



RIVEREAST

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Hoping to Help Others... Beth and Dan Bolduc of East Hampton knew their daughter, Mae, was a fussy baby – but they had no idea why. It wasn't until she was about 10 months old that testing revealed Mae had suffered a stroke at birth. Now the family – which includes a goat named Marilyn – hopes to become a source of support for other families touched by pediatric stroke. *See story on page 24.*

Belltown Hub Concept Moving Forward

by Elizabeth Regan

The East Hampton Town Council has apparently agreed on a general concept for updating the town's aging and inadequate facilities – but the cost and timeline for the proposed municipal hub remains unknown.

By the end of a workshop Tuesday night attended by more than 50 people, councilors appeared to have coalesced around the idea of moving fourth- and fifth-graders into Memorial School while renovating the old Center School for use by Town Hall offices, the police department and possibly the Board of Education.

Five members of the council – Democrat James "Pete" Brown was out of town and Republican Melissa Engel was waylaid by downed trees – took in five options presented by Friar Associates. The Farmington-based architectural, engineering and design firm was hired in April to assess the practicality and cost of using Center School as a municipal hub, among other options. The report is an update of the firm's comprehensive 2008 facilities evaluation.

The presentation was given by Michael Sorano, vice president of Friar Associates. He directed those at the meeting to the town website to access a copy of the 94-page report. The document was added prior to the meeting, and can be found at easthamptonct.org/Pages/facilities.

Sorano said the various floor plans included

in the report are concepts meant to generate discussion so councilors can decide which option best fits the town's needs. He emphasized that the schematics do not represent what the final blueprints will look like.

"The next move for the Town Council will be to pick a direction and then select an architect and construction manager to actually put together the floor plan that you're going to put out to bid and go to referendum with," Sorano said.

He said the timeline and cost projections in the report are based on the submission of grant application to the state by June 30. The project could be complete by June 2019.

Preliminary cost estimates – which, like the floor plans, are meant as a discussion piece and not as a final product – came in at \$24.4 million for the most heavily-discussed option. It includes a 14,000-square foot addition to Memorial School and a 10,600-square foot addition to Center School. A property purchase authorized by voters in December will allow for police department parking across the street from the proposed hub.

Another option also includes a 14,000-square foot addition to Memorial School, but broaches the possibility of a renovated and expanded gym with a full-sized basketball court and bleacher space. The addition to Center School would

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Colchester Foursome Raises Record Amount

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

It was the coldest year yet for the Colchester foursome who go "Freezin' for a Reason" every February – but it was also the most successful year yet.

Selectman Stan Soby, Colchester Police officer Rob Suchecki, Fire Chief Walter Cox, and resident Fred Brown braved subzero temperatures – and wind chills well below zero – as they camped out on the Town Green from noon Friday to noon Sunday, to raise money and awareness for the Colchester Fuel Bank. The fuel bank helps provide funding for heating sources for residents and families in need.

And raise money they did; people came from near and far to donate funds for the four's cause, and in the end the men wound up raising \$15,000.

Last weekend was the sixth annual "Freezin' for a Reason." The event, originally called "Three Men in a Tent," was launched in 2010 by Brown, along with resident Jack Faski and then-first selectman Gregg Schuster.

Temperatures dropped to 10 degrees below zero this past weekend – with a wind chill of 20 below. Despite the cold, the four stuck with their camping plan – although they did take some furloughs in the warmth of their vehicles.

Most of the four men's 48 hours on the green was by a large fire. Cox said with a concern for hypothermia, they did spend some time in their

cars warming up.

Last year, "Freezin' for a Reason" raised approximately \$10,000 for the fuel bank; however, the men had to cut things short, ending early Saturday evening, as wet, heavy snow had weighed down their tents. This year the group had hoped to meet their amount from last year. They wound up exceeding it – by a lot.

"The cold weather made an impression on people," Cox said Wednesday. "People from all over the state stopped by."

Visitors to the makeshift campsite on the town green came from as far as Danbury, New London, Seymour, Killingly, Plainville, Stamford, and Mystic. The group said they were pleased with the number of people who stopped by and the amount of funds they were able to raise.

"Just the generosity was unreal," Suchecki said. "Every news station talked about the bitter cold of the weekend, and it worked in our favor."

The most surprising and rewarding thing, Suchecki said, was the number of people that were "paying it forward."

"We had a lot of very heartwarming stories from people who had needed assistance in the past and were paying it forward," Suchecki said. "The stories like that kept us going."

And while he noted the reason for the freezin'



Residents Fred Brown, Walter Cox, Stan Soby and Rob Suchecki (pictured from left) stand around their fire on the green as they raised money for the Colchester Fuel Bank last weekend.

isn't fun, the annual campout is indeed an enjoyable event.

"I look forward to doing it and it makes me

feel good," he said. "I've worked for the town for 26 years and to give something back is very

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come in at 9,300 square feet in that proposal. The estimated price tag would be \$25.9 million.

The square footage and layout of each option in the report was based on what town employees said they need in a new facility. Sorano met with Town Hall department heads, some school administrators, and the current and former superintendent to gauge their list of priorities.

Police Department Building Committee Chairman Tom Burdick spoke at the start of the workshop to outline the contents of a report his committee recently submitted to the Town Council. He asked councilors to consider an alternative layout inspired by the Montville Police Department, which he said has the best flow “of internal and external access” out of the numerous police stations the committee toured.

Sorano said he would look at the committee’s request to see if it can be incorporated into the proposal.

Council members at the workshop balked at the proposed addition of about 10,000 square feet to turn Center School into a municipal hub. They said the concept strayed too far from basic necessities.

“There’s a big difference between what you’d like to have and what you need,” Republican Josh Piteo said.

Republican Mark Philhower put it this way: “There’s wants and needs – and we really need to get rid of the wants.”

One element of the plan questioned by some councilors revolved around bringing the Board of Education into the municipal hub from its current location at 94 Main St. The mock-ups from the updated Friar Report put the Board of Education on a second floor addition that Republican council member Ted Hintz said would cost \$2.5 to \$3 million.

Hintz said he didn’t think the cost was necessary – and Superintendent of Schools Paul Smith agreed.

Speaking the next day from his office in the Main Street building, Smith was supportive of the Board of Education’s current home. “When you think of this building as a historic schoolhouse, it’s kind of fitting for the Board of Education to be here,” he said.

The Friar report’s square footage and cost estimates for the Memorial School renovation were based on projected enrollment figures from early 2015 that projected a declining school population. But revised figures emerged in October showing the number of students is likely to remain stable over the coming years.

That could mean Memorial School will need more square footage than the initial enrollment projections indicated. The exact formula is dictated by state Department of Education funding guidelines.

Councilors questioned the accuracy of the

enrollment projections, which were provided by the Massachusetts-based New England School Development Council. They agreed to bring in a new consultant to take another look at the situation.

Smith said a second opinion makes sense.

“I think at this point it’s a good idea to get a more solid sense of projections: someone that comes into town, looks at the developments going on, and uses everything from the number of lives births to the number of kids in school now,” Smith said.

Smith will also be working with Sorano to discuss “educational specifications” that will guide the next phase of the process. Those specifications allow an architect to understand what the school needs, from room size all the way to the type of technology available.

Smith said “ed specs,” as they’re commonly known, must be approved by the Board of Education.

The state Department of Education specifies that a building committee is responsible for implementing the educational specifications approved by the Board of Education.

According to Smith, the updated Friar report and the first Town Council workshop are just the start of a long process.

“I think people should understand these are only very preliminary ideas that have not been shared with board members or administrators or teachers,” he said.

Resident Cynthia Abraham, a professional planner and member of the High School Building Committee, spoke during the public comment period to say it isn’t the Town Council’s job to scrutinize the proposals at the level of detail exhibited during the workshop.

“You guys are the Town Council. We need to you to be the Town Council. You need to form a building committee of professionals,” she said.

It’s the building committee that should look at specific items to determine what’s sound and what’s not, according to Abraham.

“You guys should not be doing this,” she told the council.

Abraham recommended the council adhere to the timeline the Town Council used when the high school renovation process began in 2012. That building committee was up and running within 12 weeks, according to Abraham.

“It was a very clean process,” Abraham said. “It’s there for you.”

She cited the High School Building Committee’s work as an integral part of the passage of the \$52 million high school renovation project at referendum.

“It passed because we got trust and confidence from the town, the taxpayers. We educated them,” she said.

The Town Council will meet for another workshop Tuesday, March 1, at 6:30 p.m., at East Hampton Middle School, 19 Childs Rd.

Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

A reader shot me an email this week, politely letting me know I goofed in my column last week. I wrote that, earlier this month, Chuckles the groundhog saw his shadow, to indicate “spring was just around the corner.”

Chuckles did indeed indicate spring was around the bend – just not the way I said it. The legend goes that if the groundhog *doesn’t* see his shadow, spring is almost here. When he sees it, it’s six more weeks of winter. Chuckles indeed didn’t see his shadow – nor did Punxsutawney Phil, his more-nationally-famous counterpart – which suggested spring was on its way.

Needless to say, the prediction was a tad off-base – as anyone who endured the incredibly cold weather last weekend could tell you. It was the coldest weather I can ever recall experiencing. The record-setting low temperatures were bad enough, and then when you add in that wind chill – egads.

I looked at the weather on my phone Sunday morning – not even all that early Sunday morning; about 9 a.m. or so – and the wind chill was still 24 degrees below zero!!

It was so cold that when I was driving up Main Street at around 11 a.m. Sunday morning, there were hardly any other cars on the road. It was a scene you normally only see on holidays like Thanksgiving and Christmas. It was easy to figure why – nobody wanted to leave their toasty homes – but it still made for a bizarre scene.

I’m heartened by the hope that this was the worst winter will get. A look at the forecast for the next several days shows temperatures for the most part in the upper 30s and 40s. Still not exactly spring – Chuckles has some ‘splaining to do – but it looks a heckuva lot nicer than last weekend.

* * *

After news broke last Saturday of Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia’s death, I found myself on Facebook, where, not surprisingly, there were several stories posted about his death. And those stories featured a fair amount of readers offering snarky comments expressing their enthusiasm that the man was dead. Those left me feeling a little queasy.

Look, I heartily disagreed with a lot of the things the man said – oh *boy* did I heartily disagree with a lot of the things the man said – and those are his legacy and should be considered as such. But I’m not going to dance on the man’s grave. He wasn’t evil incarnate; nobody is evil incarnate. He was somebody’s husband, father, grandfather. To break out into some “ding dong, the witch is dead!” type song just doesn’t seem quite right.

And on the subject of Scalia: Let President Obama nominate a replacement – and then vote on that replacement.

Within hours of Scalia’s death, Republi-

cans – including those running for president – said the Senate should take no action on anyone Obama nominates for the Supreme Court; instead, they should wait until the next president take office.

Why? Because this is Obama’s last year in office? Last I checked, Obama was re-elected to a four-year term in 2012, not a three-year one. He’s the president; it’s his job to nominate a replacement, just as it’s the Senate’s job to vote on it. And refusing to even vote on the matter – not appoint him or her; just to hold a freaking vote on the person – is just something I flat out do not agree with.

Advocates of the Republicans’ stance have pointed to the Democrats’ defeat of Robert Bork, President Reagan’s 1987 nominee for the Supreme Court. But that was because the Democrats, who controlled the Senate at the time, didn’t like the ultra-conservative Bork. It wasn’t because the Democrats felt Reagan should be nominating someone when he was so close to leaving. This was proven the following February – when Reagan, like Obama had less than a year left in office – as another Reagan nominee, the more moderate Anthony Kennedy, was appointed to the Supreme Court via a unanimous vote.

But even with Bork, it’s worth noting at least the Democrats voted on the matter. The Republicans don’t even want to hold a vote.

I got a good chuckle when I read that Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell – who, by the way, was one of those senators who voted for Kennedy in February 1988 – said “the American people should have a voice in the selection of their next Supreme Court justice.” Hey, Mitch, guess what? The American people did have a voice, back in 2012! And they chose Obama! I mean, it’s not like the man was appointed or something; he was elected president – and this is one of his presidential duties.

Again, I’m not saying that whomever Obama nominates should just go straight to the Supreme Court, no questions asked. It’s the Republicans’ refusal to even hold a vote on the matter that just really baffles me.

Not surprisingly, Obama has vowed to put forth a nominee anyway. It’ll be interesting to see who he chooses – a left-leaning liberal or a more moderate name. I think he should go with the latter. Not a conservative, mind you, but a moderate with a history of bipartisan support – someone who will make it difficult for the Senate Republicans to refuse to at least consider, unless they want to look flat-out childish.

Because that’s how they look at the moment – and it’s something I hope voters remember in November.

* * *

See you next week.

Foursome cont. from Front Page

rewarding.”

The seasoned police officer added he’s “very proud to have done it and have been a part of something that became so big. ... It’s become much bigger than I ever thought it would become.”

All four have committed to another year of Freezin’ for a Reason – though Suhecki said he doesn’t know if the group can ever beat the \$15,000 record they set this year.

“You think of [how many people need to come together to] come up with \$15,000,”

Suhecki said. “I don’t know if we would ever be able to achieve it again.”

The group particularly thanked Peg’s Diner, Colchester Pizza, Dunkin’ Donuts, S&S Worldwide and everyone who brought coffee and doughnuts. Donations to the fuel bank are always being accepted and people can donate specifically to “Freezin’ for a Reason” through PayPal at freezinforareason@yahoo.com. Donations can also be made at United Bank at 99 Linwood Ave. in Colchester and at Town Hall at 127 Norwich Ave.

East Hampton Girl ‘Perfect’ Despite Pediatric Stroke

by Elizabeth Regan

Mae Bolduc was a fussy baby – her parents, East Hampton residents Dan and Beth, said she was crying any time she wasn’t eating or sleeping – but numerous doctors in specialties from pediatrics to gastroenterology said the colicky behavior was not uncommon.

It wasn’t until Mae was 10 months old that testing revealed she had suffered a stroke at birth.

Stroke occurs in one out of every 3,500 live births, according to the American Stroke Association.

Beth Bolduc called the news overwhelming. “We got in the car afterward and we just broke down,” she said. “How do you get ahold of that fact? My kid had a stroke.”

The stroke occurred on the right side of Mae’s brain – her MRI scan showed the affected area was about the size of a nickel, indicating a small stroke – and resulted in the limited use of the left side of her body, Beth said.

Mae, who turned two years old this week, works with both a physical and occupational therapist once a week. The most visible evidence of her stroke can be seen in her left hand, which tends to ball up in a fist without the aid of a brace, and a left arm that often rests at her side.

Beth said Mae gets frustrated when she can’t use her hand. But the frustration has become easier for Mae to express and for her parents to understand with the passage of time.

Sometimes Mae will have trouble doing something and will explain it’s because her arm is “stuck,” Beth said: “She can’t do it because it’s ‘stuck.’”

Beth described a verbal and intellectual acuity in her daughter that she thinks results from – and helps mitigate – Mae’s physical limitations. Mae can speak in full sentences and has known her colors for months, Beth said.

“She’s perfect,” Beth said. “She’s a lot of

work, but she’s beautiful.”

While they don’t know how much motion Mae will ultimately regain, Beth said doctors are hopeful.

“They really think that because it was so mild that she’ll do fine,” Beth said.

The family of three – plus one goat, two dogs, two cats and some chickens – also believes in animal therapy.

As a former manager at Haddam Neck’s Connecticut Draft Horse Rescue farm, Beth sees the benefits horses can provide in helping Mae along.

“She’s obviously a little young to be riding horses, but because she loves the horses and she thinks it’s fun to ride them, it’s good to get her in a saddle to encourage her to use both hands to use the reins,” she said.

Mae has a special bond with the Bolduc’s 7-year-old goat, Marilyn. Caring for and feeding the goat is another exercise that encourages her to use her left hand in a natural way that doesn’t feel like structured therapy.

The toddler and her goat are the namesakes of an endeavor called Marilyn Mae Homemade Goods which the family embarked upon this summer.

“Since she could lift a cup, Mae has loved lifting up sand, water, or anything else in a cup and pouring it out slowly,” Beth said. “It calms her down and allows her to focus her anxiety.”

With that knowledge, Beth enlisted Mae’s help to mix ingredients including beans, rice, lavender and essential oils for aromatherapy sachets designed to be put in the microwave for therapeutic warmth.

“Sometimes telling her she has to use her hand to pick up blocks and stack them is a lot more frustrating and a lot less fun than telling her we’re going to make sachets and she can play with the beans,” Beth said.

The product line grew to include soaps, hand



Mae Bolduc, 2, gets therapeutic benefits from time with the family goat, Marilyn. Mae has limited use of the left side of her body following a stroke at birth. Photo by Dan Bolduc.

salves, lip balms and candles available online at marilynmaegoods.com and through a few local retailers. Last month, the family launched a special purple candle – the color of pediatric stroke awareness – to help raise money for the cause. They donate \$1 per candle to Pediatric Stroke Warriors.

The educational and support group spearheads outreach efforts in the form of “Brave Boxes” and “Warrior Bags” sent to families with children who have had strokes. The boxes include a card, toys and “Be Brave” T-shirt. The bags come with a pediatric stroke guide for

families, a journal, a book of stories from others who have gone through the same thing, and a plush toy for comfort at home and doctor appointments.

Pediatric Stroke Warriors is the kind of resource the Bolducs wish they knew about sooner, according to Beth.

“When we found out Mae had a stroke, we just felt super alone,” Beth said. “Like, oh my gosh, my kid had a stroke. Where do we start, where do we go, where do we get the help we need? It’s definitely something I think we could have benefitted from.”

Marlborough School Budget Shows Decrease – for Now

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

At \$7.34 million, the proposed 2016-17 Board of Education budget is actually lower than current year spending.

But it might not stay that way for long.

Superintendent of Schools David Sklarz last week presented the Board of Education with a proposed \$7.34 million budget for the next fiscal year – a \$51,413, or .70 percent, decrease from current year spending. The proposal is also less than the \$7.42 million budget Sklarz first pitched to the school board in December. That proposal would have been a \$22,000, or .30 percent, increase over current year spending.

At last week’s school board meeting, Sklarz shared that, since his December presentation, the budget proposal dropped \$73,413 – thanks to a \$70,000 decrease in health insurance; a \$3,403 decrease in workers’ compensation; and a \$2,467 reduction in liability insurance. The budget also saw a slight increase of \$2,457 in additional sewer fees from Sklarz’s December proposal.

“The insurance was a very big and pleasant surprise,” Sklarz said.

However, the board didn’t have a chance to bask in the glow of a lower budget for long. Shortly after his budget presentation, Sklarz shared the enrollment projections for next year’s kindergarten class are already proving to be way off – and the school may need to keep a kindergarten teacher Sklarz had initially planned to cut.

Sklarz shared that, when he was crafting the

2016-17 budget, he incorporated the New England School Development Council’s (NESDEC’s) projection that the incoming kindergarten class for the next school year would consist of 39 children. However at the time of last week’s school board meeting, 54 students were already enrolled for next year.

With NESDEC’s numbers in mind, Sklarz had budgeted in three kindergarten teachers with three paraprofessionals. But, if the kindergarten class reaches over 60 students, the school may have to consider four teachers with two paraprofessionals, he told the board. The current 2015-16 kindergarten class has 69 students, with four teachers and two paraprofessionals.

If put back into the budget, the extra kindergarten teacher would add \$65,000 back into the budget.

However, even if the teacher were added back in, the overall number of teachers at Marlborough Elementary School would still decrease from the current year. For the 2015-16 school year, there are 28 full-time, certified teachers at MES. Even with the extra kindergarten teacher, MES would be at 27 teachers for 2016-17; one teacher has already given notice she is leaving at the end of the current school year, as her husband was relocated to Hawaii for the military.

There are also other ways the budget may climb from the \$7.34 million proposal, as the board discussed adding more money to the

emergency maintenance contingency line for the elementary school.

The boards of education, finance and selectmen held a joint meeting earlier this month to talk about school maintenance – and specifically, whether the town or the school system were responsible for paying for it. At that meeting, members of the three boards talked in circles, venting their frustrations about who should pay for what, but failing to reach any kind of solution.

Sklarz has sent a letter to First Selectwoman Amy Traversa about scheduling a follow-up meeting. However, earlier this week Traversa said she has spoken with school board chair Ruth Kelly and finance board chair Doug Knowlton about developing a better format for the meeting – and added that she wants to wait until after budget season to address the situation.

School board members had already expressed concern last Thursday that the issue on maintenance funding would not get resolved in time to affect the 2016-17 budget.

The school budget contains an emergency contingency line item, and Sklarz told the board last week the line has been used for school maintenance in the past. He also told the board he is currently concerned about the school’s need for a new walk-in freezer and oven, as both are broken. MES Principal Dan White told the board the question is whether to “Band-Aid” the two items – which are each approximately

10 years old – and make repairs, or to buy new replacements.

A new freezer is estimated at \$4,800 while a new oven is estimated to cost \$6,000 – which combined is well in excess of the \$5,000 in the emergency contingency line for the 2016-17 school year.

But board member Betty O’Brien suggested those items may not need to be included in the 2016-17 budget – and wondered whether the board, if it has surplus funds available at the end of the current fiscal year, should buy a new freezer and oven. The board has been criticized by residents and town officials over the years for spending its surplus on “nice-to-have” items that the board had opted not to fund in its budgets.

However, board member Sue Rapelye pushed for the contingency fund to have more than \$5,000 in it. “It would be nice to increase [emergency contingency] a little bit,” she said.

Sklarz said the money for the freezer and the oven has to “come out of someplace” and the board agreed it did not have to discuss the issue that night. A motion to increase the line item would come on Feb. 25 during the board’s next meeting.

The Board of Education budget is expected to be adopted at the Feb. 25 meeting at 7 p.m. in the Marlborough Elementary School media center. The meeting will include a public hearing on the proposed budget.

Marlborough Awarded Grant for Water System

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

Last week, Marlborough was awarded a \$500,000 Small Town Economic Assistance Program grant and with it, Phase II of the town center water system is moving forward.

According to First Selectwoman Amy Traversa, the town had applied for the STEAP grant in 2015; however, it was not awarded. After taking office in November, Traversa said she reapplied for the next phase of the water system and was notified last week the money was granted.

“We were able to make a compelling case – in part – due to the foreclosures of the former [Robert] Elliott properties and the fact that Marlborough has a very real chance of economic development in the near future,” Traversa said.

The properties Traversa was referring to were the three plazas and two single-family homes in the town center formerly owned by Elliott. This includes 3-5 East Hampton Rd., 32 East Hampton Rd., 1, 3, 5, and 7 South Main Street, 20 South Main St., and 22 South Main St. After Elliott was foreclosed upon by the bank in December, the properties were sold to developer Allan Schwartz earlier this month.

Phase I of the water system ran pipes down a portion of South Main Street, East Hampton Road and a small section of North Main Street. That phase was completed in 2015; however, currently no one can hook up to the water system until Phase II is completed, which includes water storage tanks. Phase II also includes finishing the system’s loop to School Drive and Independence Drive.

The Phase II plan is estimated to cost \$630,000, with \$500,000 covered by the grant. The plan includes two 15,000-gallon storage tanks totaling \$375,000 with engineering and construction, and 1,000 linear feet of water main extension to finish the Phase I loop, totaling

\$255,000 with engineering and construction. With the STEAP grant, this would mean a \$130,000 cost to the town. However, this plan may be tweaked depending on business needs in the town center.

In January, Traversa told the Board of Finance she was hesitant to move forward with Phase II until she got a handle on what Schwartz will need for his development of the properties.

“We are reviewing the costs for the completion of the system, and we will have a better idea of what is needed as Schwartz Realty begins to develop his plans,” Traversa said. “However, it is not the new development alone that will determine what is needed.”

She said the town needs to take a comprehensive look at what the existing businesses’ need as well as future endeavors.

“The plans for Phase II will likely remain largely intact, but may be modified depending on what develops over the next few months,” Traversa said. “We will review what is needed for funding, and if additional monies are needed, we will seek sources and/or the necessary approvals prior to construction.”

Traversa also credited state Sen. Cathy Osten (D-19) for helping Marlborough acquire the STEAP grant.

“Marlborough’s Village Center is an area with immense potential for economic growth and I am thrilled that we were able to take this important step toward capitalizing on it,” Osten said in a statement.

Osten explained in her press release that Phase II reduces the need for new businesses to construct wells for water access. Constructing a well can cost as much as \$20,000 for the design, drilling and testing – in addition to taking up a “sizeable” portion of developable land.

Andover Grand List Rises .6 Percent

by Geeta S. Sandberg

The Andover Grand List, which represents the assessed value of all taxable property in town, rose just over half a percent for the year ending Oct. 1, 2015.

The list totaled \$269,277,100, up \$2,337,400 from the previous year’s Grand List of \$266,939,700.

According to Town Assessor John Chaponis, the additional assessment equates to an additional \$71,800 in actual tax dollars based on last year’s mill rate.

Real estate increased \$428,200 to \$232,030,900, while personal property climbed \$334,900 to \$6,715,600 and motor vehicle assessments went up \$1,524,300 to \$26,930,600.

The top three real estate taxpayers in town continue to be Whispering Hills LLC at \$905,200 followed by Martin, Marshall at \$790,200, and the Eastern Connecticut Housing Authority at \$781,800.

The remaining top 10 real estate taxpayers are: 84 Route Six LLC at \$765,800; Marcia, Kenneth R. and Katherine at \$582,600; Hillside Self Storage Center LLC at \$578,300; Hatem, Pamela B. at \$569,700; Andover Plaza LLC at \$524,700; Maguire, Danielle B. at \$493,700; and Mandeville, Adrian & and McGregor, Kristin D at \$493,510. In total, the top 10 taxpayers are responsible for \$6,485,510 in taxes.

Meanwhile, the top 10 personal property taxpayers are: Connecticut Light & Power Co. at \$4,081,010; Algonquin Gas Transmission LLC at \$484,520; Scott Elektrokräfts Inc. at \$464,670; AT&T Mobility LLC at \$164,480; Tameme, Urwa at \$136,490; Andover Landscaping LLC at \$120,410; Drake Petroleum Co. at \$104,640; ICA Donuts LLC at \$80,320;

Cellco Partnership at \$73,700; and Bisson, Ronald at \$65,740.

Once the Grand List is set, it’s used by the Board of Finance to help set the mill rate for the upcoming fiscal year; this is determined by dividing the town’s budget by the Grand List total.

The mill rate is then used to determine residents’ taxes: a resident can determine their taxes by multiplying the mill rate by their total assessments. One mill is equal to \$1 in tax per \$1,000 of assessed property. Under the current mill rate of 30.72, a resident with a home assessed at \$250,000 would pay \$7,680 in taxes.

Board of Finance Chairman Dan Warren said of the increase Thursday, “It’s certainly a positive thing and will help out when it comes to the budget making process this year.”

However, he added, “the Board of Finance is definitely aware that we have a revaluation coming up later this year and that things could change considerably as a result of that. So we’re proceeding very conservatively with respect to the budget making process and we’re also keeping in mind the ceiling on the motor vehicle mill rate that’s going to be coming into effect this year.”

Warren concluded, “So we’re happy [with the increase] – it’s a good sign for Andover but we’re still proceeding cautiously.”

Anyone who wants to appeal their assessment can submit a written application to the Board of Assessment Appeals before Feb. 20. For more information or an application go to andoverconnecticut.org and click on “town departments” followed by “Assessor.”

One Extricated After Collision with Tree in Marlborough

State police said a Colchester man had to be extricated from his SUV after he collided with several trees on Ogden Lord Road Feb. 12.

Michael Fauchon, 60, of 30 Apple Ln., was transported to the Marlborough Clinic for precautionary measures after the crash at 12:27 a.m. Police said Fauchon had been driving a

Toyota FJ Cruiser southbound on Ogden Lord Road when he failed to drive right, colliding with several trees and ending up in the north-bound lane.

Police reported Fauchon became trapped in the vehicle and firefighters from the Marlborough Fire Department had to extricate him.

One Injured After Ice Hits Van in Marlborough

State police reported an East Hampton man sustained eye injuries after ice flying off of a truck struck his windshield on Route 66 Feb. 16.

Walter Farren, 48, of 181 Wopowog Rd., was transported to the Marlborough Clinic after the accident. Police reported Farren was driving a Nissan van on Route 66 near Rob-

erts Road at 7:33 a.m. when a large piece of ice came off another vehicle’s roof, causing damage to his windshield. Farren sustained minor eye injuries from the glass.

Police said the other vehicle was described as a white box truck; however, the truck did not stop and continued toward East Hampton.

Marlborough Police News

2/12: State Police said Lisa Mogren, 52, of 71 South Buckboard Ln., was arrested and charged with DUI, failure to drive right, and driving with a suspended license.

Colchester Police News

2/9: State Police said William Washington, 22, of 14 Main St., was arrested and charged with disorderly conduct, third-degree assault, second-degree strangulation, and second-degree unlawful restraint.

2/10: Colchester Police said Dwayne Shippee, 40, of 330 Chestnut Hill Rd., was arrested and charged with disorderly conduct and violation of a restraining order.

2/11: State Police said Jennifer Lamb, 30, of 3 Beechwood Rd., Oakdale, was arrested and charged with failure to appear.

2/11: State Police said Joshua Myers, 30, of 3 Beechwood Rd., Oakdale, was arrested and

charged with failure to pay a violation.

2/11: State Police said Matthew Morrissey, 43, of 9 Briar Hill Rd., Old Lyme, was arrested and charged with DUI and failure to carry license.

2/12: State Police said Tod Stolting, 54, of 7 Way Rd., Middlefield, was arrested and charged with DUI and speeding.

2/15: State Police said Melanie Acevedo, 27, of 132 Mansfield Ave., Windham, was arrested and charged with failure to appear.

2/16: State Police said Vincent Basileo, 22, of 4 Green Valley Ln., Old Lyme, was arrested and charged with failure to appear.

Two Colchester Homes Damaged After Transformer Fire

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

Two homes on Westchester Road were damaged, displacing two families, after a transformer blew and began a basement fire in one home and fire on the exterior of another home Sunday.

Chief Walter Cox of the Colchester Hayward Volunteer Fire Department said the call came into the firehouse at 7:10 a.m. for a transformer explosion with wires down at 331 and 335 Westchester Rd.

“As a result of [the explosion], an electrical short went into the service lines into several residences and caused a fire in the basement of one home and a fire on the outside exterior of the second location,” Cox said.

The homes, which are next to each other on the same side of the road, were damaged, but no one was hurt.

Due to the extreme cold, as well as concern the fires might spread to other homes, nine fire departments provided mutual aid – East Hampton, Marlborough, East Haddam, Hebron, Salem, Gardner Lake, Lebanon, Glastonbury and Bozrah.

“We were there for several hours, initially because of the seriousness of the cause and

the fire involved,” Cox said. He added the call was complicated because the quickest way to shut the power off was to shut the grid down. The grid ran from the intersection of routes 16 and 149 and ran down 149 heading north to Ponemah Village.

“A lot of homes did not have power,” Cox said which was dangerous with the extremely cold temperatures on Sunday. According to the Weather Channel, Sunday’s high in Colchester was 11 degrees, with a low of 10 degrees below zero. “There was a senior housing center we were concerned with when their generator didn’t start.”

He said Eversource did a good job of responding and getting the homes back online; however, the fire department did wellness checks on every home in the grid to check for any other issues.

“We were worried we would have to start a warming center with people without heat on that terribly cold day,” Cox said. “We were concerned with our own personnel and the residents in the homes.”

The issue was isolated to the two homes that caught fire, Cox said.

Colchester School Board Aims to Keep Budget Flat

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

The Board of Education Wednesday continued to work on its budget – with the goal of keeping spending flat with the current year.

Also Wednesday, the board unanimously approved a major change to curriculum for William J. Johnston Middle School, replacing the Family Consumer Science elective with Innovations Institute. This means a shift from food and fashion to technology and critical thinking.

Last month, Superintendent of Schools Jeff Mathieu presented a proposed \$40.04 million budget for the 2016-17 fiscal year. The spending package would be a \$241,822, or 0.61 percent, increase from current year spending.

At the time of his presentation, Mathieu stated that the Board of Finance had asked him to stay as close to a zero percent increase as possible.

But Board of Education Chairman Ron Goldstein said Wednesday that, after conversations with finance board chair Rob Tarlov and school administrators, the district is trying to decrease the superintendent's proposed budget by \$241,822 – to make it completely flat with the current year.

In the weeks since Mathieu's presentation, Goldstein said, the board has held budget workshops and the "consensus is to continue on a path equal to last year's budget." This would mean the board needs to approve the cuts before presenting the budget to the finance board in March.

Mathieu presented the board with a tentative list of reductions – which includes the elimination of four certified teachers: a 0.4 full-

time equivalent (FTE) science at Bacon Academy for \$20,089, a 0.4 FTE world language at Bacon for \$20,089, a 1.0 FTE special education new position for \$50,330, and a 0.2 FTE world language at WJJMS for \$10,045. (Due to these teacher cuts, the unemployment compensation line in the budget would rise \$12,255.)

Other larger cuts Mathieu proposed were \$44,265 from capital and \$40,672 from technology. He also proposed cutting the facilities manager position, to save \$44,517. Currently, that position is filled by Ken Jackson, who also is the town's facilities manager. The school board pays half Jackson's salary, while the town pays the other half. The reduction would potentially make Jackson a part-time town employee, depending on what the town decides to do with the position.

Other, smaller, cuts were: \$1,500 from language arts textbooks for the middle school; \$2,100 from printing, postage and office supplies; \$3,000 from professional development; \$2,000 from IT supplies; \$1,000 from advertising; \$1,000 from music travel to competitions for Bacon; and \$500 from positive behavior intervention support supplies for \$500.

Other changes would include changing telephone plans, for a savings of \$7,970; and requiring parking fees at Bacon Academy for a \$5,000 reduction.

The new total budget would be \$39.80 million – the same as the approved 2015-16 budget.

While the board did not take any action on Mathieu's proposed cuts, a resident in atten-

dance urged the board not to reduce too much.

"The administrators here are strong," resident Kevin Fennell said. "I feel it wouldn't be to the community's best interest to limit them in any way. Allow them to make their decision."

The school board will hold a special meeting to discuss the budget Wednesday, Feb. 24, at 7 p.m. in room 120 at Jack Jackter Intermediate School.

* * *

Also at the meeting, William J. Johnston Middle School Principal Chris Bennett and Assistant Principal Carla Kennedy presented the new Innovations Institute course to the board. Bennett explained at the end of this school year, both Family Consumer Sciences (FCS) teachers are retiring, accelerating the decision about what to do about FCS. The construction on the middle school – approved last spring for a new building – also posed a problem to the FCS program since the FCS rooms are in areas set to be blocked off this summer.

"It's not a slight to the FCS program," Bennett said. "It's an opportunity to move forward and change."

The new course would focus on project-based learning and applying skills learned in other areas. He explained the three main areas of focus are problem solving, 21st century skills, and attracting and retaining students who otherwise go to magnet or private schools.

The programs goals, Bennett said, are to create a STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math) program that will "excite our students, providing them with opportuni-

Hebron Residents Discuss Natural Gas Proposal

by Geeta S. Sandberg

On Wednesday evening, around two dozen residents, state and town officials gathered to hear a presentation by Connecticut Natural Gas on a proposed pipeline expansion in town that, if approved, would mean a switch to natural gas for a number of town buildings, as well as the option for any of the 260 residents along the proposed route to switch.

If approved, the gas line would move down East Street, where there's already a gate station, then up along Route 85, across Route 66 to the elementary school, left up Main Street toward Ted's Plaza, and right up John Horton Boulevard. The line would also branch off up Wall Street to reach RHAM.

As part of the proposal, all town buildings along the route would be required to convert, including the town offices and the fire department, the library, Hebron elementary school and RHAM middle and high schools.

According to a cost analysis by CNG, taking into account current fuel consumption and costs for the buildings, switching to natural gas would result in more than \$117,000 in annual fuel savings for the town.

Anthony Sherman, manager of gas expansion projects with CNG, was present Wednesday and said, "You need to heat your buildings – you might as well do it the smart way."

He said the company had been looking at an expansion in town "for a while," mentioning there were currently around 90 residents serviced off the gate station on East Street. How-

ever, he said the project hadn't been financially viable until recently, when the state Department of Energy and Environmental Protection's Comprehensive Energy Strategy allowed CNG to take some of the money made from selling off excess gas not used by the customers and putting it toward expansion projects.

"Everything seems to be lining up," said Sherman.

That "everything," though, needs to include the RHAM schools. Tierney said RHAM Superintendent of Schools Bob Siminski told him the only way the regional school district was likely to move forward with the project would be if there was no budget impact. RHAM is a vital piece of the pie since without its agreement, Sherman said the proposal "doesn't work," as the schools are such large buildings and thus would realize the most in savings from the switch.

However, if RHAM is on board and the town can move forward with the proposal, CNG would contribute \$1.25 million toward the project; CNG estimated Hebron would be responsible for \$441,900 if they paid for the project with no tax abatement. If the town were to pay for the project under a 10-year tax abatement, that amount would decrease to \$242,900; and with a 25-year tax abatement, \$168,100.

The gas company would take care of the installation of the gas mains and meters, but the customer would be responsible for the conversion of equipment and piping to the meter,

which is usually attached to the building.

Under the worst case scenario, Town Manager Andrew Tierney said conversion costs could amount to \$1,160,000. He explained he wanted to bring forward a conservative number to the meeting, but if the town were to proceed, he was "pretty sure we could get that number lower."

To pay for the project, Tierney said there were a couple of options, including using the approximately \$60,000 in annual property taxes from CNG and any savings realized to offset the cost. The remainder, he said, could be paid for with a short-term loan.

Sherman stressed that, in addition to cost savings, moving forward with CNG's proposal was touted as beneficial for economic development.

"There's no question that [having natural gas available] makes you more attractive to businesses," Sherman said. He also mentioned natural gas was "environmentally friendly" and one of the cleanest burning fossil fuels available.

However, a couple of residents at Wednesday's meeting were against expanding natural gas in town.

Resident Gil Salk, who is also a member of the Hebron Citizens Green Committee, said he considered committing to a natural gas company a "step backwards" that could potentially prevent the town from making investments in alternative energy sources moving forward.

He added natural gas was by no means "en-

vironmentally friendly," mentioning the process of fracking, which is a means of extracting natural gas from underground rock formations by injecting a mixture of water, sand and chemicals into wells at high pressure to crack the formations and release the oil or gas.

He added natural gas was "not sustainable."

"We're using a resource that can't be replaced and we're causing earthquakes and injecting poison – to put it simply – into the ground."

Fellow committee member Elizabeth Eldridge shared similar sentiments.

"What about the water used and the chemicals that are put into the ground?" she asked. "I think we need to look at how we get this gas: fracking. It's really harming the environment. Agreeing to continue to destroy the environment... I think it's wrong."

But other individuals present expressed support for the idea.

Economic Development Commission Chair Vicki Avelis said, "Whenever we [the EDC] talk to a developer they ask what choices they have for services and say 'why don't you have natural gas?' ... The EDC would like to see choice, so we voted in favor of this pipeline."

And East Street resident Ron Wenzel said, "My wife and I support this project. The savings alone will be over" the cost of converting.

* * *

Discussion on the CNG proposal was set to continue at the Board of Selectmen's meeting scheduled for Thursday, after press time.

HES Students Raise Money Through Reading

by Geeta S. Sandberg

The Board of Education last week learned students at Hebron Elementary School recently collected \$5,000 to donate to Heifer International through their participation in the Read to Feed program.

Heifer International is an organization founded 70 years ago by Dan West, a farmer from the American Midwest and a member of the Church of the Brethren who served as an aid worker during the Spanish Civil War.

While there, according to the Heifer International website heifer.org, West realized the aid being provided to the refugees – a single cup of milk per day – wasn't enough, and he thought, "What if they had not a cup, but a cow?"

From that "teach a man to fish" philosophy West founded Heifer International, and, 70 years later, the organization has helped 25 million people in over 20 countries.

The mission of Heifer International is to give those in poverty more than a handout; the organization helps bring sustainable agriculture and commerce to poverty-stricken areas, and provides animals to families with the under-

standing that the livestock can not only provide food for those they belong to, but products such as milk and eggs to trade or sell at the market.

Heifer International's Read to Feed program provides students the opportunity to practice key literacy skills through reading while helping those in need. Students in seven classes at Hebron Elementary School were charged with sharing information about the program to people they knew and asking them to be their sponsor, providing large or small amounts of money for every page, chapter or book the student reads.

That money was then collected, and pooled to use for the purchase of an animal – or in this case, animals. Participating third-graders read over 250 hours, while those in fourth grade read 868 books, raising \$5,050 in just six weeks that allowed for the purchase two heifers, two water buffalo, a goat, a pig, several flocks of chickens and ducks and more, along with the opportunity for seven girls to attend school.

* * *

Also last week, Superintendent of Schools Tim Van Tassel shared a survey with the board

that will be used to garner information from parents with students in the school system, as well as those sending their children to magnet schools.

Van Tassel explained the goal was to elicit feedback from the community to get an idea how the school system was doing, if there was anything parents felt could be done better, or wanted to recognize the district for doing well.

Van Tassel said, "We'll try to do our part to try to get outreach in the community" to get parents to complete the survey. He added while the survey will be helpful in determining how parents with children currently in the school system feel about the programs offered, it will also help to determine the reasons parents choose to send their kids to magnet schools, and if there was anything the district could change to entice them to come back.

Board of Education Chairwoman Erica Bromley added, "The more information we can get the better and the more information we can get about what people like about our school, what things can be improved, will give us info that can help in a variety of ways now and down

the road."

* * *

Also last week, the board unanimously approved the transfer of \$69,244 to be used for the replacement of windows in the 1970s wing of Hebron Elementary School.

Van Tassel said the window replacement was originally on the school's Capital Improvement Project list but will now clear the way for the completion of a different item on that list. Last month the board discussed and decided to use some of the surplus funds from the current budget to check off some needed maintenance items.

Van Tassel said the transfer would also cover any difference between the approximately \$17,000 in technology grant funds received from the state for the purchase of new Chromebooks and the total cost.

* * *

The next regular Board of Education meeting will be held Thursday, March 10, at 7 p.m. in the Gilead Hill School music room, 580 Gilead St.

Bluegrass Coming to Grange Stage in Portland

by Elizabeth Regan

Members of Portland's Hemlock Grange hope music can help infuse the century-old organization with new energy and enthusiasm.

The group will host the bluegrass group Amy Gallatin & Stillwaters Saturday, March 12. It will be the first band of its kind to take the stage at the Grange hall, where the musicians will look out on a warm, open space that can hold 80 people without running afoul of the fire marshal.

The 3,500-square-foot barn, built in 1900, was purchased by the Grange in 1912 and converted as its meeting space. It's been the home of the community organization with agricultural roots ever since.

Hemlock Grange President William Sanborn and event organizer Ray Phillips invited Amy Gallatin, who lives in Glastonbury, to check out the venue when they first broached the idea of hosting a concert.

Gallatin said in a phone interview she hasn't played in Portland before but is looking forward to making the Grange her first stop in town.

"The wooden floors, the kind of old-timey vibe; I really like it," she said. "Musically, to perform in a space like that is really good."

Gallatin joined up with resophonic guitarist Roger Williams a few years ago, according to biographical information on the group's website. The band also includes Williams' son, JD, on vocals and mandolin and Eric Levenson on bass.

The group describes their sound as "traditional, yet modern and distinct."

That blend of old and new is the same thing Sanborn and Phillips said the Grange is hoping to achieve with its efforts to expand the organization's role in the community – and its reach.

"Back in 1912, there wasn't much going on

in town. Everybody belonged to the Grange," Sanborn said. There were approximately 300 members at that time.

Now there are 59, according to the Connecticut State Grange. The declining membership worries Sanborn, who has spent 69 of his 84 years as a Granger.

And it's not just a local problem. He said there used to be Grange halls in most of the state's 169 towns; now there are 60.

"I've been saying to the members, 'What can we do?'" Sanborn said. "Well, this is Ray's baby right here."

Phillips is optimistic the inaugural concert will become a series.

"I'm heavily into music myself, and I see that there's a need for this kind of thing," Phillips said.

Gallatin agreed there's room for different types of venues in the local music scene. "I think, more and more, there aren't a lot of places for people to go that isn't a club," she said.

The Grange in Portland presents a safe, well-lit destination with ample parking for those in search of live music outside of a bar, according to Gallatin.

Phillips said tickets were selling fast – so fast that there were only 17 left with a month to go until the concert.

And that's what he's counting on. "If it was successful and a lot of people came – and I think we're going to sell out – then maybe there would be some desire to do this on a regular basis," Phillips said. He envisions a lineup that features a variety of musical genres throughout the year.

Sanborn said he's supportive of any ideas that will help get out the word about the Grange and its goals of promoting community service and agricultural awareness.

He said the way tickets are flying out the door show that Phillips is heading in the right direc-



Amy Gallatin & Stillwaters will bring their bluegrass sound to Hemlock Grange Saturday, March 12. It's the first band of its kind to take the stage at the Grange hall, which is located on Sage Hollow Road. Photo by Marla Singleton.

tion – even though some of the members weren't so sure about it at first.

"I think the enthusiasm will grow and I'm hoping that other members at our meetings will come up with ideas of things we can do," Sanborn said.

He brought up the idea of hosting educational presentations or workshops as another way to bring new faces of all ages into the Grange. He said he hopes some of the families might even

become Grange members willing to share their own fresh ideas to make sure the tradition continues.

"We've got this nice hall," Sanborn said. "We should use it."

The concert will be held Saturday, March 12, at 7 p.m., at the Hemlock Grange, 17 Sage Hollow Rd. in Portland. Tickets are \$12. Contact Maureen Sanborn at 860-342-0290 to purchase tickets or for more information.

Portland Grand List Sees "Modest Increase"

by Elizabeth Regan

Portland's 2015 Grand List of assessable properties shows what First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield called a "modest increase," despite the departure of one of the town's biggest taxpayers.

The Grand List increased .45 percent from the previous year.

Clondalkin Pharma & Healthcare, a Dutch company that had a packaging plant in town, left in mid-2015 after deciding to consolidate its operations, according to Bransfield. Their machinery went with them, driving a 1.2 percent decrease in the personal property section of the Grand List, bringing that amount down from \$33,904,885 to \$33,497,870.

The Clondalkin building remained on the 2015 Grand List, but Bransfield said it's been sold to marijuana producer Connecticut Pharmaceutical Solutions. The company, which is already based in town, will be expanding from

lower Main Street into the Freestone Avenue facility.

Overall, Bransfield added she was pleased with the 2015 Grand List and its prospects going forward.

"It's important to point out that while we did have a large facility that left town, we were able to still have an increase. That speaks well to the climate in Portland and hopefully future improvement to the Grand List as we move forward."

The value for real estate went up .4 percent from \$700,055,114 to \$702,959,694. Motor vehicles, meanwhile, climbed 1.2 percent, bringing the total up from \$70,586,812 to \$71,459,700.

The list, which represents the assessed value of all taxable property in town, totals \$807,917,264 for an increase of \$3.4 million from the previous year.

The Grand List is used to help set the mill rate for the upcoming fiscal year. The rate is determined by dividing the town's budget by the Grand List total. Residents can calculate their taxes by multiplying their total assessments by the mill rate; the current mill rate is 32.34.

A mill is \$1 tax per \$1,000 of assessed property value, and, for example, a person with a house assessed at \$250,000 would pay \$8,085 in taxes.

According to the assessor's office, the top 10 property owners in Portland are: Connecticut Light and Power, with property valued at \$14.75 million; St. Clements Foundation, at \$4.65 million; Jarvis Airfoil, at \$3.34 million; Buckeye Cattle Company, at \$2.63 million; Perry Portland Associates, at \$2.46 million; Portland Care and Rehabilitation, at \$2.04 million; Safety-Kleen Systems, at \$1.84 million;

Woodgreen Portland Limited Partnership, at \$1.83 million; Clondalkin Pharma and Healthcare, at \$1.74 million; and Oakwood Sports Center of Glastonbury, at \$1.72 million.

Combined, the top 10 taxpayers own \$37 million of taxable property in Portland.

Currently, the town operations budget is being worked on by Bransfield and the town's Finance Director Tom Robinson; the Board of Education's proposed budget has already been submitted, with a 1.58 percent increase over the current year.

The town operations budget is scheduled to be submitted to the Board of Selectmen by March 2. Following the submission, a public hearing will be held on March 15 at 7 p.m. at Portland High School to discuss the budget. The Board of Selectmen will then hold several budget workshops throughout March to deliberate on the proposal.

East Hampton Police News

2/9: William Thomas Murphy, 55, of 140 Stockburger Rd., Moodus was issued a summons for traveling unreasonably fast and operating under suspension, East Hampton Police said.

2/12: Robert J. Turney, 56, of 30 Namonee Tr., was arrested and charged with driving under the influence, police said.

Portland Police News

2/7: Kyle Philipchik, 22, of 86 Bartlett St., was charged with evading responsibility, failure to drive right and traveling unreasonable fast, Portland Police said.

2/8: Hector Diaz, 52, of 41 Plaza Dr., Waterbury, was charged with operating an unregistered motor vehicle, police said.

2/11: James Leighton, 60, of 18 Farmington Ave., New Britain, was charged with operating under suspension, failure to display number plate, operating an unregistered motor vehicle and insufficient insurance, police said.

2/12: Richard Maynard, 42, of 136 Marlborough St., was charged with operating under the influence, traveling unreasonably fast and operating under suspension, police said.

2/13: Vincent Capello, 21, of 41 Grove St., was charged with operating a motor vehicle with a suspended license, operating an unregistered motor vehicle and traveling unreasonably fast, police said.

Colchester Police News

2/9: State Police said William Washington, 22, of 14 Main St., was arrested and charged with disorderly conduct, third-degree assault, second-degree strangulation, and second-degree unlawful restraint.

2/10: Colchester Police said Dwayne Shippee, 40, of 330 Chestnut Hill Rd., was arrested and charged with disorderly conduct and violation of a restraining order.

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charged with failure to pay a violation.

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2/16: State Police said Vincent Basileo, 22, of 4 Green Valley Ln., Old Lyme, was arrested and charged with failure to appear.

Obituaries

East Hampton

Rev. Fred M. Dole

The Rev. Fred "Ted" M. Dole, 75, of East Hampton, formerly of Colchester, passed away Tuesday, Feb. 9, with his wife and best friend of nearly 40 years, Edi, at his side. Born Oct. 19, 1940, in Framingham, Mass., he was the only child of the late Fred E. and Nellie (MacLean) Dole.

He was a graduate of Trinity College and later earned his Master of Divinity degree from Hartford Seminary. He was pastor of the Westchester Congregational Church for 33 years and following his retirement, he and Edi joined Marlborough Congregational Church. Marlborough soon called him to be their associate pastor. He was also an active member and longtime chaplain of the Colchester-Hayward Volunteer Fire Company. These last several years of service were some of his most memorable. Along with his years in ministry, Ted was also a professional photographer and a model train enthusiast.

In addition to his wife, he leaves three children, Sheryl (Bobby) Scheidel of Colchester; Sandy (Lenny) Adams of Norfolk, Va.; and Billy Cameron of San Diego, Calif. He had four grandchildren, Joshua (Ana) Smith, Matthew and Brian Scheidel and Alexandra Adams.

A memorial service celebrating his life will be observed at 11 a.m. Saturday, Feb. 20, at Marlborough Congregational Church, 35 So. Main St., Marlborough.

In lieu of flowers, donations in his memory may be made to Marlborough Congregational Church, P.O. Box 57, Marlborough, CT 06447, or to the Colchester-Hayward VFC, 18-54 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester, CT 06415.

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

Colchester

Ruthann Skut

Ruthann (Price) Skut, 52, beloved wife of Anthony, passed away peacefully Saturday morning, Feb. 13, at home, surrounded by her loving family, after a courageous battle with cancer. Born June 4, 1963, in Manchester, she was the daughter of the late Harold and Beatrice (Merkle) Price Jr.

Ruthann had worked as an LPN for Manchester Family Practice as well as the school nurse at the William J. Johnston Middle School in Colchester. A talented baker and cake decorator, she had also run a bakery in Colchester for many years.

A woman of great faith, she was an active member and former deacon of the Westchester Congregational Church. A self-taught artist, she loved to paint in her spare time. However, her greatest joy was found in caring for her family.

In addition to her loving husband of 32 years, she leaves two children, Ryan of California and Jared of East Haddam; three siblings, Harold Price III of Sterling, Alma Mendoza of Tucson, Ariz., and Vera Tracy of Windham; and numerous extended family members and friends.

She was predeceased by a brother, "AJ" Anderson, in addition to her parents.

The family received guests Wednesday, Feb. 17, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. The funeral service was observed Thursday, Feb. 18, directly at the Westchester Congregational Church (located at the corner of Cemetery Road and Route 149) in Colchester. Burial was private in the Skut family plot in St. Joseph's Cemetery, Colchester.

In lieu of flowers, donations in her memory may be made to Hartford Health Care at Home Hospice, 1290 Silas Deane Hwy., Ste. 4B, Wethersfield 06109 (hartfordhealthcare.org).

For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.



Colchester

John G. Gallucci

John G. Gallucci, 50, of Colchester, died unexpectedly from natural causes at home Wednesday, Feb. 10.

He leaves to mourn his passing his loving wife, Sandra (Simas) Gallucci; daughter, Gina Gallucci; mother, Dorothy Raucci and stepfather, Steven Raucci of Hebron; sister, Kristan Patterson of Colchester; two brothers, Jeff and Michael Gallucci, both of Naples, Fla.; and his beloved dog, Peanut.

John had worked as an independent contractor for AT&T in a supervisory position for a number of years before suffering a debilitating injury.

The memorial liturgy will be celebrated at 11 a.m. today, Feb. 19, at St. Andrew Church, 128 Norwich Ave., Colchester. There are no calling hours and burial will be private.

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

Colchester

Kyler David Urban

Kyler David Urban, 14-year-old son of David and Aimee (Clark) Urban, passed on early Friday morning, Feb. 5, at his home in Colchester.

He will be always loved and remembered by sisters, Kianna and Abrianna Clark; little brother, Jaiden Urban; paternal grandmother, Cindy Urban; maternal grandmother, Nancy Clark; and many other extended family and family friends.

In all his 14 years, Kyler was never able to speak a word, but he left lasting impressions as a pure soul, who never sinned or had sinful thoughts. As long as we live he too shall live, for he is part of us, as we remember him. His memory will always be recalled by those who knew him as an angel or a saint.

Funeral services will be held at a later date to be announced.

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



East Hampton

Benjamin A. Jones Jr.

Benjamin A. Jones Jr., 81, of East Hampton, beloved husband of Alice (Mower) Jones died Monday, Feb. 15, at Middlesex Hospital Hospice. Born May 17, 1934, in Hebron he was the son of the late Benjamin and Dora (Scraton) Jones.

He proudly served his country in the U.S. Army and was a lifelong resident of East Hampton. Benjamin was retired from Pratt & Whitney after 33 years of service. Ben loved sport cards, bowling and good friends.

Besides his wife Alice, he is survived by his son, Ben Jones III and wife Cindy; two daughters, Cathy Snider and husband Rich, Cindy Duran and husband Gene; brothers Bob Jones, Kenneth Jones and wife Lou, sisters Ruth Flemke, Peg Blake; brother-in-law Don Emerson, eight grandchildren, Ryan, Jess, Corey, BJ, Madison, Ethan, Elizabeth, Shaler; three great-grandchildren, Zayden, Lexie and Nora; also several cousins, nieces and nephews, special nieces Marie and Judy and nephew Len.

He was predeceased by a brother, Sid Jones, and three sisters, Edith Trudeau, Betty Laussier and Melissa Emerson.

Friends may call at the Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton, today, Feb. 19, from 11 a.m.-noon. A memorial service will be held at noon with the Rev. Thomas Kennedy officiating. Burial will be private in Maine.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to Middlesex Hospital Hospice Unit, c/o Middlesex Hospital Department of Philanthropy, 55 Crescent St., Middletown, CT 06457, or to East Hampton Ambulance Assoc., P.O. Box 144, East Hampton, CT 06424.

To leave online condolences, visit spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

Hebron

William Reynold Stelzner

William Reynold Stelzner (Bill), 65, longtime resident of Hebron, passed away suddenly Wednesday, Feb. 10, while doing what he loved most, helping others.

Bill was born in New London, and spent his youth on Block Island. He also resided in the towns of Bloomfield, Lyme and Glastonbury, but eventually moved to Hebron, where he lived for the past 33 years.

After graduating from Glastonbury High School (Class of 1968) he went on to Hartford State Technical College and Manchester Community College.

Bill began his career at Clinton Iron Works but moved on to co-invent the All Nighter Wood Stove. He worked for Morande Auto Group and retired after 20 years of employment. During his so called "retirement," he became a part of the "Orange Team" at the Windham, CT Home Depot.

Far out of the limelight, Bill was a true humanitarian, always willing to lend his support to community causes, especially the Hebron Lions Club and AHM Youth and Family Services. His efforts forever made a difference in the lives of those around him, even people he did not know. A day did not go by without Bill showing some act of kindness, respect and empathy for others.

Bill's association with the Hebron Lions Club led him into service with the Fidelco Guide Dog Association and Big Brothers-Big Sisters Program. As a past president of the Hebron Lions Club, he received numerous awards, including the Night of the Blind Award and was a two-time recipient of the Melvin Jones Fellow Award. He also served on the town of Hebron's Water Pollution Control Authority and Capital Improvement Committee as well as Hebron Fire Department's EMS Membership Retention Committee.

Bill had always been an avid reader, music lover, skier, surfer and political enthusiast. He was a true history buff and was known by his friends as "The Historian." He loved animals, particularly his dog, Fenway, whom he lovingly referred to as his "sidekick." Bill was a Harley Davidson enthusiast, and loved to travel with his family, both abroad and here in the U.S. He especially loved the towns of Newport and Narragansett. Bill had a true passion for the great outdoors and remembered, fondly, his cross country motorcycle trips and youthful adventures of hitch hiking throughout the U.S.

Bill leaves behind the love of his life and wife of 30 years Nella (Garofalo); his beloved son Paul William; two brothers, Daniel and his partner Raymond St. Germain of Rehoboth, Mass., and Peter and his wife Melinda of Waterford; his father-in-law Sebastian Garofalo of New Britain; as well as numerous family, fellow Lions and treasured friends.

He was predeceased by his parents, William Stelzner Sr. and Caroline (Littlefield), his brother Paul, and niece Valerie.

In his ever-loving way, Bill continued his gift of giving by being an organ and tissue donor.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the American Heart Association: P.O. Box 3049, Syracuse, NY 13220-3049 or to the Hebron Lions Club: 347 Gilead Street, Hebron, CT 06248.

Courant

Colchester

Robert J. Metcalfe Jr.

Robert J. Metcalfe Jr., 62, of Colchester, passed away on Sunday, Feb. 14. Rob was born in New Britain, on April 30, 1953, to Robert and Josephine Metcalfe, now deceased.

Rob grew up in Niantic, graduating from East Lyme High School in 1971 as valedictorian. He continued his education obtaining a bachelor's degree in science from Springfield College. He also pursued a career in nursing and was a licensed practical nurse, retiring from the State of Connecticut after 20 years.

Rob is survived by his two siblings, Jeffrey Metcalfe of Niantic and Pamela Metcalfe of Waterford. He also leaves behind his niece, Michelle Funaioli of New York City; his nephews, Michael Funaioli of New London and Jesse Metcalfe of Los Angeles, Calif.; and a grandniece, Jahzara Funaioli.

Rob had the soul of an artist, the brain of a genius and a heart full of love for his family and friends.

A memorial service will be held for Rob at 6 p.m. today, Feb. 19, at the Thomas L. Neilan & Sons East Lyme Funeral Home, 48 Grand St., Niantic.

Visit neilanfuneralhome.com to leave a condolence message for Robert's family or to view his video tribute.



Colchester

Amy Louise Yockachonis

Amy Louise (Borkiewicz) Yockachonis, 54, of Colchester, passed away at home Monday, Feb. 15. Born in Norwich Jan. 20, 1962, she was the daughter of the late William and Helen (Romanewicz) Borkiewicz.

For many years, Amy had worked behind the deli counter at Tri-Town Foods in Colchester and more recently at Westchester Market. She was an avid lover of animals, especially her loving pets, Harley and Davidson. She was very proud of her flower gardens and enjoyed cooking and baking for others. Amy was a communicant of St. Andrew Church in Colchester.

She leaves three sisters, Carol Borkiewicz of Columbia, Christine Pudlo and husband, John, and Cindy Danko and husband, Phil, all of Colchester; two brothers, Peter Borkiewicz of Colchester and Timothy Borkiewicz and wife, Sheila of Brooklyn; and numerous nieces, nephews, extended family members and friends.

The family will receive guests from 4-6 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 24, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. A chapel service will be observed at 6 p.m. Burial will be private.

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

For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

Courant

Portland

Leonard Smith

Leonard "Sonny" Smith, 86, of Portland, husband of the late Josephine Sumpter Smith, passed away peacefully Friday morning, Feb. 12, at Middlesex Hospital. Born in Middletown, he was the son of the late Lemon and Ola Mae (Blalock) Smith.

Sonny lived in Portland all of his life and was a member of True Vine Church. He was employed by Phillip Brothers Chemical Company and American Cynamid in Wallingford until retiring. For many years, Sonny served as the first African-American constable in Portland. His oldest grandson, Eric Grant, followed in his footsteps and served as a police officer in Portland as well. Sonny enjoyed life, his family and friends and especially his grandchildren who were extra special to him.

Sonny is survived by his four daughters, the Rev. Earlene Grant of Middletown, Kathryn Smith of West Hartford, Rosalyn Perry of Middletown and Laura (Tyron) Gaston of Meriden; his beloved sister, Grace Larry of Portland; 10 grandchildren; six great-grandchildren; and many dear nieces, nephews and cousins.

Along with his wife and parents, he was predeceased by his daughter, Linda Smith Wakefield; two sisters, Emma Smith and Sophronia Smith; and a brother, Ernest Smith.

The family thanks Dr. Emmanuel Kenta-Bibi and Pastor Moses L. Harvill for all of their prayers, genuine kindness and compassion.

Funeral services will be held Saturday, Feb. 20, at 10 a.m., at Cross Street AME Zion Church, 440 West St., Middletown. Burial will be in the spring in Trinity Cemetery. Family and friends may call Saturday morning from 9-10 a.m. at the church.

In lieu of flowers, donations in Sonny's memory may be made to the Alzheimer's Association Connecticut Chapter, 200 Executive Blvd., Southington, CT 06489-1058.

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

Courant

Colchester

John G. Gallucci

John G. Gallucci, 50, of Colchester, died unexpectedly from natural causes at home Wednesday, Feb. 10.

He leaves to mourn his passing his loving wife, Sandra (Simas) Gallucci; daughter, Gina Gallucci; mother, Dorothy Raucci and stepfather, Steven Raucci of Hebron; sister, Kristan Patterson of Colchester; two brothers, Jeff and Michael Gallucci, both of Naples, FL; and his beloved dog, Peanut.

John had worked as an independent contractor for AT&T in a supervisory position for a number of years before suffering a debilitating injury.

The memorial liturgy will be celebrated at 11 a.m. today, Feb. 19, at St. Andrew Church, 128 Norwich Ave., Colchester. There are no calling hours and burial will be private.

Care of arrangements has been entrusted to the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home of Colchester.



Obituaries continued

East Hampton

Shawn Ryan Aldrich

Shawn "Kirby" Ryan Aldrich, 31, of East Hampton, unexpectedly passed away in his home Thursday, Feb. 11. Born Aug. 21, 1984, Shawn was the son to Wanda Folsom of Colchester and the late David Sorrele of East Hampton.

He was predeceased by his sister, Rennee Sorrele.

Shawn was a very kind person with a soft heart. After graduating from East Hampton High School, he attended Porter and Chester Institute where he studied to become an E2 Electrician. His passions included working on cars for he was a die-hard Chevy man, riding quads, and racing.

A beloved son, father, grandson and friend, Shawn leaves behind his adored children, Angelina Corson of East Hampton, Kaleb Aldrich of East Hampton, Hayley Bodamer Aldrich of East Hampton and Skyler Bodamer of East Hampton; fiancée, Shannon Bodamer of East Hampton; former spouse of 10 years, Dianna Corson of East Hampton; and grandmother, Neta Brooks-Aldrich of Vermont.

Relatives and friends are invited to celebrate his life Sunday, Feb. 28, from 4-8 p.m., at VFW Post 5095, 20 North Maple St., East Hampton.



Courant

Middle Haddam

Robert Harold Briggs

Robert Harold Briggs, 83, of Haddam, formerly of Middle Haddam, passed away Monday, Feb. 8. Born in Waterbury July 21, 1932, he was the son of the late William F. Briggs Sr. and Dorothy (Porteus) Briggs.

Bob was raised in Middletown, attended Woodrow Wilson High School, served in the United States Navy and graduated from the University of Rochester, N.Y. He was married for over 49 years to Barbara (Turner) Briggs until her death in 2003. They lived in Middle Haddam before settling in Haddam.

Bob is survived by his son, Scott, his fiancé, Kathy and her son, Adam of Madison; his daughter, Lisa Roser and her husband, Donald of Columbia; his daughter, Robin Reilly and her partner, Ralph of Higganum; and his son, Craig and his partner, Paige of Sarasota, Fla. He was most proud of his grandchildren: Tyler (Erin), Austin (Hilary), Maeve, Clare, Chelsea, Ethan, Carter and his great-grandson, Jack.

Bob's favorite hobbies and interests were his family, friends, community and golf. Bob spent his adult life providing a variety of services to numerous Middletown community organizations: he chaired the South Congregational Church growth and renewal committee, the Connecticut River Foundation at Steam Boat Dock building and grounds committee, and Camp Tadmah capitol campaign. He served on the board of directors for the Middletown United Fund, Y.M.C.A., Middlesex Chamber of Commerce and the Independent Connecticut Petroleum Association (now CEMA) and as president and director of the Middletown Rotary Club. He also was a director and coach with the East Hampton Little League and the Haddam Little League.

Bob has been the recipient of the Middlesex Chamber of Commerce Good Guy Award, the Paul Harris Fellow and Sapphire Award given by the Rotary Club and the Distinguished Service Award sponsored by the Middletown Jaycees. He was a member of the Wesleyan Faculty Club, the Petroleum Marketers Association of America, the New England Fuel Institute and the Middlesex Manufacturers Association. Bob was co-owner and vice president of Valley Oil in Portland.

A celebration of life will be held Saturday, April 23, at 11 a.m., at the South Congregational Church, 9 Pleasant St., Middletown.

In lieu of flowers, donations in Bob's memory may be made to The Rotary Club of Middletown Scholarship Fund, P.O. Box 1107, Middletown, CT 06457 or the Northern YMCA Women's Board, 99 Union Street, Middletown, CT 06457.

Doolittle Funeral Home is handling the arrangements. To share memories or send condolences to the Briggs family, visit doolittlefuneralservice.com.