

RIVEREAST

News Bulletin

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

Volume 41, Number 6

Published by The Glastonbury Citizen

October 28, 2016



Breast Cancer Awareness Month... Each year, the East Hampton Hawks Football and Cheerleading Organization recognizes October as Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Hawks players and cheerleaders feature pink attire as part of their home and away uniforms throughout the month and special fund raising efforts are held with all proceeds donated to the Sandy Peszynski Breast Cancer Foundation. This season, \$3,538 was raised and will be donated to the foundation. Since the inception of the Hawks program in 2012, the Hawks have contributed over \$8,800 to this cause. The Hawks thanked all who contributed to this cause.

Belltown Looks to Diversify Police

by Elizabeth Regan

East Hampton Police Chief Sean Cox is looking forward to “diversifying the police department” now that residents have voted to hire a new police officer.

“Currently we employ an all-white, male police department. That’s not our goal. It doesn’t accurately reflect the community we police, and we need to work on that,” Cox said after the town meeting on Monday.

There was an emphatic chorus of ‘ayes’ in the East Hampton Middle School library as voters approved the new position. Moderator Red McKinney noted only three ‘nay’ votes out of roughly 30 people in attendance.

The department currently employs 14 officers, plus Cox. He has long said the force is understaffed, a complaint that gained traction after Officer Hardie Burgin was struck by a car while directing traffic in early September. It’s “too soon to tell” when Burgin will return to work, according to Cox.

Cox also cited the importance of conforming with a state law, passed last year, that requires departments to establish guidelines for hiring and retaining minority officers with the goal of promoting racial, gender and ethnic diversity.

“I think people are finally understanding the limitations we have,” Cox said.

While the aging and undersized police station in the basement of the town hall does not have locker room facilities for a female officer, Cox is confident that the department will be able to meet the needs of a more diverse force.

“I think, should it be a female employee that we hire, we would have to make temporary, separate accommodations at first,” he said. “But hopefully now we have the motivating forces to help make some modifications to the existing infrastructure.”

Councilor Melissa Engel, who helped bring back the town’s police canine program earlier this year in part because she said the town could not afford another human officer, cited Burgin’s injury as the motivating factor for the mid-year appropriation.

“I absolutely think it was necessary after Hardie’s accident,” she said following Monday’s town meeting. “We’re already low. We can’t be that low.”

Between the newly-approved position and a police dog purchased this summer through donations, Engel said the department is “going to be in better shape than we’ve provided for in a while.”

She welcomed Cox’s commitment to diversity in the force, expressing optimism that the

See Police Officer page 2

Endorsements Only

Next week’s *Rivereast*, the Nov. 4 edition, is the last before Election Day. As such, all political letters should be endorsements only, or positive in nature. No negative letters will be accepted, as candidates would not be able to reply before Election Day.

Senate Candidates Focus on Economy

by Elizabeth Regan

When it comes to what the 33rd District state senate race is about, an oft-used phrase by longtime Democratic strategist James Carville may sum it up most succinctly: “the economy, stupid.”

Democrat Norman Needleman, the active three-term first selectman from Essex, said his main priority if seated in Hartford would be to “resolve long-term, intractable budget issues” that have plagued the state.

“From resolution of that issue, all other issues can be dealt with,” he explained in an interview Monday.

Needleman, 65, touts restrained spending and investment in economic development, not “onerous taxes on businesses and individuals,” as the way to balance the state budget.

“I think there’s a proclivity to spend money on both sides of the aisle,” Needleman said. “When the budget was slashed to what would’ve been a balanced budget two years ago, all legislators came flocking in with requests from constituents to restore this and restore that. I’m afraid some kind of fiscal discipline needs to be put in there.”

The \$40.3 billion biennial budget passed in 2015 relied on about \$1.3 billion in tax hikes

over two years. A deficit mitigation package and a budget revision were approved this year to try to balance the budget.

Needleman is trying to unseat Republican incumbent Art Linares, 27, as the senator for the 12-town 33rd District, which includes the *Rivereast* towns of Colchester, East Hampton and Portland.

Linares said promoting economic development and job creation has been the focus of his two terms in Hartford and this campaign as well.

“I voted against Gov. Malloy’s tax increases in Hartford and I want to propose solutions to bring jobs back to Connecticut to help grow our economy and control spending so we can lower taxes in this state,” Linares said in an interview Tuesday.

Linares was one of three state senators to vote against this year’s deficit mitigation package. According to *CT News Junkie*, the plan addressed a \$220 million deficit by maintaining



Linares

funding for state hospitals, community nonprofits, and municipalities while sweeping about \$62.1 million from funds outside the general fund and reducing monies for various state agencies by about \$83.4 million.

Linares said on the floor of the senate that the plan didn’t solve the underlying budgeting problems that caused the state’s deficit.

He told the *Rivereast* that the senate Republicans’ agenda for the upcoming session includes the solution to the problem. He’s optimistic his party can win control of the senate and turn those legislative goals into a reality.

Republicans need to win four seats to regain the majority for the first time since 1996, according to the Associated Press.

One of the proposals in the Republican agenda would require the General Assembly to approve all budget-related legislation no later than May 5 so municipalities would know how



Needleman

much funding they’d be receiving when finalizing their own annual budgets.

Linares touted a “great partnership” with state Rep. Melissa Ziobron, R-34, and state Rep. Christie Carpino, R-32, citing efforts to clean up Riverfront Park in Portland and expand the Air Line Trail as projects he has undertaken with them.

A particular source of pride came from securing funding for the \$52 million East Hampton High School renovation along with Ziobron.

“I’m proud of our accomplishment working together on that,” he said.

While conversation among the major party candidates has revolved around job creation and economic development as ways to jumpstart the state economy, a third challenger for the 33rd District is focused on the “clean energy economy.”

See Senate Candidates page 2



Bennett

Senate Candidates cont. from Front Page

Colin Bennett, 37, and a member of the Green Party, said his platform is built on a commitment to change the state's reliance on fossil fuels. He criticized efforts by those like Gov. Dannel P. Malloy, whom he calls "Methane Malloy," to expand the availability of natural gas.

"That's a huge step in the wrong direction," Bennett said. "We need to be investing in renewable energy."

Bennett said an equally important focus is promoting the Black Lives Matter movement that began as a response to police brutality and perceived systemic racism.

"I believe fundamentally we need to have a paradigm shift about how we treat each other and how we treat the planet," Bennett said.

Bennett is a five-time candidate for the state senate district; he has also run for the U.S. House of Representatives and state comptroller.

He tried to run this year as a Democrat, he said, but did not receive the party's nomination.

In a 33rd District candidates' debate last week at Valley Regional High School in Deep River, Bennett explained in his opening remarks that he is "on a mission to help save the world."

Though he declined to participate in the debate beyond his opening remarks due to a disagreement with the debate moderator, Bennett used the opportunity to outline his vision for the state before he left the stage.

"Briefly, this vision can be summed up as such: a Connecticut where all people enjoy safety and security. A Connecticut where no one

goes to bed hungry and everybody has access to health care and excellent schools. Finally, I'm working toward a Connecticut that has a clean, healthy, and thriving environment," he said.

All three candidates are business owners: Needleman is the founder and CEO of a company that develops and manufactures effervescent products, employing more than 200 people; Linares is a co-founder and owner of a commercial solar energy company with 76 employees in Middletown; and Bennett is the owner of a used book store in Deep River that opened in 2015.

Needleman, who has a Bachelor of Science degree in mathematics from Adelphi University, bills himself as someone with the problem-solving skills to take care of the state's budget deficit by promoting small business growth instead of relying on the state's biggest businesses for revenue.

"The math doesn't work," he said. "The state is heavily dependent on several hundred private equity and hedge fund people and if they have a bad year, the state has a bad year."

He emphasized that Connecticut's economy revolves around a few large corporations that are doing well financially but "quite frankly have no soul anymore."

The key is to build businesses "where people live," Needleman said. According to his campaign website, doing so involves strengthening small business incentives and cutting red tape.

Needleman cited involvement with 13 annual

budget cycles in Essex as another example of his affinity for balancing budgets. He said most of the budgets have produced surpluses and have resulted in reserves – commonly referred to as a rainy day fund – amounting to 13 percent of the current budget.

Linares described building a successful company out of his father's basement as an experience that taught him not only about the challenges of being an entrepreneur in Connecticut, but also about how to get people to work together to accomplish a goal.

The state senator, who will soon turn 28, said he also knows how important it is to draw members of the millennial generation to the state. Retaining and attracting young professionals and families to live and work in the state is paramount to successful economic development, as is making sure the state is attractive to retirees.

For Bennett, who runs his part-time bookstore amid numerous paying and volunteer jobs, his commitment is to "people over profit."

Describing Needleman and Linares as "hardcore capitalists," Bennett said he is "absolutely not driven by profit."

The two major party candidates, however, affirm their commitment to improving the economy for everyone – even though they disagree on who can get it done.

According to Linares, it's not the Democrats.

"My concern is that under Gov. Malloy and the Democrat-controlled legislature, under their leadership, we have not seen balanced budgets. We have not seen a growing economy," Linares said.

Needleman, for his part, has criticized Linares for not denouncing presidential candidate Donald Trump in the wake of a growing list of controversial comments and allegations.

Referring to Trump's run as a "horrible campaign," Needleman said Linares "should have denounced it, whether he thought it was politically-expedient or not."

When asked for comment, Linares refused to say whether he continues to support Trump.

"I think my opponent has made who I am voting for for president an issue because he has bankrupted ideas and he's foreclosed upon the opportunity to run a campaign on what he stands for," Linares said.

According to online news source *Lyme Line*, Linares stated during a Sept. 22 debate at Lyme-Old Lyme High School that he would be voting for Trump.

Bennett, who emphasized the need for an alternative to the two-party system, said the refrain of Malloy-blaming and Trump-blaming takes up time that could be better spent talking about issues and experience.

"Being on stage with those two, I have to shake my head. This is the best they can do? It's so frustrating," he said.

Needleman lives in Essex with his life partner, Jacqui Hubbard. He has two sons.

Linares is a Westbrook resident. He graduated with a degree in entrepreneurship from the Sykes College of Business at the University of Tampa.

Bennett, who has a teenaged daughter, lives in Westbrook. He served for 12 years as a Marine Science Technician in the U.S. Coast Guard Reserve. He has been active in many local and state groups addressing environmental and educational concerns. He has a bachelor's degree in communications from Southern Connecticut State University and is working toward a master's degree in women's studies.

Election Day is Tuesday, Nov. 8; polls will be open from 6 a.m.-8 p.m. In East Hampton, voting is at East Hampton Middle School, 19 Childs Rd., and in Portland, it is at Portland Middle School, 93 High St. (a change in location from past years). In Colchester, there are three places to cast ballots – Town Hall, 127 Norwich Ave.; Bacon Academy, 611 Norwich Rd. People unsure of where they vote can call Town Hall at 860-537-7200 or visit dir.ct.gov/sots/LookUp.aspx.

Police Officer cont. from Front Page

council would be willing to authorize additional funding to modify the basement space for a female officer.

"As long as it works within that space, I would like to think he would not be denied that funding to make it more diverse. I think it would be great," Engel said.

Monday's vote clears the way for the department to spend \$54,974 from the current budget on a new officer based on a January start date. The money will come out of the general fund, with \$41,073 being applied to the police patrol budget and the remainder going toward health insurance. The insurance estimate is based on a family rate; if the officer hired for the job needs an individual plan instead, the cost will be lower.

The estimated cost for the additional officer in next year's budget would be about \$109,948 for a full year of salary, insurance, and pension, according to Town Manager Michael Maniscalco.

The estimates are based on the pay rate for 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, according to Cox.

He said a POST-certified candidate with the necessary training and experience could be out on patrol within three months of being hired.

But Cox emphasized multiple agencies are competing for POST-certified candidates, which makes it difficult for East Hampton to lure qualified officers when the station is old, small and lacking in on-site parking. Officers must travel two miles, to a separate facility at 205 East High St., to pick up and drop off their police cruisers and gear.

According to policeapp.com, there are 15 departments currently looking for POST-certified candidates. Salaries range from \$50,382 in East Haven to a maximum of \$88,632 in Norwalk.

The job description and salary is currently being determined, Cox said. It will be posted on the law enforcement recruitment site policeapp.com and in the print media. He said he also plans to send a uniformed officer on a recruitment visit to meet candidates taking the physical fitness assessment required for becoming a police officer in the state.

One of the 'nay' votes at the town meeting belonged to Councilor Ted Hintz Jr. He said after the meeting that he does not support mid-year hires because they deny taxpayers a voice through the annual budget cycle.

Each annual budget is crafted through a months-long process led by the Town Council, Board of Education and Board of Finance that includes multiple public hearings as well as at least one town meeting and referendum.

Hintz said Tuesday that if the understaffing was such a problem, the request for an addi-

tional officer should have been made back when the current budget was being drafted.

However, the Town Council unanimously approved a budget policy statement in January that stated "every effort should be made to maintain or where possible reduce staff."

The charter-mandated exercise of outlining the council's goals for the coming budget cycle 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.

At the time, Engel emphasized the council understood the department's needs but could not afford another employee.

"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 in response to a question about the apparent prohibition on hiring. "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."

While Engel and the rest of the council came around to accept the need for an additional officer after Burgin's injury, Hintz continued to maintain the new position should have been requested before this year's budget was passed.

"If the position was so needed at budget time, no matter what the budget policy statement said, you need to put [it] forward," he said Tuesday.

Hintz said it is not acceptable "if the community's safety is at risk and [Cox] failed to put that into the budget."

On Wednesday, Cox responded that he has never said the safety of the community is at risk.

"I've been steadfast in stating additional staffing would only help us to better serve the community," he said.

Cox has said in multiple public forums that shifts of two officers – the most common scheduling configuration in the department – can react to crimes but cannot take steps to prevent them. He's told officials there's a minimum threshold that must be met before the force can transition from a "strictly patrol department" to a "fully functional department."

Cox further disputed the idea that he could have disregarded the council's directive to maintain current staffing levels.

"While I'm happy to hear [Hintz] agrees the budget policy statement was clear in communicating the restriction against requests for additional employees, it's a chief's primary role to adhere to and enforce policies, not ignore them," Cox said.

Hintz's argument also pointed to the fact that voters rejected proposed budgets multiple times during each of the prior two budget years as evidence that there's not a town-wide appetite for increased spending.

The failed budgets led to the removal of provisions that would have funded a police captain and a half-year position for the department.

Marlborough Hires Temporary Public Works Consultant

by Julianna Roche

Following the resignation of Chris Corsa, who served as Marlborough's Superintendent of Operations for the Public Works Department for the last three years, the Board of Selectmen announced Oct. 18 that John Jones would replace him as a temporary consultant to oversee the department.

Jones' official start date was Tuesday, Oct. 11.

According to First Selectwoman Amy Traversa, Jones served as the director of operations, as well as a variety of other positions, for the Colchester Public Works department for nearly 23 years before retiring.

He also currently serves as board member on Colchester's Board of Selectmen.

"John is well-respected in large part due to his decades of hands-on experience plowing roads, repairing culverts, and maintaining facilities and equipment," Traversa said. "He also has a long history of effectively managing people and schedules, estimating costs and knowing what needs to be done."

In addition to Corsa's resignation, which took effect earlier this month, Traversa had announced that his role 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.

According to Traversa, Jones will supervise and direct the entire public works department

until both of those positions are filled – "however long it takes."

The selectwoman also stated this week that the town has already received a number of applications and resumes; however, in order to "remain neutral and unbiased," the applications will remain sealed until the board can consider every application at once.

In the meantime, Traversa added, Jones and the rest of the department will focus on preparing the town to face any potential challenges that the winter season may bring.

"A lot of preparation is needed to get the town ready for winter and in his two weeks on the job, John has exceeded all of my expectations," Traversa said.

She continued: "Do you remember when Halloween was canceled due to an early-season snowstorm [the nor'easter in October 2011]? It could happen at any time, and John and the crew at public works are making sure we're ready for anything."

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, marlboroughct.net. The next Board of Selectmen meeting is Tuesday, Nov. 1, at 7 p.m., at Town Hall, 26 N. Main St.

Green 'Excited' to Represent the 55th District

by Geeta S. Sandberg

When Marlborough resident Robin Green decided to run for state representative earlier this year, she had no idea she'd be running unopposed.

But unopposed she is, which means following the Nov. 8 election Green will become state representative for the 55th Assembly District, representing Andover, Hebron, Marlborough and Bolton. She'll be replacing Republican Gayle Mulligan, who is concluding her first term and announced in April she won't seek re-election because she's moving out of district.

Green, who is also a Republican, shared this week that at the end of May she heard rumors no one was running against her, and that was confirmed the following month.

"I was very surprised," she said, but added she still ran her campaign as if she was opposed, visiting all four towns, attending events and talking to residents.

"That made it at least to where I could get my feet wet and be more comfortable," she explained. "I was out and about sometimes four to five times a week in the community."

Of meeting some of the individuals she'll be representing, she said, "What was really nice



Green

is how wonderful and open all the folks in all four towns are; they're always eager to talk, willing to talk about their concerns, and even though the state is highly in debt and spending more than it's bringing in, people are still hopeful things can turn around in Connecticut."

Getting the state to control its spending, she added, is one of the biggest issues facing the state.

"That's a big concern for people who are just trying to make it day-to-day and just want the state to live within its means – and it's not," Green explained.

Concern over the state budget was one of the reasons expressed by Green for running when she announced her intentions in May.

She wrote in a press release at that time, "I am deeply concerned with the dire financial situation this state is in, and have heard from so many in our area about how exasperated and frustrated they are. What kind of expertise can help at the state capitol? Someone who knows how to read a budget, manages finances, and spends no more than we take in. I have that experience."

For the last 15 years Green has owned – and grown – her own business, Discovery Zone Learning Center, for children from infancy through five years old. According to the website discoveryzone.info, Discovery Zone provides a "creative, multicultural atmosphere [that] facilitates learning for children at all developmental levels."

Discovery Zone has locations in Columbia

and Hebron, as well as in Marlborough, where Green has lived for the past 10 years with her husband and two children, who currently attend RHAM High School.

Green received a bachelor's degree in human services from Springfield College and, prior to owning her own business, she worked with a non-profit for 18 years as well as the Capitol Region Education Council.

In addition to being on the Marlborough Republican Town Committee, Green is also a member of the Marlborough Arts Center and Museum, the Friends of Richmond Library and the Marlborough Business Association. She has also helped with RHAM Project Graduation, which hosts a drug- and alcohol-free party for RHAM seniors the night of their graduation, and is a member of Friends of Connecticut State Parks and the Connecticut Childcare Association.

Speaking Wednesday to other issues in the state of particular import to the 55th District, Green mentioned funding for education, and taxes.

Along with controlling spending, she said, "We need to make sure our towns receive appropriate funding for education, and stop putting a bigger tax burden on Connecticut residents."

And to help address these issues as she begins in her new role, Green said she plans to educate herself as to how things work at the Capitol, make sure she's on the committee that

best serve the needs of the four towns in the district, and work across party lines.

"I'm really excited about going to the Capitol, really educating myself to make sure I go across party lines, and figuring out with republicans and democrats how to get ourselves out of this hole," Green stated.

Some of that education, however, has already taken place, as Green has had the support and mentorship of Pam Sawyer, who held the same seat for 22 years before Mulligan.

"Pam Sawyer has been just a bucket of knowledge for me. She has been so supportive and very helpful in guiding me through a campaign. It was very nice to know that she was always a phone call away."

Green added, "I'm proud to be following both women; they both have done a lot of work in the Capitol and worked very hard for the towns."

Which is precisely what Green now plans to do. And, she concluded, she wants her soon-to-be-constituents to know that, when elected, she will "have an open-door policy; they can email me any time or call me. I'm there to work for them."

Election Day is Tuesday, Nov. 8; polls are open from 6 a.m.-8 p.m. In Hebron, voting is done at Hebron Elementary School, 92 Church St.; in Andover, it's done in the community room at Town Hall, 17 School Dr.; and in Marlborough, ballots can be cast at Marlborough Elementary School, 25 School Dr.

East Hampton Anniversary Planning Begins in Earnest

by Elizabeth Regan

Buoyed by an infusion of \$20,000 authorized by the Town Council earlier this month, preparations for the town's 250th anniversary celebration have begun in earnest.

The extended anniversary celebration will span all of 2017 as the town looks back on its defining people, places and events since – and even before – Chatham was incorporated in 1767. Festivities will range from the commemorative, like a viewing party for a 250th anniversary video, to the purely social, like a Craft Beer and Food Truck Expo.

There will also be a "graffiti birthday card" making stops at hot spots like the schools, library, senior center and town hall. People are invited to add their signatures and artwork to a vinyl banner to be displayed at next year's Old Home Days.

The \$20,000 appropriation from the general fund to the Parks and Recreation Department was made in order to provide start-up funds for the celebration, funds that will likely be repaid, according to Town Councillor Josh Piteo, who is spearheading the celebration efforts.

"This budget request represents 0.05 percent of the current town budget," Piteo told councilors at their Oct. 11 meeting. "...The goal of the celebration is to make money in the end and have a good time in the process, but we need some starting funds."

Some councilors, like Melissa Engel, expressed confidence that those in charge of the year-long celebration would be able to return the money to the general fund.

That's what happened when the 200th anniversary committee received \$2,000 back in 1967, Piteo said.

The request was granted by a council vote of 5-2, with councilors Ted Hintz Jr. and Mark Philhower opposing the motion. Hintz said he felt the money for the celebration should come via fundraising efforts, not through an infusion of town funds.

Finance Director Jeff Jyllka said the Board of Finance made a recommendation to approve the appropriation.

The same Town Council meeting served as the backdrop to the unveiling of an attractive, blue and gold logo to go with the 250th anniversary's newfound catchphrase: "A rich history, a bright future."

The winners of the logo and catchphrase contest were selected from 17 entries by the Parks and Recreation Department Advisory Board, according to Piteo.

Piteo presented the resident behind the catchphrase, Tim Adams, with a bell custom-made by Bevin Bells of East Hampton to honor the occasion.

The logo was designed by John Denner, who was unable to attend the meeting.

"This logo and phrase will be used in all official town documents celebrating the 250th anniversary of the town," Piteo said. "We encourage all outside supporters to use these designs in their own publications and their own clubs and organizations. We give them to the outside parties most willingly."

Even though there could only be one winner, other submitted catchphrases that captured the spirit of the event included Robert Olivieri's "where small-town life is enjoyed by all;" Ethan Hall's "life on the lake;" Jordan Werme's "the Belltown is ringing;" and Karen R. Johansmeyer's "a town where history lives."

Piteo said he is leading the 250th anniversary celebration in cooperation with the Parks and Recreation Department and an ad hoc committee group of 10 residents.

"To date, this process is working well," Piteo said. "As we get into 2017, this may change with more people wanting to get involved but for now this system works."

The 250th anniversary's Internet home can be found at eh250.org. The site is the repository of historical information, photos, and event listings as well as a point of contact for those



East Hampton resident Tim Adams, shown here with his daughter, was honored earlier this month for his winning entry in the 250th Anniversary logo and catchphrase contest. His tagline – "A rich history, a bright future" – will surround a logo by resident John Denner as the trademark for the year-long celebration of the town's 1767 incorporation.

interested in volunteering or making a donation.

Photos on the website so far have been contributed by the Chatham Historical Society and the Arts and Culture Commission.

Those who would like to volunteer with the ad hoc committee or add an event to the 250th anniversary calendar are asked to contact Parks and Recreation Director Jeremy Hall by phone

at 860-267-7300 or email at jhall@easthamptonct.gov.

"It is important to the 250th Anniversary Committee that an honest and accurate account of East Hampton's history be presented, with plenty of the celebratory high points, but also inclusive of the challenges that have faced the town over the years," the ad hoc committee wrote on the website.

Tax Exemption Committee for Colchester Firefighters Established

by Julianna Roche

As a result of new state legislation extending tax abatements to include retired volunteer firefighters, the Board of Selectmen has begun interviewing candidates to appoint to the Colchester Hayward Volunteer Fire Department (CHVFD) Tax Exemption Eligibility Committee, a new committee formed to help determine which firefighters are eligible for the exemptions.

In early August, Dave Martin, president of the Colchester Hayward Volunteer Fire Company, presented the new tax abatement plan to the Board of Selectmen, which enables retired volunteer firefighters (who have offered their services for at least 25 years) to receive tax breaks.

According to Martin, these firefighters are considered “life members” and at CHVFD, 11 of those members are still active, meaning they are still responding to emergency calls. Currently, there is a tax abatement plan in effect in Colchester, but it only applies to current active members who qualify with a set amount of calls responded to each year. For example, the exemption is \$1,000 if a member responds to 175 or more emergency calls within one tax year

and \$500 for responding to 125 calls.

But new state Public Act No. 16-99, which took effect July 1, extends those tax exemptions to include retired volunteer firefighters. The act states that “any municipality may establish, by ordinance, a program to provide property tax relief for... any individual who is a retired volunteer firefighter, fire police officer or emergency medical technician and has completed at least 25 years of service” in that position in town.

According to the bylaws for the CHVFD Tax Exemption Eligibility Committee (which are listed on the town’s website, colchesterct.gov, under the “boards and commissions” link), the committee will consist of three members and no more than two of them may be CHVFD members. Each appointment lasts for a four-year term and the committee will be charged with submitting a certified list identifying the CHVFD members who are eligible for an exemption to the town assessor on or before Dec. 1 of each year.

At last week’s Board of Selectmen meeting, selectmen interviewed two potential committee members – Richard Peruta and Laura

Steinmeyer – both of whom have a longstanding history working in fire departments.

Peruta – who has over 35 years’ experience working for the Wethersfield Fire Department, including 20 years as an officer – said his experience managing nearly 30 department members and keeping track of their records, training and responsibilities would be an asset to the committee if he was appointed.

“I think I’ve got a pretty good handle on what the stresses [are for firefighters], he added, especially in terms of “time and commitment.”

During the interview, Peruta also mentioned he has worked all over the state, managing and assisting with large scale incidents, such as Hurricane Sandy in 2012, when the state deployed him to Long Island for two weeks.

“He has been essential in our department, not as a member but as an outside citizen taking care of our problems,” vouched board member and CHVFD member John Jones, who has known Peruta since the late 1970s, when he worked at Colchester Emergency Communications (KX), the now-defunct emergency services dispatch center.

Jones said he has also known Steinmeyer for

“a number of years,” calling her a “member of the fire department in very good standing” and “a very devoted member.”

When asked by selectman Stan Soby what skills or talents she could bring to the committee, Steinmeyer, a CHVFD member and EMT, said years of working closely with other firefighters would be an asset, should she be appointed.

“I think first and foremost is being a member of the fire department,” she said. “I certainly understand some of the sacrifices that people make volunteering. ... It would certainly be an honor to play a role in having that service recognized by tax abatements.”

Because the committee’s bylaws state that no more than two of its members can also be CHVFD members, Steinmeyer would make one of the two if she is appointed.

After thanking both candidates, First Selectman Art Shilosky stated that the board would interview a third candidate and reach a final decision at the next Board of Selectmen meeting, which will be held Thursday, Nov. 3, at 7 p.m., at Town Hall, 127 Norwich Ave.

Marlborough’s Potential Property Purchase Moves to Public Hearing

by Julianna Roche

At Wednesday’s special Board of Finance meeting, board members voted 5-0 (with one abstaining vote from board member Ken Hjulstrom) to move the town’s potential purchase of the 17 East Lake Rd. property to a public hearing next month.

During a presentation to the finance board regarding the property, First Selectwoman Amy Traversa explained the town was “approached out of the blue” by property owner James Dwyer about purchasing the land where a small cottage sits adjacent to Blish Park with a waterfront view of Lake Terramuggus.

The town has since signed a purchase agreement with Dwyer (which was presented to board members during the meeting), which states it will purchase the property for \$200,000, with a Dec. 31, 2016 closing date, “before budget season begins,” Traversa added.

Dwyer is “in a stage where his family is gone and he wants to move into retirement,” Traversa told the finance board. “He said he always loved the idea of having it be something for the town.”

Traversa added that her first thoughts were the property could be “a great place to put a community center someday.”

Several board members expressed concern, however, about the legality of the purchase agreement and also if the negotiated price was appropriate considering the property owner told Traversa, the home “is not something [the town] wants to salvage.”

Additionally, there have been no formal inspections done inside the house yet.

Traversa (who has done a walkabout outside the home with Town Planner Peter Hughes) said she expected to have inspections done before the public hearing on Nov. 9. Hughes also backed the selectwoman at the meeting and stated he didn’t foresee any major issues com-

ing from the inspection.

Traversa also added that the purchase agreement did have “loopholes in it for us to get out of it” in the event the inspections turned up “adverse conditions, like asbestos.”

However, Hjulstrom – who has worked in real estate for over 12 years – stated he was “not convinced” and had “trouble justifying” that \$200,000 was a good price for the property, stating for example, if demolition or rehabilitation of the home was necessary after inspection, it could bring on additional costs for the town.

“You’re treating this \$200,000 as if it’s a pristine house,” he said.

Some board members echoed Hjulstrom’s concerns about additional costs beyond the original \$200,000 purchasing price (such as closing costs, utility fees, etc.), to which Traversa argued that, if there were any, they would be “nominal.”

She also added that the town would “shut the property down” so there would be no ongoing utility costs, especially since the town is not anticipating using the house – they just need to first assess the interior condition of the home. Traversa also stated the building would also be boarded up so as not to create any “illegal hangouts.”

“I’m not an appraiser. We haven’t put any money into this [yet],” she added. “We’ve just looked at the property and this [potentially building a community center] is what we’d like to do in the future. Are we going to sit here and squabble over bits and pieces of it?”

According to Knowlton, to fund the \$200,000 property purchase, the town would use \$50,000 from the open space fund, \$22,000 from the land acquisition fund, \$50,000 from the undesignated capital expenditure reserve within the capital non-recurring fund, and the remaining \$78,000 from the undesignated fund bal-



On Nov. 9, the Board of Finance will hold a public hearing in Marlborough Elementary School’s media room at 7 p.m., where residents can vote on whether the town should move forward with the purchase of this 17 East Lake Rd. property, which sits adjacent to Blish Park.

ance.

Despite voting in favor of moving the potential purchase to a public meeting, board member Erik Young also expressed hesitancy about the purchase during the discussion, agreeing with some of Hjulstrom’s concerns, stating he thought the purchase agreement was “poorly-written” and questioned whether it was even a legal contract – to which Chairman Doug Knowlton said it’s “probably not.”

“If this goes to public hearing, the public needs to know all of this,” Young said.

“This is a want, not a need,” the select-

woman emphasized, “and I’ve been very forthright about that, but [this is] an opportunity to do something in conjunction with the park that we otherwise wouldn’t be able to.”

The public will have a chance to decide for themselves at the public hearing, which will be held at the finance board meeting Wednesday, Nov. 9, at 7 p.m. at Marlborough Elementary School’s media room. From there, the proposal would go to a town meeting in December so that, Traversa said, “we can close this out before the end of the year and before budget season begins.”

Portland Grapples with \$10 Million Question

by Elizabeth Regan

While the race between presidential candidates has dominated the news, voters in Portland find themselves with an impactful but much less-publicized decision to make.

For some in town, it's a question of wants versus needs.

This year's ballot asks for a 'yes' or 'no' vote on a \$10 million bond package, appropriating \$6 million for a large-scale recreation complex on Route 17, \$2.5 for improvements to deteriorating roads like Brownstone Avenue, and \$1 million to fix sidewalks on streets adjacent to town schools. It also sets aside \$500,000 for miscellaneous projects including repairs to roofs on the town garage and Fire Company 2 as well as police station windows.

The shorter-lived projects, like sidewalks and capital equipment, would be bonded out over 10 years, according to town financial advisor David Eisenthal. The park and the roads would be bonded out over 20 years.

At a town meeting Wednesday, Parks and Recreation Commission Chairman Ralph Zampano said the park is necessary not just to serve the recreational needs of all residents, but also to draw new, taxpaying families to town.

"I see the 'For Sale' signs that are in Portland and I see how long they're there. To me, that reflects on whether we are still relevant in this area as being a place for young families to land," he said.

But Long Range Capital Commission Chairman Michael Agogliati said his group did not look at it that way when it crafted its list of \$33.01 million in capital priorities as requested by the Board of Selectmen.

The long range capital commissioners called the park a "want."

"I'm not in favor of this question at all," Agogliati said at the meeting. "I don't like the way [the Board of Selectmen] divvied out the money."

If the question fails, Agogliati said, it's not the end of the road for the various improvements: "We'll have to come up with a Plan B on all these projects, which can be done through the process of budgeting."

According to Agogliati, the Long Range Capital Commission classified the new park as a "want" because "there's not a park there."

He described immediate needs as existing needs: leaking roofs, rutted parking lots, crumbling sidewalks and windows falling out of buildings.

"You've got houses falling apart, do you go buy a summer home?" he asked. "That's a 'want.'"

The commission provided a list in early August that detailed \$2.73 million in "absolute needs" to be addressed in one year or less. The list included 25 projects ranging from \$50,000

in communication upgrades for the fire department to \$500,000 for traffic safety upgrades in the parking and drop-off areas at Gildersleeve School.

The commission's list of "needs," which it defined as projects to be addressed in 1-3 years, came in at \$12.2 million.

The Board of Selectmen decided on Aug. 26, at a meeting scheduled only a day in advance and attended by four out of seven members, to prioritize four of those "absolute needs" for inclusion in a \$10 million bond appropriation.

The list accounted for \$500,000 of the \$2.73 million "absolute needs" identified by the long range capital commissioners.

In addition to the roof repairs and police station windows, the selectmen's choices included condensing units for the library and furnaces in the town garage and Fire Company 1.

At Wednesday's town meeting, some residents also wondered why the town would assign \$1 million to fix sidewalks when town ordinance specifies it is the responsibility of homeowners to keep their sidewalks in good repair.

Selectman Michael Pelton, a member of the board's sidewalk sub-committee, said the existing ordinance has been enforced "very little" to date and has resulted in unsafe conditions on many sidewalks. That's why the subcommittee is working on a proposed revision to the sidewalk ordinance that might assign the responsibility for sidewalk maintenance to the town.

The \$1 million price tag for sidewalks only addresses a portion of a 7.8-mile, \$3.22 million sidewalk project detailed in a memo from public works department director Rick Kelsey. The selectmen's pared-down version focuses only on the streets in a half-mile radius of the town's schools, according to Pelton.

Resident Tim Lavoy called the sidewalk request a large cost for taxpayers to take on.

"People knew for years it was their responsibility and [the town] never enforced it. I get that. But you shouldn't just send that bill to everybody else," Lavoy said.

The bonding package includes \$2.5 million for road improvements that First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield said would likely address Brownstone Avenue. Other possibilities, to be determined by the selectmen, include Spring Street, the Maple Road area and possibly some other rural roads affected by frequent drainage issues.

"The decision will be the Board of Selectmen's, based on staff's input and recommendations as well. I would also request a public hearing before the final decisions are made, to provide good input from the community. We would follow the same process for sidewalk improvements, with special consideration to the



Proponents of the \$6 million proposed Portland Town Park hope to provide recreational opportunities, increased property values and a commitment to green space through its portion of the \$10 million bond package up for vote on Nov. 8.

areas around the schools," she said in an email this week.

The \$6 million proposed park on Route 17 has been over a decade in the making, ever since residents voted to purchase a 37-acre property from Nelson Goodrich for \$510,000. The last payment on that purchase was made this year, according to Zampano.

The design from the engineering firm Weston & Sampson, delivered last year, includes 226 parking spaces, two natural turf soccer fields and two baseball fields. A playground, splash pad, fitness circuit, paved multi-use path and nature trail were designed to provide recreational outlets for all ages. Other attractions include a bocce ball court, horseshoe pit and multiple picnic areas. A recreation barn and a concession stand both have room for storage.

The park will be a year-round resource, with parking being reduced to one lot during the winter to cut down on plowing requirements. There will be a sledding hill created when soil is moved during construction and a skating rink when the wetlands are groomed to hold water near the park entrance.

A paved, multi-use path and a fitness circuit, as well as a nature trail, provide recreational outlets for all ages, according to proponents.

The splash pad is a response to feedback from residents who say they leave town in the summer – taking their lunch money with them – to enjoy water features in other towns, according to Zampano. While many people were clamoring for a pool, he said a splash pad is a less expensive option that still keeps people in town.

Park proponents on the Parks and Recreation Commission and the Recreational Park Steering Committee have emphasized at meetings throughout the year that the town does not own the soccer fields at YMCA's Camp Ingersoll off Route 66 or the baseball diamonds at Tomasso Little League field on Airline Avenue.

Bransfield said the lease arrangements with

the camp and the asphalt producer do not cost the town anything in terms of renting the space; instead, the expense comes from maintaining the fields.

The town also does not own the Oakwood Soccer Club facility on Route 17, which proponents cite as a common misconception.

Resident Shirley Olson spoke at the town meeting to say she understood Zampano's view that bringing new families to Portland is critical to the town's long-term success.

But she reminded the audience there's another crucial element of the tax base when she invoked the specter of the former Elmcrest Hospital property that continues to haunt Portland.

"I don't disagree with Ralph's analysis of making the town grow by increasing the population," she said. "However, simultaneously there needs to be business brought into this town, and that's not happening. The Elmcrest project failed for the second time. This needs to be looked at carefully. Really, really carefully."

Registered voters in town will see the referendum question on their general election ballot. Those who live elsewhere but own at least \$1,000 in taxable property in Portland can vote by absentee ballot or on the day of election by filing out a ballot with the referendum question only, according to Town Clerk Ryan Curley.

The diverse projects come together to form one question on the referendum ballot: "Shall the town of Portland appropriate \$10,000,000 for construction of a new public park located on Route 17, reconstruction and repair of town roads and sidewalks, and miscellaneous capital expenditures, and finance the appropriation by issuing the town's bonds, notes and other obligations in an amount not to exceed \$10,000,000?"

There are only two choices: 'yes' or 'no.'

Hebron Admin Reviews Last School Year, Shares Priorities

by Geeta S. Sandberg

At the October Board of Education meeting, district administration presented a year-end review of the 2015-16 school year as well as priorities for the current year.

Schools Superintendent Tim Van Tassel explained at the beginning of the last school year "we met during convocation and we talked about the district priorities for the 2015-16 year. We discussed them with staff, which really kind of set the expectations and goals for the year."

And the work that took place "was really something to be tremendously proud of," he stated.

"I can't say enough to the administrative team for leading the work, and to all of the staff that worked for Hebron Public schools," Van Tassel said. "So much was done for the benefit of our children; the work that was done in a year is a tribute to the great efforts of everybody."

Patricia Buell, director of educational services, echoed those remarks, explaining "we made tremendous progress thanks to the staff that comes here and works every day so hard for the children. We really have made a lot of progress and I think that's really a credit to maintaining focus and ensuring we stay on course with the initiatives we had chosen."

Gilead Hill School Principal Eric Brody talked about some of the initiatives and areas that were worked on last year, which included a focus on three main areas: professional learning, academic achievement, and curriculum and programming.

Under the first focus, he explained, work continued on the implementation of a new writing program, a new math program and standards based report cards.

Professional development included, for the writing program, site visits, the development of writing rubrics, and the calibration of teachers on writing units and scoring writing; for the math program, bringing in a consultant, scheduling math implementation meetings, and the allocation of afterschool hours for planning and assessment; and for the report cards, developing rubrics, aligning the reports to core standards and units of study, creating a parent report card companion document and holding parent forums to answer questions and provide information.

Regarding academic achievement, Hebron Elementary School Principal Katie Urriano explained work was conducted on the computerized adaptive assessment the district uses three

times a year, from which both principals wrote school goals.

She explained, among other things, a universal screening calendar was developed, and a consultant was brought in to help teachers understand how to take the results and use them for instruction by, for example, identifying strengths and weaknesses.

Work was also done surrounding writing, and how to use writing as an assessment.

"Writing can be a subjective thing to assess," Urriano explained. "So a lot of time was spent scoring as a group and calibrating between teachers so they're all on the same page and able to use writing pieces for assessment and further instruction after the fact."

Among other things, work was also done on reading assessments used in the district, and unit assessments in math were piloted.

Finally, regarding curriculum and programming, Urriano shared the district continued efforts to align with Common Core State Standards, worked on tiered interventions, the district's Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) program, and unit-based scope and sequencing, which is a list of all the ideas, concepts and topics covered in a particular unit.

The work that was done last year, Buell explained, "Set the stage and direction" for the current year.

"All that work led us to the next point in the road; so that being said, we're heading forward again" she stated, and following district priorities for the current year that continue to focus on professional learning, academic achievement, and curriculum and programming through work on some of the same areas and initiatives as last year.

"We're not changing direction; we're staying the course," Buell said. "We're just taking it to the next level."

Van Tassel concluded, "When you look at the amount that's been accomplished over the course of the year, it is significant."

He added, "We made tremendous gains last year. The state assessment results do reveal that, and I just can't thank [staff and administration] enough."

The next Hebron Board of Education meeting takes place Thursday, Nov. 10 at 7 p.m., in the music room at Gilead Hill School, 580 Gilead St.

Obituaries

Colchester

Edwin M. Edwards Jr.

Edwin "Sonny" M. Edwards Jr., 75, of Colchester, beloved husband of Barbara (Kinne) Edwards, died Wednesday, Oct. 19, at Marlborough Medical Center. Born Jan. 23, 1941, in Hartford, he was the son of the late Edwin and Ann (Solarz) Edwards.



Sonny grew up in Glastonbury and was a graduate of Glastonbury High School. He was employed as an electrician for Northeast Utilities for more than 30 years until his retirement five years ago. He was a member of the sons of the American Legion, and a life member of the Glastonbury Elks Club. Sonny enjoyed fishing and hunting; he also enjoyed traveling to Alaska and Costa Rica. He also looked forward to playing cards with his friends on Wednesday nights.

Besides his loving wife Barbara, he is survived by his brother, Marion Osmanski and wife Sabrina of Storrs; two sisters, Patty St. Jean and husband Roger of Middletown, Betty Dejkus and husband Bob of Massachusetts; and his dear friends, Kevin and Amanda Reid and their children Jared, Bryce and Morgan.

A funeral liturgy was celebrated Wednesday, Oct. 26, in St. Paul Church, 2577 Main St., Glastonbury, followed by burial in St. John the Baptist Ukrainian Catholic Cemetery in Glastonbury.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to Colchester Ambulance Service, 52 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester, CT 06415 or to Middlesex Hospital Hospice c/o Middlesex Hospital Department of Philanthropy, 55 Crescent St., Middletown, CT 06457.

To leave online condolences, visit spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

Portland

Karen Childs

Karen (Ghent) Childs, of Portland and Orlando, Fla., was called home by her father on his birthday, Saturday, Oct. 1. Born in Middletown July 12, 1965, she is the daughter of Joyce and the late C. Paul Ghent.



Karen grew up in Portland and was very active in local athletics. She was one of the first female Little League players in town and played softball and soccer during high school. After graduation from Portland High School in 1983 and New Hampshire College in 1987 with a degree in marketing, she settled in the Orlando, Fla., area. Karen loved playing darts at the bar, watching the Boston Red Sox and New England Patriots and trips to the casino.

Karen was predeceased by her father, C. Paul Ghent, and cousin, Pamela Harmon. Besides her mother, she is survived by the greatest love of her life, her daughter Hannah. She also leaves behind her sister, Lynne Nursick and her husband James; brother, Todd Ghent and his wife Renee; sister, Lori Brown and her husband Michael; brother, Thomas Ghent and his wife Missy. Karen was adored by her nieces and nephews: Kristen (Nursick) Wilson, Matthew and Jessica Nursick, Amanda Ghent, Kelly, Justin and Jacklyn Brown, Ashley and Tyler Ghent and her great-niece Reagan and leaves her loving cousins, aunts and uncles and longtime best friend, Janine Nebbia.

The family would like to express its sincerest gratitude to Wadsworth Glen and Middlesex Hospital Hospice for their overwhelming compassion and care.

Her funeral service was held Thursday, Oct. 6, at 9:30 a.m., from Portland Memorial Funeral Home, 231 Main St., Portland, when the funeral cortege proceeded to Zion Lutheran Church for a service that morning. Burial followed in the Swedish Cemetery. Relatives and friends were received Wednesday, Oct. 5, at the Portland Memorial Funeral Home.

In lieu of flowers, donations in memory of Karen Childs may be made to Zion Lutheran Church, 193 William St., Portland, CT 06480 or Middlesex Hospital Hospice, 28 Crescent St., Middletown, CT 06457.

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

East Hampton

Rhonda T. Kissinger

Rhonda T. (Choiniere) Kissinger, 67, of East Hampton, beloved wife of Stephen Kissinger, died Friday, Oct. 21, at Middlesex Hospital Hospice. Born Sept. 27, 1949, in Newport, Vt., she was the daughter of Evelyn Hurlburt of Vermont and the late Raymond Choiniere.



Rhonda graduated from East Hampton High School and had retired from Wesleyan University after 35 years. She had worked in the religious studies department, where she was an administrative assistant. Rhonda was a 10-year member of the East Hampton Old Home Days Committee.

The matriarch of the Kissinger household, Rhonda's open arms welcomed all into her home and "The Rail." She was blessed with so many loving friends, which is a true testament to her huge heart and acceptance. With a book in hand, the beach was her favorite place to be. She enjoyed craft fairs, gardening, motorcycle rides and cruising in the convertible with her devoted, loving husband of 45 years. Stephen was truly the love of her life and they were a beautiful couple.

Rhonda was strong both inside and out and although she lost her battle with cancer, she fought courageously until the end and gave all of us so much inspiration. Rhonda was a devoted wife, a loving mother and grandmother, and was the foundation of her family. She will be missed by all and forever in our memories.

Besides her mother and her husband Steve, Rhonda is survived by her son, Eric Kissinger and his wife Heather of Portland; her daughter, Elisha Milton and her husband Richard of Manchester; two brothers, Owen Choiniere and wife Janice of East Hampton, Raymond Choiniere of Vermont; a sister, Michelle Zoldak and husband Robert of East Hampton; and her five grandchildren, MaryJane, Easton and Evan Kissinger, and Bryson and Mia Milton.

Friends called at the Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton, Wednesday evening, Oct. 26. A memorial service was held Thursday, Oct. 27, in the funeral home, followed by burial in Lake View Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to East Hampton Old Home Days Association P.O. Box 213 East Hampton, CT 06424.

To leave online condolences, visit spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

Andover

Bonnie Ann Eells

Bonnie Ann (Williams) Eells, 76, of Andover, beloved wife of 58 years of Robert S. Eells, passed away peacefully, after an extended illness, Thursday, Oct. 20, at Manchester Memorial Hospital.

She was born June 11, 1940, in Hartford, daughter of the late Frank and Rose May (Wright) Williams. Bonnie was employed as an L.P.N. for over 13 years at Rockville General Hospital until her retirement in 2004. She attended Andover Congregational Church.

Bonnie enjoyed going to the beach and watching and attending UConn women's basketball games. She was an avid and gifted gardener who was well known for growing her delicious vegetables.

In addition to her husband Bob, she is survived by her two sons and daughters-in-law, Joseph and Rachel Eells of Columbia and Stephen and Christine Eells of Hebron; her two grandsons, Jeffrey Eells and his fiancée Alyssa of Manchester and Mark Eells of Hebron. Bonnie also leaves her two brothers and sisters-in-law, Terry and Connie Williams of Waterford and David and Lynore Williams of Amston; and many nieces, nephews and many wonderful friends.

In addition to her parents, she was predeceased by her son, Billy Eells; her two brothers, Norman and Fran Williams; and her sister, Joan Chesanek.

Calling hours were at Watkins Funeral Home, 142 East Center St., Manchester, Sunday, Oct. 23. Funeral services were held Monday, Oct. 24, at Andover Congregational Church, Route 6, Andover. Burial followed in New Hebron Cemetery, Wall Street, Hebron.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the Andover Fire Department, 11 School Rd., Andover, CT 06232.

To leave an online condolence, visit holmes-watkinsfuneralhomes.com.

Colchester

Kenneth M. Bujnowski

Kenneth M. Bujnowski, 74, died unexpectedly at his home Wednesday, Oct. 19. He was born in Norwich Oct. 21, 1941, to the late Zygmunt and Jean (Dombrowski) Bujnowski; he was the husband of Xenia (Varnish) Bujnowski, who survives him.

Ken graduated from NFA and continued his education at Silverman College of Arts, AFA; Yale University, school of Fine Arts and University of Hartford, MFA. Ken taught sculpture, design and color theory at several colleges and created and forged his own sculptures that were exhibited throughout New England and New York. His works have made it into private collections throughout the U.S. and Denmark.

Ken was a carpenter for the Connecticut Carpenter's Union Local 24, member of the Slater Art Museum, Connecticut Commission on the Arts and multiple other organizations. When not sculpting, Ken enjoyed hunting, fishing, boating and skiing.

Ken is survived by his wife, Xenia Bujnowski of Colchester; his sister, Beverly Maurice of Norwich; and sister-in-law, Mary Bujnowski.

In addition to his parents, he was predeceased by his brothers Richard and Donald and sister Dolores.

Funeral services will be held at a later date.

The Belmont Funeral Home in Colchester has been entrusted with Ken's care.

Colchester Police News

10/17: Colchester Police said that sometime between 6 and 10 p.m., a vehicle was stolen from a resident's driveway on West Road. According to police, the victim believes that a key for the vehicle was obtained during a burglary that occurred at his residence in August of this year. The stolen vehicle is a red 2010 Toyota Corolla with Connecticut registration and license plate BG6020. The case is still under investigation.

10/18: Colchester Police said Kayla L. Smith, 19, of 335 Linwood Cemetery Rd., was arrested and charged with failure to respond to a payable violation.

10/18: Colchester Police said Peter A. Ezold, 32, of 87 White Birch Dr., Guilford and

Margarita C. Robita, 27, of 12 Balaban Rd. Apt. 608, were arrested and charged with illegal possession of a narcotic, possession of drug paraphernalia and simple trespass. Ezold was also charged with possession of a narcotic out of a container, while Robita was charged with possession of less than half an ounce of cannabis.

10/18: Colchester Police said Matheau Willette, 26, of 25 Victoria Dr., was arrested and charged with possession of drug paraphernalia and illegal possession of a narcotic.

10/23: Colchester Police said David S. Hurlbut, 34, of 27 West Coit St., New London, was arrested and charged with threatening and disorderly conduct: threatening.

East Hampton Police News

10/14: Demtrios H. Katras, 38, of 166 Comstock Tr., was taken into custody pursuant to an active warrant for his arrest and charged with first-degree larceny, East Hampton Police said.

10/14: Christopher A. Scaplen, 31, whom police said they had no certain address for, was taken into custody pursuant to an active warrant for his arrest and charged with violation of prob

A

Andover Police News

10/22: State Police said that Philip Faticanti, 73, of 231 Gilead Rd., was arrested and charged with second-degree violation of conditions of release, disorderly conduct, interfering with an emergency call, third-degree assault and second-degree strangulation.

From the Editor's Desk

Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

The best World Series, of course, are the ones that involve my New York Mets.

But, if that can't happen this year, I suppose Cubs-Indians is a pretty awesome alternative.

The team that's gone the longest without winning a world championship with the team that's gone the second-longest. And we're not talking a few decades here. The Cubs last won the World Series in 1908, and the Indians in 1948.

So no matter who wins, it's going to be a team that hasn't taken home a world championship in a long, long, long time.

Really, the fact that the Cubs are even in the World Series is rather amazing. The team hadn't even won a National League pennant since 1945. They've come close in the 70 years since, but haven't quite closed the door. Many Cubs fans would be forgiven for wondering if they'd ever see a pennant in their lifetime. But, here they are.

And here's an interesting piece of trivia: even with the seven decades between World Series appearances, the Cubs are still one of the winningest teams in the National League, having collected 17 pennants in the franchise's history (including six pennants won between 1876 and 1889, when the team was known as the Chicago White Stockings – not to be confused with the similar-sounding Chicago White Sox). That's as many as the Braves franchise has, and more than the Pirates, Reds, Phillies and, yes, my Mets.

Anyway, who am I rooting for? As I've written here in the past, I'm a National League fan, plus, I have several friends who are Cubs fans. So I'm pulling for the Cubbies. Although, to be honest, I won't be too disappointed if Cleveland wins either. Like I said earlier, something's got to give. History's going to be made no matter who wins.

* * *

The third and final presidential debate was last Wednesday. I've shared my thoughts on Trump here before, several times in fact, so I won't beat a dead horse. You all know where I stand. But I will briefly offer a few thoughts on Trump I took from that final debate.

I just cannot stand this guy. Can't stand him. Beyond his terrible ideas, beyond his lies, beyond his arrogance, he is just so, so childish. At one point, when Hillary mentioned him being a puppet, he interrupted her by shooting back, "You're the puppet! You're the puppet!" like he was 8 years old. If there were to be a fourth debate, should we have expected a Pee Wee Herman-style "I know you are but what am I"?

Refusing to say he'd accept the results of this election, despite what his running mate and his own daughter have already said? Pathetic. And Hillary was correct in noting he's been playing the "this is rigged!" card for a long time when he doesn't get his way. Why? Again, because he's a child.

Seriously, though: For the third debate in a row, The Donald started calmly and then within 20 minutes was flying off the handle at the slightest provocation. A president shouldn't behave like that. It's scary to think of that temperament trying to have sensible discussions with other foreign leaders, including our enemies. Each of these debates, he's made it crystal clear why I don't want him anywhere near the nuclear football codes.

* * *

Halloween is just around the corner, so, in keeping with the season, here's one of my favorite, short-but-sweet jokes:

A skeleton walks into a bar and orders a drink and a mop.

* * *

There's an interesting public hearing coming up in Colchester in a couple weeks. The Board of Education is considering renaming a school in town to honor a late longtime first selectwoman.

Concetta "Jenny" Contois passed away Oct. 12, 2015. A staunch Democrat, Contois was the town's first selectwoman for 15 years, and became something of a beloved figure in Colchester.

During her time in office, Contois oversaw the building of the current Town Hall, renovations and additions to Cragin Library, and renovations to the town's schools – including the building of Colchester Elementary School. And now, the board is thinking of renaming CES in her memory.

The suggestion came from a pair of residents, Art Liverant and Michelle Gilman, at a school board meeting in January. The pair thought it would be an incredibly fitting honor, given Contois' involvement with the construction of CES. "We have that school because of Jenny," Liverant said at the time.

The board kicked around the idea for a bit, and decided to hold a public forum on the matter, to gauge citizens' input.

That forum will take place Wednesday, Nov. 9, at 7 p.m., in Town Hall, 127 Norwich Ave. The forum will be in what's now known as "Contois Room 1" – as the Town Hall's three meeting rooms were in January renamed in Contois' honor.

All Colchester residents are invited to attend and share their views on the matter. Those unable to attend the forum but who'd still like to offer their comments can email them to Superintendent of Schools Jeff Mathieu at mathieuj@colchesterct.org.

As it stands now, CES is the winner of the "one of these things is not like the other" game, as the other three schools in town – Jack Jackter Intermediate School, William J. Johnston Middle School and Bacon Academy – are all named after people. It'll be interesting to see if the Board of Education decides CES should follow suit.

* * *

See you next week.