 years where he held several engineering and management positions and was awarded numerous patents before retiring in 1999.

Jim was an avid sports car enthusiast, with a special love for the Austin Healey. He was actively involved in the New England Region of the Austin Healey Club. This close-knit membership became a second family to him. He became an active member in the vintage racing group racing his 1955 Healey at racetracks throughout the Northeast with a special place in his heart for Lime Rock Park.

In addition to his wife, he leaves a daughter, Linda Iannazzi of Gloucester, R.I., and her fiancé, John Costa, and a son, Joseph Smith of Burlington and his wife Diana. The loves of his life were his five grandchildren, Julia and Jennifer Iannazzi, and Cameron, Mackenzie, and Maxwell Smith. He also leaves his sisters, Evelyn Condon and Shirley Tordo, many nieces and nephews, and many in-laws who were as close to him as his own family.

Jim was predeceased by his brother Glenn and sister Elizabeth.

Friends may call at the Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton, Monday, Jan. 25, from 5-8 p.m. A funeral liturgy will be celebrated Tuesday, Jan. 26, at 11 a.m. in St. Patrick Church in East Hampton. Burial will follow in St. Patrick Cemetery.

Jim's family would like to thank all the wonderful doctors and staff at the St. Francis Cancer Center and especially the eighth floor hospital staff, who kept him comfortable during his many visits.

Memorial donations may be made to St. Francis Cancer Center at Foundation@stfranciscare.org or the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation (JDRF), 18 North Main St., West Hartford, CT 06107.

To leave online condolences, visit spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

Marlborough

Robert J. Dettore

Robert J. Dettore, 52, of Marlborough and formerly of Colchester, died Tuesday Jan. 19 at his home. Born Nov. 13, 1963 he was the son of the late Robert Dettore and Eileen Rogers.

Robert had worked as a lineman for a cable service for many years. He is survived by his sons David of East Haddam and Brian of Colchester, a daughter Holly of Andover, brothers Mike, Richard, John, and his sister Shirley.

Friends may call at the Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton, today, from 9:30-10:30 a.m. A Funeral Liturgy will be celebrated at 11 a.m. in St. Andrew Church in Colchester. Burial will follow in Lake View Cemetery in East Hampton.

To leave online condolences, visit spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.



From the Editor's Desk

Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

Just when you think you've seen it all, *Jeopardy!* goes and proves you wrong.

I hadn't seen the show in a few days, so I figured I'd sit down after work Monday night and watch an episode. The episode started off weird – there were actually two returning champions, instead of the normal one returning champ. Claudia Corriere won the Dec. 17 and Dec. 18 episodes, but before the taping of the Dec. 21 episode, the church musician got a gig, so she took it and was allowed to return at a later date. That later date was the episode that aired Monday, with Claudia facing Randi Kristensen and fellow returning champ Mike Drummond.

After Alex Trebek explained away the two returning champions stuff, the show proceeded as normal – and was a pretty good episode. No one contestant ran away with it; all three fared well. In fact, Mike and Claudia headed into Final Jeopardy with identical scores: \$13,800. Randi brought up the rear, but was very much still alive, with \$6,000.

The Final Jeopardy category was State Capitols. And the answer was – well, it struck me as incredibly difficult. It was:

“A 1957 event led to the creation of a national historic site in this city, signed into law by a president whose library is now there too.”

Like I said, I was just completely lost. I couldn't hazard a guess. My mind went to Eisenhower, as he was president in '57, but I couldn't tell you his birthplace. It probably wasn't like anyway, as it was unlikely something would be dubbed a national historic site the very same year the history-causing event took place.

That only left 45 years of presidents and their home states to consider and – oh, would ya look at the time? The 30 seconds to come up with the correct response quickly ran out.

As soon as the “Think” music ended, Alex pointed out all three contestants seemed to have trouble with the clue. And he would be proven right.

Alex went first to Randi, who had written (well, didn't quite finish it, but got about halfway there before the 30 seconds ran out) Springfield. Wrong. Randi had bet it all, so the loss dropped her down to \$0.

Over to Claudia. She responded with Austin – which also was wrong. Like Randi, Claudia had bet it all, so she was dropped down to \$0 as well.

This left Mike as the last contestant standing – except for the fact he guessed Atlanta, and that too was wrong. Mike also bet it all, so that meant he too was left with nothing.

The correct response was Little Rock, Ark. Bill Clinton was the president in question, and the 1957 event the clue referred to was the desegregation of Little Rock Central High School.

Since none of the three could correctly guess it, there was a three-way tie. Everyone had \$0.

I've watched *Jeopardy!* off and on an awful lot over the years, but I'd never seen anything like that. I had no idea what would happen next. A “sudden death” type situation, with whoever ringing in first winning? Returning all three to the show the next day? Could you even be a “champion” with \$0?

The answer to that last question was – no, you couldn't.

There would be no returning champion, Alex revealed. Instead, the next day's show would feature three new contestants. “Sorry, folks,” he told Mike, Claudia and Randi.

None of them seemed all that broken up about it, though. Indeed, they were all laughing. I think they all knew the incredible strangeness of what had just transpired – and that they were all a part of history.

Indeed, as I read the next day (as the outcome of this episode, not surprisingly, quickly made the rounds on the Internet), there have only been a handful of times in the 32 years the current version of *Jeopardy!* has been on the air that all three contestants finished with nothing.

History did not repeat itself with the next episode, on Tuesday night. Final Jeopardy proved once again to be a toughie, and once again nobody got it right, but at least this time

not all three contestants bet it all. This meant the new champion, Kyle Webb of Pennsylvania, won just \$4,399 – but at least there *was* a champion.

* * *

Onto more serious news: taxes – and specifically, scams regarding your taxes. The East Hampton Police Department this week passed this news release on to me. It's about an old scam, but, with tax-filing season here, it's particularly timely to share news of it again. And while the release may have come from the EHPD, I know for a fact this isn't a problem that's strictly facing East Hampton. Folks nationwide have been bilked out of huge amounts of money by these scam artists.

The EHPD has received reports from residents that an automated phone system has been leaving messages for resident to call a phone number with a Washington, D.C., area code claiming to be the IRS. The recorded message sounds official and states that the victim owes back taxes.

According to the IRS, if there is an issue with your federal taxes, you'll first receive a letter or notice in the mail from the IRS. Real IRS employees have badge numbers. Ask the caller for his or her badge number, and then call 800-829-1040 to confirm it. Sometimes the caller may volunteer a fake badge number before you even ask for one. Victims may be told they owe money to the IRS. If the victim refuses to cooperate, they may be threatened with arrest, deportation or suspension of a business or driver's license. In many cases, the caller becomes aggressive and insulting.

If you get a phone call from someone claiming to be from the IRS, here's what the EHPD says you should do:

- If you know you owe taxes or you think you might owe taxes, call the IRS at 800-829-1040. The IRS employees at that line can help you with a payment issue – if there really is such an issue.

- If you know you don't owe taxes or have no reason to think that you owe any taxes (for example, you've never received a bill or the caller made some bogus threats as described above), then call and report the incident to the treasury inspector general for tax administration at 800-366-4484.

- If you've been targeted by this scam, you should also contact the Federal Trade Commission and use their “FTC Complaint Assistant” at FTC.gov. Add “IRS Telephone Scam” to the comments of your complaint.

The IRS does not initiate contact with taxpayers by email to request personal or financial information. This includes any type of electronic communication, such as text messages and social media channels. The IRS also does not ask for PINs, passwords or similar confidential access information for credit card, bank or other financial accounts. Recipients should not open any attachments or click on any links contained in the message. Instead, forward the email to phishing@irs.gov.

More information on how to report phishing scams involving the IRS is available at irs.gov.

* * *

Lastly, I love potlucks. I love trying other people's culinary creations, and, much like Christmas, I enjoy seeing people's reactions to my (hopefully tasty) dishes. So this sounds like a lot of fun.

Cragin Memorial Library, located at 8 Linwood Ave. in Colchester, is encouraging people to participate in the “Cookbook Challenge.”

To participate, check out a book from the library's cookbook display and try some different appetizer recipes. Then bring your favorite new appetizer (along with copies of the recipe to share) to a potluck at Cragin Memorial Library next Thursday, Jan. 28, from 6-8 p.m.

Sounds fun, right? Plus, with the Super Bowl just around the corner, it's a handy way to find out new recipes to try.

This is a free program. For more information, call the library at 860-537-5752.

* * *

See you next week.