

RIVEREAST

News Bulletin

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

Volume 41, Number 4

Published by The Glastonbury Citizen

October 14, 2016



Would You Like to Swing on a Star?... East Hampton residents Lily and Eli LaPlant recently checked out the playscape at Seamster Park in East Hampton.

Officials Endorse Extra Police Officer

by Elizabeth Regan

The East Hampton Board of Finance and Town Council have joined forces to endorse the hiring of another police officer to supplement a department that Chief Sean Cox has long complained is understaffed.

The problem has come to the forefront as Officer Hardie Burgin recovers at home from injuries sustained when he was struck by a car on Route 66 while directing traffic on Sept. 4. Cox told finance board members at a special meeting Tuesday that it's "too soon to tell" when Burgin will return to the force.

"He has some surgeries in his future," Cox said. "It's going to be quite a long road."

The finance board and council approved resolutions on the appropriation at separate meetings Tuesday. A town meeting will be held at 7 p.m. Oct. 24 at the East Hampton Middle School for voters to approve or reject the new position.

The united front comes on the heels of a recent controversy that arose after a police canine was purchased with donated funds. Some finance board members said the move sidestepped the town budgeting process by using donations to pay for a program that hadn't been officially voted on by the finance board and the Town Council or approved by voters.

Town Manager Michael Maniscalco said the appropriation would pay for an additional officer from Jan. 1 to June 1, 2017 with the intent of "seeing what we can do in the budget next year as well."

Finance Director Jeff Jylkka told finance

board members the estimated cost increase for a half-year hire would be \$54,974, based on a more experienced candidate who has already been certified through the Police Officer Standards and Training (POST) protocol.

Those who've already been certified are able to hit the streets months earlier than those who must go through the police academy after they're hired, Cox said.

He cautioned, however, that the aging and undersized police department isn't likely to help the town attract qualified, already-certified candidates.

"We are not the only one fishing in the POST-certified pool," he said. "If it's between us and someone who's not parking two miles away to change [in the off-site locker room], if it's between us and someone who isn't working in the environment that our current employees are working in, I think we're losing every time."

The estimated cost for the additional officer in the 2017-18 budget would be \$109,948 for a full year of salary, insurance, and pension, according to Maniscalco.

Cox explained to the finance board that the current, 14-member department is spread out over three shifts, which usually consist of two officers each. A pair of officers working at any given time means there is only enough manpower to handle calls as they come in, instead of taking a proactive approach to improve community relations and reduce crime.

Cox said officers are not only tasked with
See Police Officer page 2

Refugee Family Becomes a Blessing for Congregation

by Geeta S. Sandberg

"We as a group wanted to be a blessing to a family in a really horrific situation in their life; and what we found is they've been a blessing to us."

Those were the words the Rev. Dr. Denise Esslinger, pastor of Gilead Congregational Church in Hebron, shared this week about the Syrian refugees the congregation recently helped resettle in Connecticut.

The family of five arrived from Turkey at the end of August and came to the United States to find a furnished apartment waiting for them in Manchester, along with a support system ready and willing to help them transition to American life.

But just as their journey didn't begin in Turkey – the family was originally from Aleppo, Syria but fled to Turkey in 2011 and applied to the United Nations to receive refugee status two years ago – the journey to get things ready for their new home didn't begin with their arrival, but a year earlier. It was then that members of the congregation, who were moved by the refugee crisis going on in the world, came to Esslinger and said they wanted to do something to help.

"Hearts were moved by this," she said this

week. "To me it was God's nudging of us as a church" to do something. And that nudge led to a group of individuals from the church attending information sessions by Integrated Refugee and Immigrant Services (IRIS), a refugee agency based in New Haven. The church worked with IRIS before, about 10 years ago, to help a refugee family from Africa. But now they wanted to embark on a mission to help those they had seen and heard about who've left their home country due to the war in Syria.

Following those sessions, the congregation formed a Refugee Core Committee, made up of chairman Mark Hand, Brian and Kyra Byrne, Bill Cox, Stephanie and Skylar Haines, Berry Honore, Lynn Lukach, Debbie Meincke, David Olio, Joe Sheehan, Heather Summerer, and the recently-deceased Ev Berzins.

Hand explained in May of this year the committee submitted an application to IRIS for the congregation to co-sponsor a family. That plan included information on housing, clothing and furnishings, finance, English as a Second Language (ESL) courses and education, health, hospitality, transportation, employment and acculturation.

"We had to make sure we had money raised,

a place for them to live lined up, and people that are willing to come in 40 hours per week collectively for the first two months to take care of all the responsibilities involved with getting them here," Hand explained.

After the application received the approval of IRIS, Hand shared there was a team of people "who were just wonderful in finding things."

"It wasn't always smooth," he added. "It's not necessarily easy to find an apartment when you don't know who all the tenants are, and a lot of people in the congregation had to kind of personally vouch to do that; we also had to find out how to turn on utilities, how transportation will work, and how to get some assistance from the state."

As refugees, the family – who the church declined to identify, for the sake of the family's privacy – was extended an invitation to come to the United States following their approval through the United Nations Commission on Human Rights and an extensive vetting process. Having refugee status means, along with the help of the congregation, the family is able to receive assistance from the state and national government; they're provided resettlement and placement funds of \$925 per person, are eli-

gible to receive Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, are enrolled in HUSKY Healthcare, and immediately authorized to work. But they're also required to learn English, seek and find a job soon after arrival and, in order to get to the country, have to take out a travel loan for \$3,000 for their travel expenses.

"One thing IRIS really, really stresses is independence," Esslinger explained. "And the goal is that in six months the family will be on their own feet and financially independent."

She added she had originally thought the congregation would be able to raise the \$3,000 for the family's travel with ease, but IRIS informed them taking out the loan was a requirement.

"It's important that they have dignity – and so that's something we continue to remind ourselves of too as we help them to be independent," she explained.

In the same way, Hand explained the father – who had been "chomping at the bit to work" – applied and was hired for a job within a month of arriving. When he told his wife, Hand shared, "they were ecstatic, laughing and joking – I hadn't seen them quite that exuberant since they arrived. That's why independence is so impor-

See Refugee Family page 2

Police Officer cont. from Front Page

fighting crime, but also with responding to health emergencies as the town's designated medical responders.

"Even though you may be in the middle of an interview, if that medical call comes in – and some addresses have quite a high volume of medical calls – we have to respond. So things get put on hold," Cox explained, adding that, as a result, "what would take many departments a month to resolve, probably takes us multiple months to resolve."

Cox said that while the International Association of Police Chiefs recommends two officers per thousand residents, the East Hampton Police Department has one officer per thousand residents.

According to the town's most recent annual report from 2014-15, officers responded to 757 medical calls that fiscal year. There was one robbery, 11 burglaries, 88 larcenies, 38 assaults, five sexual assaults, 14 drug violations, three motor vehicle thefts, 95 domestic disturbances, 165 cases of criminal mischief and 21 juvenile investigations. They also responded to 613 alarms.

Maniscalco emphasized that hiring a new officer would not necessarily reduce the amount of overtime worked by officers, the cost of which concerns some finance board members.

"From my experience, overtime has been driven by workload and major cases," Maniscalco said.

Cox added that the department's predominantly senior staff, with many officers "well past the 10-year mark," accrue and retain leave time at a higher rate than new officers. If more officers are taking more days off, that could result in increased overtime to fill their shifts.

Jylkka estimated overtime through the end of this fiscal year will be between \$200,000 and \$217,000. If an additional officer is hired in January, he said overtime would likely be between \$195,000 and \$206,000.

The four finance board members at the meeting all voted in favor of the appropriation.

When it was the council's turn to meet, Council Chairwoman Patience Anderson emphasized the position adds to the current roster; it does not replace the injured Burgin.

"It is to supplement the existing police force with an additional officer," she said. "It's a short-term solution; the long-term solution comes at the next budget cycle."

That budget cycle is already beginning as department heads for the town and school district put together their budget priorities. Proposed general government and education bud-

gets will be presented and reviewed during the first few months of 2017, with voters casting their ballots at referendum in May or June.

Pointing to a 1976 annual report that included a plea for expanded police resources similar to the need Cox has been expressing since he arrived in town, Anderson said not much has changed in the past 40 years.

"Some of us have been maybe a little slow accepting the plea, but there's certainly plenty of evidence that it's necessary. It's time. I think people in this town will understand," she said.

However, Republican councilor Ted Hintz Jr. said he knows the department is in dire need of a new officer, but he does not believe it should be done outside the annual budget process.

"As much as I agree we need the police officer, I can't support a mid-year hire," he said.

While Republican Mark Philhower would also rather see all voters get the chance to vote on the new position as part of an annual budget, he said giving the chief help now is "the right thing to do."

"The voters may tell us to take [the new position] away by rejecting the budget numerous times," Philhower said. "So we might have an answer that we did the wrong thing, come May or June. And they might let us know we did the right thing."

Republican Councilor Melissa Engel indicated drastic times require drastic measures.

"The only reason we're doing a mid-year hire is that Hardie Burgin unfortunately got run over on [Route] 66. Otherwise, I don't like mid-year hires myself and never have," she said. "This is a very unusual circumstance with a very long recuperation period for Mr. Burgin: so long as to not be practical to continue to use overtime and exhaust the staff we have remaining."

She emphasized voters still have the chance to vote on the mid-year appropriation through the town meeting process.

When it came for councilors to vote on the motion to approve the appropriation for a new officer and set the town meeting date, the only 'nay' vote came from Hintz.

Any registered voter or anyone who owns property assessed at \$1,000 or more may vote at the Oct. 24 town meeting.

Maniscalco said Wednesday that while the budget process is unpredictable, he believes the new position will be here to stay.

"With the challenges our community faces in regards to opioid use, traffic enforcement and community policing, I think a majority of our residents will be firmly behind our police department and this new position," he said.

Refugee Family cont. from Front Page

tant; it gives them the dignity that all people should have in terms of being able to provide for themselves."

The family arrived on Aug. 31, and was picked up in New Haven by members of the committee who provided them with culturally appropriate snacks and water as they brought them to their new home. At the time, the only words they knew in English were "thank you," but Esslinger said "they said it repeatedly."

"Their sense of gratitude is so unbelievable" she stated, adding "it's just a reminder of what's important in life."

The mother and father have now been taking ESL classes for about a month, and the family will soon be attending cultural training to learn about American culture and norms. Their three children – aged 11, 10 and 4 – all attend school, and Hand said the school system gave them an "extravagant welcome" and the kids now have friends.

Esslinger and Hand added the Hebron community has also been a blessing.

"We have not wanted for anything – almost before we think of things, it's provided, and that goes for money, clothing, furnishings, appliances, rides – just everything," he said.

The Hebron Women's Club was also mentioned for donating "a significant amount of money towards this effort – a lot more than we asked for; they blew us away," Hand said.

Muhanad Abdullah, who helped with translation, as well Dean Umesh Vig at Manchester Community College (who introduced the committee to Abdullah), members of the local Syrian community who were "very helpful," and a welcoming community in Manchester were also thanked.

"This has been an incredible undertaking," said Hand. "It's taken a lot of work, a lot of

effort, a lot of trying to synchronize a lot of moving parts, but I would do it again in a second."

The children call Hand "Uncle Mark," and he said "they have truly been a blessing. They've impacted my life tremendously."

The experience was also a learning opportunity for all those involved surrounding the sometimes-negative perception of refugees.

"Don't believe what you hear in the media," Hand said.

Esslinger elaborated, saying, "I saw a bumper sticker on a car not too long ago that just said 'Do something radical – stop and talk to someone.' And the idea is that when you sit across from somebody, no matter what their 'difference' might be, when you have a conversation you realize you share so much more – the same hopes, dreams, and aspirations for your life."

She furthered, "I can't imagine being ripped up from my home; being uprooted from Hebron and your life and having to flee because you don't feel safe. It's kind of hard to comprehend that fragility of life and the vulnerability they felt and what they've been through. And we don't know everything that they've been through..."

"But they have been through a great deal of trauma," Hand added. "Especially, I'd say the youngest child; their whole life has been filled with trauma."

The family, he concluded, "finally has a safe place where they don't have to worry that they're going to be killed. That's the way to start healing. It's going to be a long road, but at least they can start healing now.

"And they absolutely love it here," he said with a smile. "They love everything about it here."

Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

I don't have too much new to add to the latest Donald Trump twist, the leaked 2005 video of him saying some horribly repugnant things, things he attempted to dismiss with a "guys will be guys" type of statement.

I wasn't shocked when I heard of the video because, frankly, it just seemed very fitting for him. Of course he'd be caught on video saying disgusting things about women; this entire campaign has underscored that there is no low to which he won't sink.

Nor was I surprised by his initial "apology," in which he called the comments "locker room talk" (certainly no locker room I go to) and only said he was sorry if anyone got offended by it. Typical Trump. His later, video apology started off sounding a little more contrite, but then turned it into an attack on Bill Clinton, which he extended to Hillary, and then, as Trump is nothing if not a showman, ended it with a plug for the upcoming debate.

No, Donald. Just, no. This is not how one apologizes.

During the debate, when one of the moderators brought up the video, Trump again turned it into an attack on Bill Clinton, one that went on for so long you'd be forgiven for thinking Bill Clinton was the person Trump was running against. (Spoiler alert: he isn't. Pretty sure the constitution would frown on that.)

Quick aside about the debate: It managed to do the unthinkable, which was lower my opinion of Trump even further. After starting out fairly calm, he once again quickly devolved into a rambling, ranting, raving mess. (He's been so quick in these debates to go from calm to blowing his top, I don't see how anybody would want him having a discussion with our enemies.) And he was just so, so childish, with his complaints of how come Clinton wasn't getting yelled at by the moderators like he was, or interrupting Clinton over and over again to tell her how wrong she was.

Simply put, Clinton acted like the person campaigning for president of the United States. Trump acted like someone running to be president of the sixth grade student council.

But, to go back to the video: within short order of it being leaked, Republican politicians across the country began jumping ship. This was it, they said; they couldn't support The Donald any longer. As a friend of mine pointed out: why was this the breaking point? Don't get me wrong, what Trump said was absolutely horrible and I'm glad it finally opened some eyes, but why weren't those eyes already open? This was far from the first awful thing he's done during this campaign. (Another friend of mine, for example, could no longer stand to look at him after he mocked a physically-handicapped *New York Times* reporter during a campaign speech.) Republicans looked the other way during so, so, so, so much, and I guess they just decided they couldn't do it anymore. I mean, better late than never, I suppose, but still, it's quizzical.

The most likely answer, I think, is those politicians probably feel this is it for Trump; there's no way he's going to win in November so, for their own political careers, they're opting to bail out before the ship goes com-

pletely under.

Obviously, I very much hope that ship will go under. I do think Hillary Clinton would be a good president, and I do hope she wins. The polls are starting to swing back a little more in Clinton's favor, and I'm starting to relax a little, but I won't be completely assuaged until the votes are counted Nov. 8. It's only a few weeks away, folks....

* * *

In keeping with the presidential theme, the commanders-in-chief are often the butt of jokes. It doesn't matter how good of a job they're doing, really; it just seems to come with the territory. But over the years, our presidents have shown they can be pretty witty themselves. I recently came across a list of some of their classic quips, and had a nice little chuckle. (Many of the lines came from Ronald Reagan, which was not all that surprising considering his movie star past.) Among the lines:

"I am not worried about the deficit; it is big enough to take care of itself." – Ronald Reagan

"I have left orders to be awakened at any time in case of national emergency – even if I'm in a Cabinet meeting." – Reagan

"Politics is supposed to be the second-oldest profession. I have come to realize that it bears a very close resemblance to the first." – Reagan

"I hope you're all Republicans." – Reagan, speaking to surgeons as he entered the operating room following a 1981 assassination attempt.

"If I had to name my greatest strength, I guess it would be my humility. Greatest weakness? It's possible that I'm a little too awesome." – Barack Obama

"Many of you know that I got my name, Barack, from my father. What you may not know is Barack is actually Swahili for 'That One.' And I got my middle name from somebody who obviously didn't think I'd ever run for president." – Obama

"Did you ever think that making a speech on economics is a lot like pissing down your leg? It seems hot to you, but it never does to anyone else." – Lyndon Johnson

"I just received the following wire from my generous Daddy: 'Dear Jack, Don't buy a single vote more than is necessary. I'll be damned if I'm going to pay for a landslide.'" – John F. Kennedy, addressing complaints that his father's money was buying the primary for him.

"My esteem in this country has gone up substantially. It is very nice now when people wave at me, they use all their fingers." – Jimmy Carter

"When they call the roll in the Senate, the senators do not know whether to answer 'present' or 'not guilty.'" – Teddy Roosevelt

"In my many years I have come to a conclusion that one useless man is a shame, two is a law firm, and three or more is a Congress." – John Adams

"Being president is like running a cemetery: you've got a lot of people under you and nobody's listening." – Bill Clinton

"If I were two-faced, would I be wearing this one?" – Abraham Lincoln

* * *

See you next week.

Andover Becomes Fifth in the State to Ban Fracking Waste

by Geeta S. Sandberg

At a town meeting last Thursday, residents voted unanimously to pass an ordinance that will keep waste produced from hydraulic fracking out of town – making Andover the fifth municipality in the state to do so.

The ordinance was passed by a voice vote, during which 114 residents said ‘yea’ and none uttered ‘nay.’ Andover follows Portland, which approved a similar ordinance in June, as well as Coventry, Mansfield and Washington.

The Oct. 6 meeting was scheduled in response to a petition with 90 signatures that called for the creation of an ordinance to prohibit the storage, disposal or use of waste produced by hydraulic fracking, the process of extracting natural gas from underground rock formations. The method involves drilling through rock and injecting a mixture of water, sand and chemicals into the ground at high pressure to shatter, or fracture, shale and release trapped oil and gas.

As is the case in the other four towns that have passed ordinances, no company has come to Andover and proposed storage of fracking waste, due to a state moratorium preventing any fracking waste from coming in. Still, there was a movement in town to issue a preemptive strike, and create an ordinance banning it.

At Thursday’s town meeting, Maria Tulman, who has been active with the local group No Fracking Waste Andover and started the petition that led to the meeting, said to those present, “The more I learned [about fracking] the more concerned I became.”

She relayed information on the process, explaining more than 1,000 chemicals are used

in the mixture that’s injected into the wells – many of which are toxic or known carcinogens – “and those are just the chemicals voluntarily reported by the industry.”

All of the chemicals used are unknown, she stated, “Because the oil and gas industry is allowed to withhold chemicals considered proprietary, or trade secrets.”

Tulman went on to share while fracking used to occur by drilling straight down, new technology allows for wells to be dug two miles deep and then to continue sideways for as long as two miles. Each of these wells is pumped with four to five million gallons of “toxic solution” Tulman stated, adding large quantities of the solution returns to the surface and needs to be disposed of; each well can produce more than a million gallons of liquid waste and thousands of tons of solid waste.

This waste, she furthered, is often more toxic than the solution initially injected, since it mixes with naturally-occurring ground contaminants including volatile organic compounds, radioactive elements, and heavy metals such as arsenic, lead and mercury; a salty brine is also released that’s eight times saltier than seawater and can also be contaminated with naturally-occurring but highly toxic material from deep in the earth.

“These natural toxins mix with the solution injected into the ground and wastes coming out of the well, so what goes in can come out even more contaminated than it was to start,” Tulman said.

She added various studies show fracking waste can endanger humans if not disposed of properly; concerns for humans include organ

damage, neurological damage, cancers, birth defects and reproductive and developmental disorders caused by the chemicals used in the process.

There is also concern over the impact of fracking waste on the environment. The United States Forest Service studied the impact of fracking waste in the Fernow Experimental Forest in West Virginia and found within two days of being sprayed with drill pit fluids all ground plants had died; within 10 days the leaves of trees that were unlikely to have been directly contacted by the spray (but were instead contaminated through the soil) turned brown and dropped; and a year later 50 percent of approximately 150 trees had died.

There is also the concern of waste runoff contaminating water supplies and agricultural lands and the radioactive material eventually making its way back to humans through the ingestion of contaminated crops or animals.

The nearest hydraulic fracking wells are located in the Marcellus Shale region in Pennsylvania, where more than 9,775 wells have already been drilled and, according to the Washington, D.C.-based public interest organization Food & Water Watch, more than 80,000 could be drilled in future years.

The waste generated from the wells in Pennsylvania alone from January-June of last year amounted to over 878,800,000 gallons of liquid waste and more than 647,000 tons of solid waste – waste which is being shipped to eight different states for disposal.

In Connecticut, the moratorium preventing the waste from coming into the state ends in 2018. Tulman said that, at that point, the com-

missioner of the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection may have developed regulations that would call for a continued ban on fracking waste. Alternately, the commissioner could also decide to *allow* fracking waste to enter Connecticut, which Tulman said last week was a risk she and the rest of those concerned about its implications don’t want to take.

I am delighted that the vote to pass the ordinance was unanimous,” Tulman said this week. “Andover residents are concerned with the issue of fracking waste, and are aware of its environmental and health dangers. The people came out to vote in favor of the ordinance to ban fracking waste to protect our town and their health.”

The ordinance prohibits the application of fracking wastes on any road or property within the town; prohibits the storage, disposal, sale, acquisition, handling, treatment and/or processing of waste within the town; or from being accepted at any waste water or solid waste facility.

Jen Siskind, local coordinator with Food & Water Watch, released a statement following the ordinance’s approval last week, stating “Andover residents have great pride in their town, and don’t want to see it contaminated by toxic, radioactive fracking waste.”

She added, “They made a smart choice to protect their property values, natural resources and the health of their community. ... Bravo to Maria Tulman and Andover residents for protecting their community.”

The legal notice regarding the approval of the ordinance can be found elsewhere on this page; the ordinance becomes effective 21 days after its publication.

Corsa Resigns as Marlborough Public Works Superintendent

by Julianna Roche

After serving as Superintendent of Operations for the Public Works Department for just over three years, Chris Corsa has officially resigned. The announcement was made at last week’s Board of Selectmen meeting, with the resignation taking effect Oct. 7.

Corsa could not be reached this week for comment.

During the selectmen’s meeting, First Selectwoman Amy Traversa also stated that the superintendent position would be restructured into two separate positions, including a foreman in charge of facilities and grounds and another foreman in charge of highways and fleets.

Traversa stated this week that while she could not comment on Corsa’s reason for leaving, she saw the restructuring of the position as a necessary measure of survival in today’s economic climate.

“As the state budget crisis worsens, we have every reason to believe that additional cuts will be made to funding that the town has relied on

in the past,” she said. “So I am looking to maximize every tax dollar spent in Marlborough.”

Traversa also added these types of changes would not just be limited to the Public Works Department.

“We’re looking at every department – not just public works – for opportunities to increase effectiveness,” she emphasized. “Doing so is critical to minimizing any future tax increases.”

Corsa had been with the Public Works Department for more than a decade, having been hired as the department’s physical services foreman in August 2004 and also taking on the role of buildings and grounds supervisor soon after. When the former highway and fleet supervisor left in April 2012, Corsa took on both supervising roles for the town, which included the combined duties of overseeing the town’s buildings, including the elementary school, as well as highway services.

In 2013, he was appointed superintendent of operations. As the department’s superintendent,

Corsa’s responsibilities included scheduling the maintenance staff, ensuring proper timing of projects, training employees, coordinating with the first selectman to schedule projects, assisting in budget development, and assisting in the planning and coordination of building or capital improvement projects – just to name a few.

A temporary replacement supervisor for Corsa will be selected in the interim, and the job openings for the facilities and grounds foreman and highways and fleets foreman, as well as the qualifications needed for the positions, are now listed on the town website.

When asked what she was looking for in both positions, Traversa stated it comes down to whoever can provide the town with the best services possible.

“It is my intent to see that the town is run in a cost-effective and efficient manner as possible, while maintaining the vital services our residents expect,” she said.

* * *

Also at last week’s meeting, Darek Chomiak from JK Energy Solutions and the selectmen discussed the proposed lighting retrofit project that the town is considering as a cost savings measure. The retrofit lighting work would replace old components with more energy-efficient counterparts by upgrading to LED lighting, which would reduce usage, improve lighting quality and reduce maintenance costs.

According to Chomiak, the project locations being considered are at the Senior Center, Richmond Memorial Library, the Public Works office, Town Hall, and Fire House 2. While the total project cost is estimated at \$101,640, annual estimated cost savings for the town would be \$17,410 and it would take approximately 44 months to break even.

The project was tabled for further discussion.

* * *

The next Board of Selectmen meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, Oct. 18, at 7 p.m., at Town Hall.

Concerns Raised Over Colchester Finance Board Vacancy

by Julianna Roche

For the Board of Finance, finding a replacement for member James McNair (whose resignation takes effect Nov. 1) has turned into a tricky situation.

At the board’s meeting last week, concerns were raised over the town charter and state statute regarding who could fill the vacancy, whose wording is in direct conflict with one another.

Per the charter, the vacancy must be filled by an individual with the same registered affiliation as the registered affiliation of the person resigning. While McNair currently holds a Democratic seat on the board, he originally ran as a minority party member for the Colchester Independent Party (CIP), which would mean his position would have to be filled with another CIP member.

“In theory, the charter was set up never taking into consideration that there would ever be the possibility of a third party winning the election,” McNair said this week.

According to state statute, however, the vacancy can be filled with any party except the Republican Party. Following a discussion with the secretary of state’s office, First Selectman Art Shilosky said at last week’s meeting that this meant it could open up the seat to a Democrat, a member of the CIP, Green Party or any minority party registered in town.

However, board members still expressed uncertainty, arguing that it was possible the town charter would take precedence over state statute. Shilosky said he would contact their office again for a more clarified explanation, and one in writing.

“I want it to be right because I don’t want it to come back to haunt us more, or me, or the town,” he told the finance board.

As of Thursday morning however, Shilosky said he had still not received a response from the secretary of state’s office and would not further comment until he did.

According to McNair, if it turns out the charter does overrule state statute; it could create another issue – which is determining who is even an “official” CIP member and a viable candidate for his seat.

“The real question is, who is in the CIP party? That’s the problem,” he said. “Are you now saying to replace me there are only five people who are even eligible? And then what happens if none of those people are qualified?”

McNair added that this would be easily clarified if he could track down a copy of the CIP rules, which he said would have an organizational clause clarifying its processes and regulations. However, he said it’s been difficult to do so.

“What are the rules of the CIP party? I can say that even being a member of the party, I have no idea what the rules are, how they were constructed or who voted on them,” he said, adding that CIP Chairwoman Deanna Bouchard

was also unable to provide him with a copy of the rules.

He added that, after speaking to the town clerk, Gayle Furman, he “knew for a fact” that the town has also asked the secretary of state’s office for a copy of those rules and still hasn’t received a response.

“Here’s a case where somehow this whole thing has slipped into the cracks,” McNair said. “What’s going to happen is if it’s a grey area and somebody wants to challenge it? They’re going to go straight to the secretary of state’s office.”

Once McNair’s resignation takes effect Nov. 1, the finance board will have up to 60 days to find a suitable replacement.

Until he receives a written response from the secretary of state’s office, however, Shilosky said he didn’t recommend the Board of Finance move forward with interviewing potential candidates “based on circumstances right now.”

Judge Upholds Cease-and-Desist Order on Portland Driveway

by Elizabeth Regan

A Middlesex Superior Court judge has decided a local businessman's case against the Portland Zoning Board of Appeals doesn't hold water.

The ruling is the latest in a cascade of events that began almost 25 years ago with the construction of Quarry Ridge Golf Course, which numerous downhill homeowners have since said resulted in the flooding of their property.

Judge Edward Domnarski found the zoning appeals board was justified in upholding a cease-and-desist order from former Zoning Enforcement Officer (ZEO) Bob Spencer in 2013 to prevent John J. Kelley Sr. and Christina Kelley from paving their 1,200-foot-long driveway on 1 Rose Hill Rd.

John "Joe" Kelley is the founder and former owner of the adjacent Quarry Ridge Golf Course.

Concerned neighbors include Sharon Hoy, of Rose Hill Road, and Melissa Gerrier-Satagaj, of Collins Hill Road. They were added to the lawsuit as defendants at their own request through the legal process known as intervention – a method of giving a voice to those who might not otherwise be heard in a case. Hoy and Gerrier-Satagaj, who represented themselves, filed briefs and testified in court.

Domnarski dismissed the Kelleys' case on Sept. 22. According to his written decision, there was substantial evidence that paving the driveway violated the conditions of the zoning permit issued in 2006 for the Kelley's home.

"The decision of the ZBA sustaining the action of the ZEO was not illegal, arbitrary or contrary to law," Domnarski wrote.

Joe Kelley said Wednesday he will not appeal the decision in court.

Domnarski emphasized in his ruling that the case was not about addressing or correcting storm water issues; instead, his review revolved solely around Spencer's orders as they related to the zoning permit.

For that reason, Domnarski said he could not consider briefs filed by Hoy and Gerrier-Satagaj that discussed storm water runoff and its effect on their properties. He did, however, commend them "for their efforts and their well-organized presentations."

The plot plan submitted by the Kelleys' engineer in 2006 along with the Kelleys' zoning permit application specified the existing gravel driveway would "remain in its natural state"

and, combined with the repair of two small eroded areas using broken stone or trap rock, would "slow down any runoff and permit some infiltration."

Photos in a Portland Land Use Department folder for the case show the driveway being installed as early as June 28, 2013.

A notice of violation and order to abate was issued by Spencer on July 8, according to meeting minutes from a Sept. 26, 2013, public hearing in front of the ZBA.

The minutes described the driveway on July 8 as "not fully-paved" and on July 9 as "fully-paved," based on Spencer's testimony. He said he issued the cease-and-desist order on July 9 because the grading of the driveway was believed to cause increased runoff.

The ZBA sustained the order in an Oct. 24, 2013 vote.

The Kelleys filed their appeal with the state Superior Court on Dec. 2.

The Kelleys contended local zoning regulations do not prohibit the paving of a residential driveway, the judge recounted in his decision. But Domnarski said, while that is true, it "ignored the effect of the conditions of the zoning permit."

Domnarski argued more than once in his 13-page decision that the 2006 plot plan was the product of a back-and-forth between the Kelleys' engineer and the town's engineer in response to stormwater runoff concerns.

Meeting minutes from the October 2013 Zoning Board of Appeals hearing showed the Kelleys claimed the driveway was to remain in its unpaved state for only a limited period of time.

It was an argument disputed in a letter sent to appeals' board members prior to their vote by town planning and zoning attorney Kari Olson, who recommended the board uphold Spencer's order.

"Everyone and especially Mr. Kelly (sic) knew what the score was and that the driveway was supposed to remain gravel," Olson wrote in the letter, which was recorded in the case file in the Land Use Department.

"I would also ask you to consider this: If you are not going to hold property owners in this town to the development plans they submit to your staff and which are approved based upon the representations made thereon, then why have a requirement for development plans and

staff review at all," she added.

The vote by the zoning appeals board to uphold Spencer's decision was unanimous among the five members present.

About six months later, one of the absent members, Donald Snyder Jr., was hired as the Kelleys' engineer.

Snyder disclosed the potential conflict in a letter to George Law, who was not only the Kelleys' lawyer but also the chairman of the Ethics Commission.

"For the record, I was not present at the meeting when the ZBA voted on the outcome of the application. In any event going forward, I shall recuse myself from participating as a member of the ZBA in any future ZBA conduct regarding this matter," Snyder wrote.

The Sept. 26, 2013 minutes from the first of the two-part public hearing, at which Snyder was in attendance, show he disclosed that he lived in Hill House Estates, a subdivision of Kelley's property. Snyder said at the meeting that he did not feel the connection would affect his decision-making.

According to the same meeting minutes, ZBA Chairman Ben Srb disclosed he knew or had dealings with a laundry list of those involved in the case, including Joe and Christina Kelley. He, too, said his decision-making would not be affected.

Snyder resigned from the ZBA in August 2014. Srb was a member of the board until November 2015, when he was elected to the Board of Selectmen.

* * *

Now that the judge has dismissed Kelleys' case against the ZBA, Joe Kelley said he is waiting to hear from the town "as to the way they want to proceed."

The Kelleys' neighbors and intervenors in the lawsuit, Hoy and Gerrier-Satagaj, have been in contact with the town hall to find out what's next and who is responsible for seeing that Spencer's original orders are enforced.

In an Oct. 3 letter to First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield, Hoy said she had been contacted by Joe Kelley to discuss an alternate solution to the runoff problem affecting her property "so that he could then keep his driveway paved."

However, Hoy had several concerns about whether or not the correct process was being followed and what oversight, if any, was in place.

"It is now imperative that I learn who is in charge," Hoy wrote.

The answer to that question was unclear during a phone interview with Bransfield on Wednesday.

Bransfield said the town's engineering consultant, Jeff Jacobson of Nathan L. Jacobson and Associates of Chester, will be responsible for reviewing any proposed solutions agreed upon by the parties involved.

"I don't know if I'd say he's in charge, but he's the person who would give us the engineer's opinion as to whether any solution would be possible," she said.

Public Works Department Director Rick Kelsey would accompany Jacobson on any site visits, according to Bransfield.

Bransfield did not discuss any possible solutions being considered.

Reached by phone Wednesday, Kelsey declined to comment, per advice from Olson. A message left with Olson was not returned by press time.

Bransfield emphasized Olson had advised the town that any solution to the driveway problem would have to be agreed upon by "all parties."

The parties to the lawsuit were the Kelleys, the ZBA, Hoy and Satagaj.

"What I'm unclear of is the role of the ZBA," Bransfield said, but added she would keep all parties informed.

She said the town's current zoning enforcement officer, Dan Bourret, would be kept in the loop too, but cautioned that he only works one afternoon and one morning per week.

The Kelleys have another lawsuit still pending in the Middlesex Superior Court. They accuse Bransfield of, among other things, interfering in their ability to negotiate and enter into a settlement agreement with the ZBA by preventing Jacobson from "working on anything having to do with [the Kelleys'] property or the settlement agreement for a period of time."

The Kelleys' complaint also states Bransfield interfered by placing conditions on the ZBA's ability to enter into a settlement agreement, including "requiring that it obtain approvals from owners of neighboring properties."

In her answer to the Kelleys' complaint, Bransfield denied both allegations.

According to the state judicial website, the case is slated to go to trial April 4, 2017.

Rain Cuts Short Portland Fair

by Elizabeth Regan

The mud was supposed to fly Sunday at the Portland Fair for the Dirty Ditch Mud Run, which features lifted trucks tearing through a straightaway of oozing hills and valleys.

But hopeful fairgoers got more than they bargained for as torrential rain turned the entire fairgrounds – and the offsite parking – into one big mud bog, forcing the cancellation of the last day of the event.

It was a tough weekend for the recreational truckers. Saturday night's Truck Pull was cut short around 8 p.m. – with three classes to go, including the new street legal class – when the rain came in.

"Rain is one of those four-letter words that we hate," Portland Fair Committee President Don Bascom said this week.

Bascom said organizers decided to cancel the event before gates opened on Sunday when some of the day's early arrivals, including vendors, got stuck in the mud.

According to the committee's vice president, Kelly Chester, overflow parking on Sand Hill Road presented one of the biggest obstacles. While she said the fair is lucky to have the offsite parking spot, the site was not able to accommodate all the rain Mother Nature threw at it.

"If we had better parking, I think we might've been able to still run the fair on Sunday," she said.

Losing one day of the three-day schedule – and the associated proceeds – makes it more difficult for the nonprofit organization to fund its operations next year.

"We don't really have reserves," Chester said. But the extent of the damage won't be known for about a month or so as the committee pro-

cesses its bills.

"We're hopeful we won't be at too much of a loss," she said.

Bascom was optimistic the show will go on next year.

"I don't think we're going to be hurt that bad," he said.

On Friday and most of Saturday, things went smoothly on the slightly-expanded fairgrounds. Chester said clearing out some brush and leveling out the land on a portion of the northern end of allowed organizers to adjust the layout to be more convenient for those bringing their animals to the fair.

"We were finally able to get all our animals in the same location, which was a goal we had for a long time," she said. "We had our livestock tent, our petting zoo and our cattle barn on the same side of the fairgrounds."

The move was especially well-received by farmers who brought animals for both the livestock tent and cattle barn, according to Chester. For the first time, they were able to care for all their animals much closer together.

The fair also featured elephant and camel rides from Goshen-based R.W. Commerford and Sons.

The fair's official statement invited visitors "to come learn more about these magnificent creatures: what they eat, how they live, fun facts and speak directly with their caregivers."

Chester said the attraction, including a 35-year-old elephant named Karen, went over well with fairgoers.

Acknowledging that some commenters on the fair's Facebook page viewed the attraction as animal exploitation, Chester said she did not see that sentiment on display at the fair itself.

"I don't believe we had one person who came



The Portland High School band opened the Portland Fair last Friday. This year's fair was cut short, with heavy rain Sunday forcing its cancellation that day.

with any negative type of questions," she said.

There were no protests at the Portland Fair like those she's heard about at the Durham Fair and the Eastern States Exposition, Chester added.

Over the past two years, at least half a dozen petitions were posted on change.org in objection to Commerford and Sons' presence at fairs and expos, including the Big E. The attraction's

critics cited a record of USDA violations publicized by the animal rights organization People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals.

When asked if the Commerford zoo would be returning to the fair next year, Chester said it's too soon to tell.

"I have no idea what next year will bring at this time," she said. "With our financial situation, we're just going to have to see how it goes."

Meet the Women Behind Colchester Community Lunch Program

by Julianna Roche

Odessa Turner has never understood why people turn a blind eye to the homeless.

“Even in Colchester, people seem to think there are no homeless people around here but there are,” she said. “I [used to] think to myself even if they’re not hungry, they could probably still use a free meal. Basically that’s how we got started.”

It’s what inspired Turner, five years ago, to help start the Community Free Lunch program, a service provided to homeless, low-income and at-risk community members Monday through Friday, at either Colchester Federated Church or St. Andrew Church.

The first lunch was hosted in December 2011, and the program has only gained momentum since. Currently, Turner and three other head coordinators – Phyllis Babek, Sue Haas and Gretchen Marvin – help cook or run the lunch daily, along with volunteers from Westchester Congregational Church every Friday.

“The lunch only attracted six to eight people the first couple months,” Turner said, adding however, that by early the following spring, nearly 25 to 30 people were filling the basement hall for the meal; attendance has remained at around that number ever since.

“They come in right around 11 o’clock, get their coffee if it’s made and then they sit there and talk. It’s a very social atmosphere now,” Marvin said.

Haas agreed – though, she explained, it wasn’t always that way.

“When we first started, they would come in and nobody would say a single word. It was quiet. They would get their food, eat, drink, and then leave,” she said. “But now, it’s social and the people who come in need that socialization. ... They’re really within themselves, so when they do start talking, it really does help.”

Haas added that, in addition to providing lunch, there is also typically a visiting nurse available once or twice a month to check guests’ blood pressures or address any medical concerns at no cost. Also, if anyone has any questions about other services or issues they need

addressed, for example, finding a warm place to stay in the winter, she continued, all of the coordinators know who to get in touch with to help send them in the right direction.

The meal itself has also come a long way, Turner said, explaining that in the beginning, they had bagged lunches of sandwiches and later, soups and sandwiches. Now, it’s a hot meal, complete with a protein, carbohydrate, vegetable and dessert.

“It’s a balanced meal,” Haas added. “We figured that if this might possibly be their only meal or the only good meal they get of the day, so we want to make sure it’s balanced.”

While it’s come a long way since 2011, running the lunch program isn’t without its hardships, the four women agreed – especially as it is not funded by either the town or food bank. Instead, the women rely solely on donations or pay out-of-pocket to make sure there are hot meals on the table for those who may need it five days a week.

“There’s been so many times that I’ve knocked my head against the wall, saying ‘I can’t do this anymore,’ or ‘I have to get out of here,’” Marvin said. “But the bottom line is it’s about the people. They’re all very nice, just like you and me... as much as sometimes I’m exasperated, I don’t think I could walk out on those people.”

Babek agreed, adding the driving force for her is “always helping someone less fortunate” while Haas said she feels like she’s “making a positive impact on somebody’s life.”

All four coordinators did however, express their gratitude to those that have helped along the way with either monetary or goods donations, including the Colchester Rotary Club, Stop & Shop, Swider’s Farm Stand, and countless others.

“If you live in a community and you really care about it, then you automatically want to pitch in and help,” Marvin said, adding that they are always looking for volunteers.

“Especially in a small community like Colchester,” Haas agreed. “The thing is when you’re growing up, you had scout leaders, people who coached sports, and were they paid



Meet the women behind the Community Free Lunch program, which has offered a free, hot meal to those in need since 2011. The program runs five days a week, Monday through Friday, from 11:30 to 1 p.m. at either Colchester Federated Church or St. Andrew Church. From left are Phyllis Babek, Odessa Turner, Gretchen Marvin and Sue Haas.

to do that stuff? No, they were volunteers. It’s the volunteers that helped do that. Somebody did this for me once, so now I have to pay it forward.”

Marvin emphasized that the program is always looking for volunteers to help cook, set up or clean and wash dishes.

“I think there are a lot more people who don’t know about this program and would be willing to help,” Turner said, while Haas added that she thinks “there are a lot of people in town that could use this program and they don’t.”

The Community Free Lunch program runs five days a week, Monday through Friday, from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. The program runs for two

weeks at St. Andrew Church on 128 Norwich Ave., then two weeks at the Colchester Federated Church on 60 Main St., with Westchester Congregational Church covering every Friday at the host church. To check the location, contact either church 860-537-2355 or 860-537-5189. If interested in volunteering, contact Sue Haas at 860-537-5742 or Gretchen Marvin at 860-537-1868.

All four women emphasized that anyone in need is welcome.

“We don’t discriminate to whether they have money or don’t have money,” Marvin said. Haas agreed, adding: “we don’t ask questions. If you’re hungry and feel like you need to eat, we’ll feed you.”

Colchester Human Geography Teacher Receives National Recognition

by Julianna Roche

As a young girl, Kristie Blanchard spent hours rummaging through her grandmother’s collection of *National Geographic* – it’s what made her fall in love with maps and geography in the first place.

“I was in love with that magazine,” the Bacon Academy geography teacher exclaimed. “I went to college intending to be an elementary school teacher and I just had one of those experiences where I said ‘this is not for me,’ and I fell back into what ended up being geography.”

However, Blanchard still decided to obtain her bachelor’s degree in education and geography, before making her way to Bacon nearly 18 years ago.

Dressed in a white sweater with a floral scarf draped around her neck and a pair of rainbow-striped glasses sitting atop her head, Blanchard sits relaxed in one of her student’s desks and apologizes for “the mess” in the classroom; her students were mid-project before the bell rang and they headed to lunch.

But to an outsider, the room just looks lively – filled wall-to-wall with colorful boards of posters, maps and proudly-hung student work – all the indicators of an engaged and happy classroom. Blanchard herself is a cheerful and enthusiastic woman, and whenever she speaks about geography or teaching, it’s clear why she was recently recognized as one of this year’s Geography Teacher Fellows by the American Geographical Society (AGS).

As one of 50 AGS Geography Teacher Fellows selected nationwide, Blanchard will be able to participate in the annual AGS symposium “Envisioning a Sustainable Planet” at Columbia University on Nov. 17-18.

At Bacon, the self-declared “geo-guru” teaches freshman geography and four sections of Advanced Placement (AP) Human Geography, a sophomore level class she actually helped pilot in 2001.

“That class was hit-or-miss at the beginning, but it’s gone from being a class with five or six kids every other year to close to 80 now,” she said, adding that it’s actually quite uncommon for human geography to be taught in high school.

Bacon “is an interesting school because we have the privilege of teaching something a lot of schools don’t,” she said, adding that you’re more likely to see the subject taught in schools further south or out west, where schools “are a little more progressive. We’re pretty conservative and [New England] tends to be kind of set educationally in the way that they’ve done things.”

According to Blanchard, human geography is best explained as “the study of things over space and time” and it focuses on how human activity affects or is influenced by the Earth’s surface. So for example, she continued, students will study subjects such as the population of the planet, pop and folk culture, patterns of lan-

guage, the impact of people on the globe environmentally and with each other socially, or even migrant patterns and political geography-related topics such as gerrymandering.

“We’re really looking for patterns of things,” Blanchard said. “We look at it in terms of scale globally and then work our way down to the local level. ... The topics are mostly the same, but what’s really starting to change is the technology we use to do that.”

According to Blanchard, the AGS symposium she will attend in November focuses on educating teachers and raising awareness of that kind of cutting-edge geospatial and geography technology, which she said she plans to bring back and implement in the classroom.

“Geospatial technology in general is in the top 20 for job outgrowth in the next 10 years... Most people use geospatial technology and don’t even realize they’re using it,” Blanchard said, adding that for example, whenever you geotag your location on Facebook or Instagram, or use something like Google Maps, you’re using geospatial technology.

“Human geography has a lot of connections to other courses [students] take. It’s good for sophomores because they’re 15 years old, and they haven’t quite figured out that the whole world is connected yet,” she continued. “For them, they walk out of the class with a global perspective and that’s really what the intent of it is.”



The American Geographical Society (AGS) has named Kristie Blanchard as an AGS Geography Teacher Fellow for 2016. As part of the recognition, Blanchard will attend and participate in the society’s fall symposium, “Envisioning a Sustainable Planet,” in New York City Nov. 17-18.

Obituaries

Marlborough

Sheldon J. Simon

Sheldon J. Simon, 73, of Morris, Ill., formerly of Marlborough, passed away Saturday, Oct. 1, at Aperia Care Nursing Home in Burbank, Ill. He was born Jan. 29, 1943, to the late Pearl (Joseph) and Nat Simon in Pittsburgh, Pa.

Sheldon was the beloved husband of 38 years to Elissa (nee Witkowski) Simon; father of Ryan Simon (Tina Schools), Brett Simon (Kristin Williford), Hannah (Ryan) Brown, Shon Simon and Randall Simon; grandfather of Kelsey, Isabella, Jeremy, Jackson, Sylvia, Henry, Caitlyn, Emme, Nathaniel, Alexander, Josephine, Sabryna, Shon Jr. and Gianna; brother of Sandra (late Jordan) Siegel; uncle of Steven, Laurie, David Siegel and many more on the Witkowski side; brother-in-law of Ruth Wyatt, Mark, John and Ted Witkowski.

In addition to his parents, he is preceded in death by his mother and father-in-law, Ann and Theodore Witkowski and brother-in-law and sister-in-law, C.J. Witkowski and Ann Deja.

Sheldon retired as vice president of Engineering from Habasit ABT Inc. of Middletown, Connecticut, and Engineering Manager in Ottawa, IL at MBL America. He was a lifelong Master Mason and member of Lodge 826, AF & AM of Mazon, Ill., past Associate Bethel Guardian of 48, Joliet, Ill., member of the Mechanical Engineering Society as well as a former Boy Scout leader.

Funeral services for Sheldon J. Simon were held Thursday, Oct. 6, at the Fred C. Dames Funeral Home, 3200 Black Rd. (at Essington Road), Joliet, Ill. Interment followed in Woodlawn Memorial Park II in Joliet. Visitation was Wednesday, Oct. 5.

In lieu of flowers, memorials in Sheldon's name to the Alzheimer's Association or the Parkinson's Foundation would be appreciated.

For more information, call 815-741-5500 or visit his memorial tribute at fredcdames.com.



Colchester

Mary Nitchie Smith

Mary Nitchie Smith, 69, of Colchester, formerly of Marlborough, Conn., and Raynham, Mass., passed away at home, with her family by her side, Saturday, Oct. 8. Born in Bellefonte, Pa., Jan. 29, 1947, she was a daughter of the late Francis and Mary (Conger) Nitchie.

She married Donald Edward Smith in 1968. The couple moved to Loudonville, N.Y., for a time and later settled in Marlborough, where they made their home for nearly 20 years. After that, they relocated to Raynham, Mass., where they spent 18 years before returning to Colchester.

Mary worked in various aspects of the medical field in her career. She worked as an assistant in a pediatric practice in Marlborough and later as an optical technician in Middleboro, Mass. She volunteered with the Marlborough Volunteer Fire Department as an EMT and served Marlborough Community Arts in several capacities. She will be remembered by her loved ones for many things, but most importantly for the love and devotion she gave selflessly to each of them.

She will be sadly missed but always remembered by her loving husband of 48 years, Don; son Daryl Smith and his wife Kendra and two grandchildren, Wendy and Danny of Middletown; four siblings, John Nitchie of Massachusetts, Carl Nitchie of Georgia, Beth Campbell of Maine, Kenneth Nitchie of Vermont; and numerous extended family members and friends.

A memorial service will be held Saturday, Nov. 12, at 10 a.m., at Marlborough Congregational Church, 35 South Main St., Marlborough.

In lieu of flowers, donations in her memory may be made to the Roy B. Pettengill Ambulance Association Inc., P.O. Box 308, Marlborough, CT 06447.

The Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home of Colchester has been entrusted with care of the arrangements. For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.



courant Andover

Earl Palmer

Earl Palmer, 85, of Lebanon, peacefully slipped from this life in his sleep Sunday, Oct. 8. He was born in Manchester June 2, 1931, the son of Clarence and Lois Palmer of Andover.

Raised in Andover, Earl graduated from Windham High School before joining the Army National Guard, and was a veteran of the Korean War era. Earl worked at Pratt & Whitney before owning a truck leasing company for many years. He was well-respected, and loved by all for his quick wit and quiet, thoughtful nature.

In addition to his parents, Earl was predeceased by his precious daughter, Rachel, his siblings, Sam, Leon, Audrey and Avis, and his granddaughter, Rebecca. Earl leaves behind his beloved wife of 67 years, Sarah, and five children: Earl L. Palmer (Pamela) of Naples, Fla., Kenneth Palmer (Billie) of Bloomfield, Daniel Palmer of Lebanon, Laurel Albair (Christopher) of Alton, N.H., and David Palmer of Lebanon. Also left behind to mourn his passing are three sisters: Louise Walton (Richard) of Andover, Lucille Munsell (Steven) of Coventry, and Alice Selbert, of Ohio; and two sisters-in-law, Florence Palmer of Andover and Dorcas Friedrich of Hebron. In addition, he leaves behind seven grandchildren, Karen Jordan (Jeremy), Sonya Fleming (Geoffrey), Sara Olson (Ryan), Christopher Palmer (Lillian), Stephen Palmer (Diana), John Palmer (Jamie) and Abigail Storielle (Michael). Earl is also survived by his blessed 10 great-grandchildren (Cara, Christopher, Kailey, Miranda, Kaisa, Amelia, Eva, William, Leeanne, and Leo), and numerous nieces and nephews.

Our family lost its beloved patriarch, our "Papa," and would like to express deep gratitude to the staff at Harrington Court in Colchester for their loving attention to him in his final hours.

Papa's favorite pastimes included spending time enjoying his family, fishing in Andover Lake, gardening, camping and regaling listeners with stories embellished by his famous sense of humor. Earl was a longtime member of the Andover Congregational Church.

There will be no calling hours. A private service and burial will be held at the convenience of the family.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made in Earl's memory, to the American Heart Association (heart.org).

For online condolences, or to share a memory of Earl with the family, visit potterfuneralhome.com.



From courant Colchester

Daniel Gene Duclos

On Monday, Oct. 10, our beloved son, Daniel Gene Duclos, passed away at his family home in Middletown at the age of 33. He was the son of Gene and Denise (Robbins) Duclos of Middletown.

He was a graduate of Bacon Academy in 2002 in Colchester and was involved in many sports, including basketball, baseball and football. Daniel was a union ironworker from Local 15 in Hartford. Ironwork was his passion and he leaves behind many union brothers. He worked hard and was proud to be union and of his brotherhood.

Daniel loved the outdoors and was an avid fisherman. He loved to camp and take canoe trips. He got to skydive, loved roller coasters and four-wheeling on the quad. He was also a great cook; we enjoyed several of his meals, many that were spicy hot. He loved everything from tacos to raw bar. Among his greatest pleasures were his beloved Boston Red Sox and New England Patriots. We spent many hours together yelling at the TV. Please always remember Daniel fondly and smile when you think of him. He had such a big heart.

Along with his parents, Daniel leaves behind his sister, Sarah and brother-in-law, Damon Butterworth, of Middletown; his grandfather, Melvyn Robbins, Sr. of Cromwell; his aunt, Deborah Johnson and her husband, Kevin and their daughters, Amanda and Kelley, all of Berlin; his uncles, Melvyn Jr. of Cromwell and Brian Robbins of East Haddam and Keith Duclos of Pensacola, Fla.; his father's Aunt Karen Schatzel of Irvington, N.Y.; and many cousins and his godparents, Christine (Bogdan) Gowen of Haddam and John Frey of Rocky Hill. Daniel also leaves his beloved dog and best friend in the world, Hank. Daniel also loved children, especially the Ziegler kids, and always took time to play with them.

He was predeceased by his two grandmothers, Donna Duclos and Barbara Robbins; grandfather, Ray Duclos and his uncle, James Robbins.

Funeral services will be held Saturday, Oct. 15, at 11 a.m., at First Congregational Church, 355 Main St., Cromwell. Burial will follow in Cromwell Hillside Cemetery West. There will be no calling hours.

In lieu of flowers, donations in Daniel's memory may be made to Fidelco Guide Dog Foundation, 103 Vision Way, Bloomfield, CT 06002.

To share memories or send condolences to the Duclos family, visit doolittlefuneralservice.com.



Colchester

Sandra Perry

Sandra Agnes (Sinkewicz) Perry, 66, formerly of Colchester, died peacefully with family by her side, following a sudden brief illness, Monday, Sept. 12, in Clermont, Fla. Sandy was born in New Britain Nov. 24, 1949, to the late Helen A. Mileski and Thomas A. Sinkewicz. Sandy is survived by her sons, Todd and Chad Perry.

She was predeceased by her son, John Perry Jr. She also leaves behind her three brothers and their wives, Thomas and Catherine Sinkewicz, James and Holly Sinkewicz, and Bob and Lisa Sinkewicz, as well as her nephews, Thomas, Justin, Matthew, Michael, Andrew and niece, Jaclyn.

Sandy had recently moved from East Ryegate, Vt., to Clermont, Fla. She had worked in retail, achieving assistant manager for T.J. Maxx in Littleton, N.H. Her greatest love was her children and her religion. Sandy was a devoted Catholic and worked as secretary and religious education director at St. Joseph Church in Woodsville, N.H.

A Mass of Christian Burial will be held Monday, Oct. 17, at 10 a.m., at St. Andrew Church, Colchester. There will be a private interment later that day.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to St. Joseph Church, 21 Pine St., Woodsville, NH 03785.

Cobalt

Arland Edward Hersey

Arland Edward Hersey, 49, of Cobalt, beloved husband of Lisa (Shelberg) Hersey, died unexpectedly at his home Saturday, Oct. 8. Born Dec. 6, 1966, in Middletown, he was the son of the late John and Audrey (Corbin) Hersey.

Arland had worked as a stone mason for most of his life. He enjoyed working outdoors and with stone. Arland built many beautiful everlasting stone walls in Middlesex County throughout his career. He also enjoyed NASCAR and spending time with his wife Lisa and their many friends and family.

Besides his wife he is survived by his three brothers, John and his wife Diane, James and Robert; his sister, Judy; and many nieces and nephews and close friends.

A celebration of Arland's life will be held at a later date.

To leave online condolences, visit spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.



Amston

Raymond Leroy Pierce

Raymond "Ray" Leroy Pierce, 79, of Amston, passed away unexpectedly at home Friday, Oct. 7. Born April 7, 1937, in Newark Valley, N.Y., Ray proudly served in the U.S. Navy from 1955 to 1959.

He will most be remembered for his love of hunting, fishing, playing horseshoes, his love of bowling and playing with the East Hartford Teachers Bowling league and his various Pearls of Wisdom that he so frequently shared with those around him.

Ray is survived by his loving wife, Natalie Pierce of Amston; sons, Stephen Pierce and his wife, Clara of East Hartford, Keith Pierce of Lebanon and Craig Pierce of Amston; grandchildren, Chenoa Pierce-Atkins and her husband Steven of Lake Grove, N.Y., Tashauna Pierce of Colchester and Adam Pierce of Grand Junction, Iowa; a brother-in-law, Tony Generous and his wife Nancy of Plainfield; as well as many beloved nieces, nephews, extended family and friends.

Funeral services will be held privately, according to his wishes.

The Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home of Colchester has been entrusted with these services. For online condolences, visit aurormccarthyfuneralhome.com.



courant Colchester

Virginia Lee

Virginia "Ginni" Lee, 67, passed away Wednesday, Oct. 5. Born July 2, 1949, she was the daughter of the late Shirley and Charles Lee Sr. Ginni worked as a dietary aide at Harrington Court GHC Center before her retirement.

The family received guests Monday, Oct. 10, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester, before a chapel service that morning. Burial was private.

Donations in her memory may be made to the Harrington Court Recreation Fund, 59 Harrington Ct., Colchester, CT 06415, or to the Connecticut Humane Society, 701 Russell Rd., Newington, CT 06111.



From courant Colchester

Roger G. Rondeau

Roger G. Rondeau, 76, of Oakdale, died peacefully at Apple Rehabilitation and Healthcare in Colchester Sunday, Oct. 9. He was born in Bidderford, Maine, Aug. 6, 1940, to the late Albert and Rachel (Proulx) Rondeau. After completing high school, he married his beloved wife Patricia (Chabot) in Bidderford on Jan. 2, 1967.

Roger last worked as a dealer at Foxwoods. When not working, Roger enjoyed the Red Sox, Mohegan Sun woman's team as well as the UConn women's basketball team, and earlier in life, woodworking. He had an excellent sense of humor and loved his family and was especially proud of his grandchildren. He will truly be missed by all who knew him.

He is survived by his wife and soulmate, Patricia; son, Steven Rondeau; daughters, Janine M. West, Julie-Anne C. McGowan and her husband Tom; brother, Norman Rondeau; grandchildren, Jared Rondeau, Eric Rondeau, Rachael West, Nicole West, Michael West, Bailey McGowan; former son-in-law, Mike West; and five nieces and nephews.

Roger was predeceased by his daughter-in-law, Amy (Hiller) Rondeau, and sister, Joanne Bundy.

The family would like to express their gratitude to the staff of quality caregivers at both Backus Hospital and Apple Rehabilitation Center in Colchester.

A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated Monday, Oct. 17, at 11 a.m., at Sacred Heart Church, 156 Providence St., Taftville, with burial immediately following at Sacred Heart Cemetery. There are no calling hours.

Donations in Roger's memory may be made to St. Jude's Research Hospital at stjude.org.

To leave a condolence or share a memory, visit churchandallen.com.

Colchester Police News

10/4: Colchester Police said that at approximately 12:45 p.m. they were called to investigate at a residence on Balaban Road, where the victim claimed an acquaintance of hers showed up and caused a disturbance before leaving a short time after. According to police, they caught up with the suspect at his residence, where he fled on foot through the woods in the back of his home. A K-9 track was conducted where articles of clothing were found, but not the suspect, police said. The case is currently still under investigation.

10/4: State Police said at approximately 6 a.m., they were notified by a McDonald's employee of a burglary at the 375 S. Main St. restaurant location. According to police, the burglary occurred at some time overnight and the building's rear glass door was damaged. Police

said forced entry was made into the playhouse room door. There is no known suspect or vehicle at this time and security footage is still pending, police said. Anyone with information should contact Trooper Daniel Collin at Troop K at 860-465-5400, ext. 1374.

10/6: State Police said that Mikhail A. Tarryk-Bolinao, 24, of 20 Dorset Rd. was arrested and charged with disorderly conduct and third-degree assault.

10/8: Colchester Police said Russell C. Roly, 27, of 58 Hunt Rd., Columbia, was arrested and charged with operating a motor vehicle under the influence of drugs/alcohol.

10/9: State Police said Cornelius Coney, 28, of 34 Royal Oak Dr., Apt. A, Waterbury, was arrested and charged with second-degree failure to appear.

Troopers Seek Identity of Hebron Larceny Suspect

by Julianna Roche

State police are seeking the identity of a suspect who may be connected to a larceny case that occurred over the summer.

On Aug. 31, the Hebron resident state trooper's office responded to a call of a reported larceny from two motor vehicles on Bluebird Lane. Upon arrival, police said they discovered that sev-



eral items, including an ATM card, were stolen from the vehicles overnight.

During the investigation, police said they learned that the stolen ATM card had been used at three separate banks in South Windsor, with several withdrawals of hundreds of dollars being made each time. Through those withdrawals, troopers were able to recover surveillance footage of the suspect.

Police are asking anyone with information about the identity of the suspect to call 860-465-5400 or text TIP711 to 274637 with any information. According to police, all calls and texts will remain confidential.

Hebron Police News

10/6: State Police said Stephen K. Neubert, 36, of 40 Buck Rd., Amston, was arrested and charged with interfering with an officer.

10/7: State Police said that at approximately 11:20 p.m., they received a call from a resident on Deepwood Drive stating that the screen door to her back sliding door was tampered with. Upon arrival, police said they found a striped piece of the screen door hanging off and a piece of stick that was placed in the door was found on the porch of the complainant's home. The case is still under investigation.

Andover Police News

10/7: State Police said that Peter W. Griffin, 50, of 107 Brewster St., Coventry, was arrested and charged with speeding, operating a motor vehicle under the influence of drugs/alcohol and failure to drive in the proper lane on a multiple-lane highway.

Marlborough Police News

10/5: State Police said that Kerrigan Cowles, 29, of 32 Ridgewood Dr., was arrested and charged with evading responsibility and interfering with an officer/resisting arrest.

10/7: State Police said Kenneth Strickland, 70, and Teri Strickland, 63, both of 12 Parker Rd., were arrested and charged with disorderly conduct and third-degree assault.