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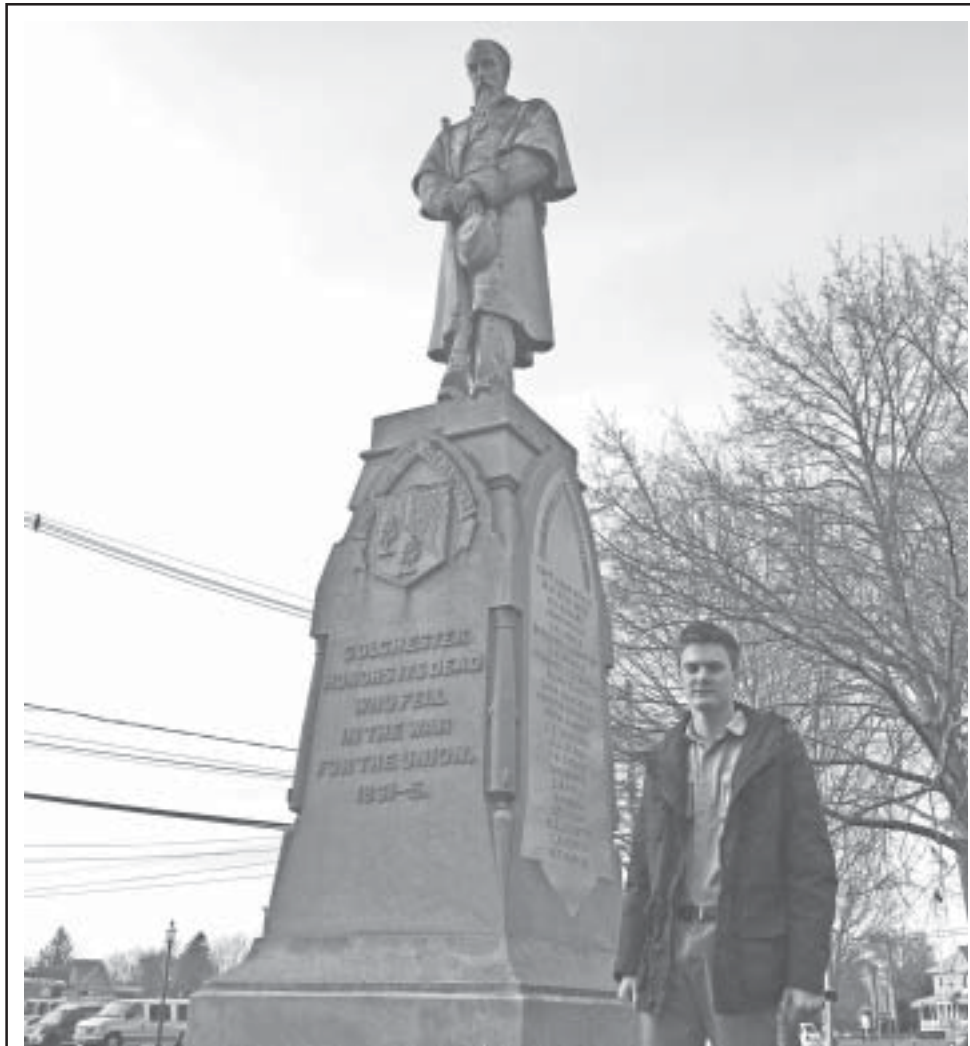
News Bulletin

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Eagle Project... Ryan McAuliffe, a junior at Bacon Academy, is starting to raise funds for his Eagle Scout project. He plans to build a wall around the Civil War monument on the town green to protect the monument from cars during car shows. See related story on page 27.

Pair Arrested In Animal Abuse Case

by Elizabeth Regan

The couple behind an animal abuse case that gained prominence last month when the state seized 32 horses and almost 100 other animals from their East Hampton farm have been arrested on numerous counts of misdemeanor animal cruelty.



Thomas Olajos

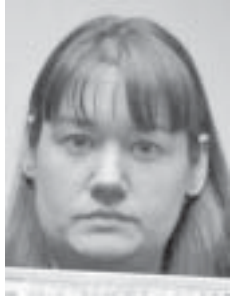
Thomas Olajos, 36, and Melanie Olajos, 37, of 47 Daniel St., were charged Friday by the East Hampton Police Department with 35 counts of cruelty to animals, according to the Connecticut Department of Agriculture. That includes one count for each of the 32 seized horses, the state said, plus three counts "stemming from the alleged mistreatment of two dogs, 19 rabbits and 78 chickens."

In addition to the 32 seized horses, court documents indicate Thomas Olajos told state animal control officers a colt had died on the property in early January; a veterinarian for the Olajoses said the horse was thin and had a rough coat, but could not determine an exact cause of death.

A spokesman for the state agriculture department confirmed the dead horse was not included in the 35 counts of animal cruelty lodged against the couple.

The Olajoses breed Friesian, Andalusian and Gypsy Vanner horses under the name Fairy Tail Equines.

Each violation of the state's animal cruelty law – which, among other things, prohibits people from failing to provide food, shelter and proper care for their animals – could result in a fine of up to \$1,000 and a prison sentence of up to a year.



Melanie Olajos

Thomas and Melanie Olajos were released on \$10,000 non-surety bonds and are scheduled to appear at Middletown Superior Court on March 15, according to the state agriculture department.

Thomas Olajos was also arrested that day by state police on an outstanding warrant for issuing a bad check to a farm in Woodbury. State police said Olajos was transported from the East Hampton Police Department to Troop L in Litchfield, where he was released on a \$1,000 non-surety bond.

On Tuesday, the state department of agriculture was granted permanent custody of the animals by a Hartford Superior Court judge based on what the Department of Agriculture called "an agreement between the department – represented by the Office of the Attorney General – and the horses' former owners that was struck just before a custody hearing was to begin."

The state was granted temporary custody of the animals on Feb. 2.

The arrests and the permanent forfeiture of

See Pair Arrested Page 2

Revitalizing Hebron's Camp Hemlocks

by Geeta S. Sandberg

There's a lot of activity at Camp Hemlocks in Hebron these days.

Campers have yet to occupy the grounds, but crews can be found working throughout replacing windows and siding and fixing ceilings; there's new furniture in places, shiny new kitchen equipment, an improved fire system, high speed wireless Internet, and more – all part of the effort to bring the once-doomed Camp Hemlocks up to its full potential.

Camp Hemlocks is located on 160 picturesque acres on Jones Street, and includes a 22-acre lake for boating and fishing, a ropes course and climbing wall, and miles of hiking trails. The barrier-free facility – which includes large meeting rooms, dining capacity for 150, overnight accommodations for 100, an open air pavilion and a fully handicapped-accessible pool – has provided a place for individuals with disabilities to experience camp life since 1974.

But just a few short years ago, it appeared those opportunities were coming to an end; in October 2013 the announcement was made that the camp would be closing due to financial reasons. But less than a year later, things turned around when the Hartford-based non-profit Oak

Hill LLC stepped in to save the day, announcing in August 2014 they were slated to become the controlling partner of Easter Seals Coastal Fairfield County and Camp Hemlocks.

And now, Camp Hemlocks has become The Hemlocks Center, a place Oak Hill Director Katie Hanley hopes will be utilized year-round.

"We think there's so much potential here and we just love being here and daydreaming about all the year-long possibilities that could involve the community," she shared. "Our summer program is still focused on people with disabilities, so of course if you're someone with a disability in the community you can come here in the summer and it'd be just the place for you. But then, year-round, we're looking for ways to engage the community."

Hanley mentioned the center already partnered with a veterans rowing and kayaking program for use of the lake for rowing practice. In addition, two weddings and a shower are booked at the facility, and a yoga retreat was held there last weekend. The hope is for those sorts of activities to continue and expand as time goes on.

"I just feel like this place has so much to

See Camp Hemlocks Page 2



Work is underway to dress up Camp Hemlocks in Hebron – to help bring the once-doomed camp to its full potential. Among the many enhancements is new furniture throughout the camp, including the meeting room seen here.

Pair Arrested cont. from Front Page

the animals followed a five-month-long investigation by the state agriculture department during which state animal control officers found the animals without sufficient water, food, shelter and veterinary care on numerous occasions.

The horses are currently at the state's large animal rehabilitation facility in Niantic. The rest of the animals are spread out across various municipal shelters. The department will now determine what steps will be taken to find new homes for the animals, according to the state.

State Rep. Melissa Ziobron, R-34, took to Facebook Wednesday to spread the word about the state's status as the newly-appointed owner of 32 horses, 2 dogs, 19 rabbits and 78 chickens. She has set up a crowdsourcing website to help raise money for the care of the horses that had raised over \$17,000 by Wednesday afternoon.

Ziobron said in her online post that the state Office of the Attorney General is working to determine ownership claims and, once completed, the state Department of Agriculture "will begin a coordinated process to find good homes for the horses."

According to a press release from the state agriculture department, an attorney for the Olajosos said Tuesday that while they were "cash-strapped" and unable to properly care for the animals, their emotional attachment to the animals prevented them from selling or otherwise dispersing them to others.

The Olajosos have changed attorneys since the February raid at the farm, and are now represented by the Hartford-based firm of Rome McGuigan. A call to the firm was not returned by press time.

The state said veterinary findings detailed in the Olajosos' arrest warrants found that their 32 horses had been neglected in terms of nutrition, grooming and wound care and that, as a whole, the herd was underweight. The findings also indicated many of the horses had active

lice infestations, matted and tangled manes, fecal material caked on their tails and legs, and a skin condition known as dermatitis.

The two dogs seized by the state – both Great Danes – had live fleas and excessive discharge from their ears, according to the state. The male, who is between 2 and 3 years old, also had a superficial skin wound, calluses on both elbows, whipworms, profuse diarrhea and anemia. The 1-year-old female presented with current and healed wounds, conjunctivitis, and had teeth that suggested the dog may have been chewing on rocks and dirt, the state said.

The 78 live chickens seized from the farm were malnourished and had little or no access to water, according to the state. Three dead chickens taken from the facility had very little content in their stomachs, minimal fat stores "and other health issues including skin lesions and intestinal perforation consistent with aggression and cannibalism."

The Connecticut General Assembly's Office of Legislative Research found in 2015 that 3,513 charges were filed under the state's animal cruelty statute from 2005 through October 26, 2015. Of those charges, 47 percent were not prosecuted, 33 percent were dismissed, 18 percent resulted in guilty verdicts and 2 percent resulted in not guilty verdicts. Those numbers represent the number of charges, not the number of people charged.

The state's animal cruelty statute covers three areas: cruelty to animals, malicious or intentional cruelty to animals, dog fighting, and intentionally injuring or killing police dogs.

From 2005 through 2015, the study found 96 percent of animal abuse cases in the state fell into the 'cruelty to animals' category. Malicious or intentional cruelty to animals comprised 1.5 percent of the charges while the remaining 2.5 percent of cases involved injuring a police dog or involvement in dog-fighting.



Work on the outside of the main building at The Hemlocks Center includes the replacement of siding and some of the windows. Intern Kerry Kincy is also hoping to gather a group of volunteers to help on the grounds, cleaning the nature trails and painting swing sets among other things.

Camp Hemlocks cont. from Front Page

offer and my hopes and dreams are that we can slowly bring it back up to its potential," she stated. "The good news is that we have a solid foundation now that we are connected to Oak Hill – we have the network and the resources to be able to get it to where it needs to be... We want this building to be alive throughout the year."

Hanley added that was sure to take some time, but efforts are being made to prepare, including those of intern Kerry Kincy. Kincy, Hanley stated, "has made a great connection with the senior population."

In addition, she holds regular teatimes at the center, which provide the opportunity for community members to come to the facility, sip some tea, tour the property and talk (the next teatime is scheduled for Monday, March 14, from 1-2:30 p.m.).

Kincy is also hoping to build a volunteer base.

"My goal is to kind of get the message out to the surrounding area that I'm working to get together a volunteer database of folks," she stated. "The stories people share about the history here are so wonderful, and my hope is to get volunteers together who want to work on the grounds, cleaning the nature trails, with the programming that will be going on, and community projects."

She added, "It's important to kind of solidify the community that wants to be a part of this. I'm trying to reach out and extend a service as far as I can to support their interests and also provide opportunities to be here."

Kincy said she wanted everyone to feel welcome at the center, which "sticks to our mission to be inclusive of everyone."

Along with gathering volunteers, those involved with the center are also looking to connect with local artists and business owners to build a preferred vendors list to provide when individuals look into the center as a possible venue. In addition, the center is hiring for the summer, looking for camp counselors, program staff and an assistant camp director.

"We're looking for people who have camp experience, who would love to be working with people with disabilities," Hanley stated. "People who could maybe stay here all summer and work with the campers. We do hire international staff and it's so cool to have such an international group here."

She furthered, "So we're looking for people to work here and hopefully that'll only grow and grow and grow. Theoretically you could have something going on here every weekend. We're not there yet, but maybe in the future."

Hanley said the hope was to also increase the number of individuals who attend during

the summer.

"We'd like to just slowly start building up our capacity again," Hanley said. "Last summer we had 150 campers over the course of nine weeks, which is fantastic, but we can do more than that. The summer is really important; we've had some campers who have been coming here since it was built."

Finally, along with all of the above, there's another aspect of The Hemlocks Center that is scheduled to make its return: use of the pool.

"Everyone in town wants to know about the pool," Hanley smiled.

Kincy added, "Based on the amount of phone calls we've gotten, I think all of those people [who used to use it] have called us, which is wonderful, but it's hard to have to say 'no, the pool's not open yet.'"

Indeed, the pool's popularity was apparent Monday, when an area resident stopped in just to ask if it was open.

"This happens all the time," said Hanley, and Kincy returned with a smile after speaking with her: "I just got hugs over the pool!" she shared.

Although work on the pool itself is finished, the ceiling is currently being replaced.

"They're totally redoing the ceiling," Hanley stated. "The type that was up there wasn't appropriate for the humidity of the pool, so moisture was getting up above, freezing, then melting, then rotting the tiles."

Originally the hope was for the pool to be available this spring, however with the ceiling setback – the work is scheduled to take about eight weeks – that isn't going to happen, since at that point it will be time for the summer programming.

"I would say the fall is a reasonable expectation at this point," said Hanley, adding the plan was for a full aquatics program.

She furthered, "It's a very exciting time here and we love it. It's nice to slowly see the changes."

"We've heard so many stories," Kincy added. "People will be like 'oh my goodness let me tell you the stories!' And it's nice because you can hear in their voices how much they want this to be another blossoming place for them."

"This whole community cares about this place and that's so reassuring," Hanley concluded. "We're honored to be in this position, with this great responsibility to get this going again."

* * *

Those interested in volunteering, working at the camp, attending one of the teatimes, becoming a preferred vendor or with a question or comment can contact camp Director Jillian McCarthy at jillian.mccarthy@OakHillCT.org.

Colchester Finance Board Agrees to Increase School Budget

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

The Board of Finance reached a consensus to increase the 2016-17 school budget by \$100,000 Monday night, after residents spoke up to advocate for restoring a number of teaching positions.

The board will officially vote on the increase next week; if approved, it would bring the spending plan to \$39.90 million, a \$99,993 increase, or .24 percent, over current year spending.

Meanwhile, the finance board reached a consensus to trim the town operations budget by \$50,000, bringing it to \$14.40 million, a \$636,411 increase, or .46 percent, over current year spending.

The board will also officially vote on this change next week.

Overall, if the finance board officially approves both changes, the proposed 2016-17 town and school budgets would total \$54.29 million, up from this year's \$53.56 million. The spending proposal would feature a mill rate of 31.05, up from the current year's 30.76. This would translate to a .95 percent tax increase.

The \$50,000 trim from town operations wouldn't actually affect town spending. Finance board chair Rob Tarlov explained that, during the 2014-15 fiscal year, \$50,000 was transferred from the roads account to the snow removal account, due to the significant number of snowstorms. After that transfer, however, money from the Federal Emergency Management Agency arrived to cover the snow overages, so the \$50,000 went into the town general fund. It's been sitting there ever since, so the board decided Monday to put those funds into the roads account – and then trimmed the \$50,000 from the roads account accordingly.

As for the Board of Education, last month it

adopted a \$39.80 million budget for the 2016-17 year; this would have been exactly \$730 less than current year spending – and was also around a quarter of a million dollars less than what Superintendent of Schools Jeff Mathieu had proposed in January.

To get to that \$39.80 million amount, the school board agreed to cut four teaching positions – three of which were existing teachers – and make several other reductions, and also to start charging Bacon Academy students to park at the school.

However, since adopting that budget and sending it to the Board of Finance, residents have come to public meetings to ask the finance board to restore some of the money.

Selectman and former school board member Stan Soby told the finance board Monday, "If I were a parent, I'd be pretty disappointed" in the school budget.

Resident Lisa Hageman stated she has had a "pit in [her] stomach" since the \$39.80 million budget was adopted. "Year after year, we're haggling over money, and we're here to give kids a quality education," she said.

Monday night was the first time finance board members spoke their minds about the school budget. And most – but not all – were in favor of adding at least some money to the school budget.

Board member Rob Esteve said he did hear some "compelling arguments" from the public that night, and was willing to support putting money back in.

Esteve also was pleased residents are coming out now and speaking their minds – rather than waiting until after the referendums are held.

"I'm glad we're having this semi-angry meet-

ing at the Board of Finance earlier in the process than after the second referendum fails," board member Rob Esteve said, adding, "To me, [this] is a step in the right direction."

Fellow board member James McNair was in favor of adding to the budget – and letting taxpayers have the say at referendum.

"When you have certain critical things, let the voters decide," McNair said. "Put some in, and if that budget goes down by a wide margin, we may look at something less than zero [percent increase]."

But board member Andreas Bisbikos – whose family owns Colchester Pizza in town – balked at adding money to the school budget.

"There is another tale – the people that are struggling to make ends meet, as well as the businesses in town that are fed up with the high taxes," he said. "We need to think about them as well."

To this, board member Tom Kane replied, "To be brutally honest, I haven't heard from them." Kane then expressed his support of money returning to the school budget.

"This is what small town government is about," Tarlov said of the discussion. "This is the first year there's a real public dialogue before the first referendum."

Tarlov went on to say he supports putting the teaching positions back in.

"Would \$100,000 make a meaningful difference?" he asked school board chair Ron Goldstein, to which Goldstein replied "absolutely."

"It's putting the ball in play," McNair said of adding \$100,000 to the budget. "The people will decide. I see this as a compromise and I hope it passes."

* * *

While the Board of Finance can set the bottom line school budget amount, it's up to the school board to decide where that money goes. And, thinking optimistically after the prior night's finance board meeting, on Tuesday the Board of Education got to work on finding just how best to add that \$100,000.

The board unanimously voted to restore the teaching positions ticketed for elimination: the 0.2 full-time equivalent (FTE) world language teacher at William J. Johnston Middle School, for \$10,045; a 0.4 FTE world language teacher at Bacon Academy, for \$20,089; a 0.4 FTE science teacher at Bacon, for \$20,089; and a 1.0 FTE new special educator position at Jack Jacker Intermediate School, for \$50,330. The board also agreed to plug in \$5,000 to the budget, so that it would no longer need to charge Bacon students for parking.

With the teaching positions back in the budget, Mathieu reported there was a decrease of \$4,830 in unemployment that will not be needed.

In total, \$100,723 was put back into the school budget, to bring the total to \$39,895,363.

* * *

The town and school budgets will be discussed and voted on by the finance board next Wednesday, March 16, at 7 p.m., at Town Hall, 127 Norwich Ave. The budgets will then go to public hearing in April. After the hearing, the finance board will decide whether to move the budget to town meeting then referendum on May 10.

Tarlov explained the date change in the referendum from May 3 to May 10 was a request from the registrars so the registrars have enough time to prepare for the referendum after the presidential primaries on April 26.

New Pet Store in Colchester

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

Pet-owners in Colchester have a new place to shop with the opening last Friday of a Pet Valu store at 95B Linwood Ave.

Walking in, shoppers are greeted with bright, colorful displays in a boutique set up. Pets can pick a toy, lie on a bed, snack on a treat, or get a bath.

Housed in the newly-reconstructed plaza in front of Stop & Shop, the store has all of the small town charm with the benefits of a larger corporation.

"Although we do have a lot of stores, we pride ourselves on the community and being the town store that has everything you need," Corinne Scialabba, manager of the Guilford store, said. Scialabba is filling in for manager Rachel Barile while Barile is trained.

One of the main features of a Pet Valu store is the wash area. Three areas for washing sit against the wall in tile in small, medium, and large. Each spot has a hookup to attach to a pet's collar and a drying machine. The store provides all of the shampoo and supplies needed to give your pet a bath. Employees also work hard to accommodate for every pet. Scialabba explained that just this past weekend a dog came in that did not want to walk on the tile into the tub. The employees put towels down so the dog would not have to walk on the tile, and the pooch felt more comfortable.

"You can come in, wash your dog, and we clean up," Scialabba said. "What's better than that?"

So far the wash area has averaged around 20 pets per day, Scialabba said – and she only expects that number to grow.

A part of the store not yet complete, she said, is a community mural that is painted above the wash area. Currently the wall is a blank slate.

"Each store is unique," Scialabba said. "It may be the dog park or the town green. It's the number one thing that I love; we really want to make it feel like it's your community pet store."

Along with the wash areas, the store carries an exclusive line of food called Performance Ultra and their own line of clothing and beds called Bailey and Bella.

"We pride ourselves in a really good assortment for pets and pet parents at a good price," Scialabba said.

Frequent flyers at the store can sign up for a free "Pet Points Plus" card which allows customers to earn points and earn money off at the store.

Pet Valu has 20 stores in Connecticut – the company's newest store, in Glastonbury, is due to open tomorrow – and 200 stores across the nation. However, Scialabba said, each store is unique and focuses on the local community.

She explained Pet Valu participates frequently in community events, and expects the store will be at the Colchester Dog Park's "Spring Bark for the Park" and the Colchester Lions' fall "Pumpkins 'n' Pooches" event.

The store will also work with local schools and groups to host fundraisers where the groups can take over the wash and all of the proceeds go to their organization.

Aside from community events, Pet Valu stores also host adoption events – usually monthly – and raise money for a different organization each month. March's organization is America's Vet Dogs which helps bring dogs to veterans as guide dogs, hearing dogs, facility dogs, and service dogs. Each person who donates \$3 receives a hand sanitizer.

Other organizations the store supports include War Dogs, cat litter collections, and their community board at the back of the store with a donation bin.

"We donate food to shelters to help out," Scialabba said. "Customer service is really important and community is really important."

Shoppers at the store definitely experience the customer service. A person with a picky pet or a pet with allergies can talk to a store employee about what food could be best for the animal. Each employee is trained in nutrition, allergies, and common issues through an "intense" program with the University of California Davis Extension School. The employees learn about a variety of animals including dogs, cats, small animals, fish and birds.

"Pets and pet parents; it's all about them," Scialabba said. "We have the answers for them."



The new Pet Valu store at 95B Linwood Ave. is not just for dogs. Piggie the pig visited the store last weekend and had a bath in the wash area of the store. Management said the store welcomes a variety of pets in the store including dogs, cats, pigs, goats and birds.

If the store does not have a particular food in stock that a shopper needs, an employee can call another store to try and get it for the person. If a person is unsure of how their pet will react to a food, Scialabba said the store gives out samples for pet-owners to try.

So far, the new store has been doing well,

Scialabba said. Many people have remarked that they "have been waiting for something like this," she said.

The Colchester Pet Valu can be contacted at 860-531-9112. The store is open 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Mondays through Saturdays, and 10 a.m.-7 p.m. Sundays.

Colchester Boy Scout Raising Funds for Eagle Project

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

A man stands tall on the town green with his hat in his hands, head down, contemplating and remembering.

Erected Sept. 17, 1875, the Civil War Monument has been a landmark in town for well over a century. Designed by George E. Bissell, the monument remembers Colchester citizens who lost their lives in the Civil War fighting for the Union.

Standing 16 feet tall and entirely made of granite, the monument has been watching over the town, reminding all residents of the war.

However, these days the monument is threatened by something that wasn't even a thought back in 1875 – car shows. Veterans' associations in town have expressed concern over car shows various groups host on the green, worried a car might back into the monument or get too close, damaging it.

Resident Ryan McAuliffe is hoping to assuage those fears.

McAuliffe, a member of Boy Scout Troop 109, is trying to build a protective wall around

the statue, for his Eagle Scout project.

The Bacon Academy junior has been in Boy Scouts since fifth grade, and said last week earning the title of Eagle has always been the goal.

"I've wanted to be an Eagle Scout for awhile," McAuliffe said. "That's the goal the whole time I've been a Boy Scout."

Eagle Scout is the highest rank a Boy Scout can achieve. The rank requires Boy Scouts to complete 21 merit badges along with their Eagle Scout project. Projects must be some kind of community service project that the Boy Scout must raise funds for and work on.

McAuliffe approached Parks and Recreation Department staff to see if they had any community projects in mind for him to do. They passed along something the local American Legion and the Veterans of Foreign Wars groups were also interested in – a wall around the monument.

McAuliffe said he was excited to take on the project.

The wall would surround the monument

around the hill it sits on and be two to three feet in height. McAuliffe said he chose to make the wall out of stone so "it's nice and doesn't fall down in two years; something that lasts."

McAuliffe said he hopes to construct the stone wall in early May, before the weather is too hot or too wet.

The project is still pending approval from the veterans' associations and First Selectman Art Shilosky; however, McAuliffe said he has already received the go-ahead from Public Works Director Jim Paggioli and the Parks and Recreation Commission.

However, McAuliffe still has to raise approximately \$2,000 for the project, in order to purchase materials. On March 19, he is hosting a pasta dinner at Westchester Congregational Church – 449 Westchester Rd. – to support the project. Going from 4-7 p.m., the dinner will include salad, pasta, meatballs, beverages, and desserts. The suggested donation is \$10 for adults and \$5 for children.

McAuliffe said that if he doesn't generate

all the needed money at that dinner, he will host another fundraiser.

Various local businesses are also making donations toward the project; Marvin's has pledged to donate some of the needed materials; Noel's Market and Stop & Shop will put up cash; and Family Pizza, Maria's Pizza and Papa Z's have also pledged donations.

McAuliffe said he already has most of the plans drawn out, needs to raise the money and get the final approvals and then get out onto the green and build the wall. He said the actual construction will be done by himself and other Troop 109 scouts, with minimal adult help.

"I think it's a great project for the town," McAuliffe's mother, Nancy, said. "It's something people have asked for."

Nancy said she believes McAuliffe will do great and that it will be a "great addition to the town."

If anyone would like to donate to McAuliffe's project, he can be reached at 860-267-6712.

Andover School Board Approves \$4.32 Million Budget

by Geeta S. Sandberg

The Board of Education Wednesday unanimously approved Superintendent of Schools Sally Doyen's \$4.32 million budget proposal for 2016-17, an amount equal to current year spending.

The \$4,320,821 proposal contains three large increases. These are: in the object 200 line, which contains insurance and is proposed at \$845,203 for an increase of \$63,988; in the object 500 line, which contains tuition and the bus contract and is proposed at \$323,238 for an increase of \$112,738; and in the object 700 line, which contains furniture and equipment and has been budgeted at \$9,600 for the 2016-17 year, up \$5,900.

These increases are offset, however, by several other decreases including a significant drop in the object 100 line, which contains salary, wages and contractual obligations. Budgeted at \$2,619,373, the amount is a 5.64 percent, or \$156,624 less than the current year and is due to declining enrollment; there are currently 50 students in sixth grade who will be moving on

to RHAM at the end of this year, and that's the largest grade currently at the elementary school; from there, the grade sizes decrease, down to 21 children currently in kindergarten.

Also included in the proposal, and in response to the decline in enrollment, is the elimination of a 5th grade class.

In addition, one of the school reading specialists submitted their resignation and Doyen said that position was not going to be replaced. The number of paraprofessionals will also decrease by two next year, due to a number of special education students in the sixth grade who will be moving on to RHAM.

Other decreases include \$15,227 from the object 600 line containing items such as instructional supplies, textbooks, heating oil and fuel; \$7,285 from the object 300 line, which contains contracted services; \$2,500 from the object 400 line, which Doyen said includes "many preventative maintenance items," and a \$990 decrease in the object 800 line.

Doyen shared this week she felt the budget proposal would be adequate for the coming year.

"I think it does meet the needs of the school for next year," she said. "Given the areas that we know we need to improve in, we continually work on making sure that our curriculum and instruction activities are up to date and meet the standards that we're required to follow, while still being conservative and not asking for any additional funds" beyond what is needed.

* * *

Also Wednesday, the board voted to approve the selection of Silver Petrucelli & Associates out of Hamden for the school roof project.

Board of Education member Mike Russo was on the board's School Roof Subcommittee and shared at the meeting three companies had submitted bids for the project, and after viewing presentations from each, Silver Petrucelli was the subcommittee's recommendation.

Silver Petrucelli President "Bill Silver has demonstrated a record of getting the job done well and on time," Russo said. He added Doyen had made calls to surrounding districts that had worked with the firm, like Columbia and Manchester, and their experiences had all been positive.

Hebron, he furthered, had received a bid from Silver Petrucelli for one of their roof projects but didn't choose them "but they said they wish they did."

Russo said we [the subcommittee] feel very strongly we're making the right decision."

Resident Ken Romeo, who was also a member of the subcommittee, added "they did a good interview. I think this is going to be a positive project."

* * *

The next regular Board of Education meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 13, at 7 p.m., in the Andover Elementary School library, 35 School Rd.

Easement Approval Fails with Tie Vote in Andover

by Geeta S. Sandberg

The easement over town property voters agreed last summer to grant to two residents is officially in limbo, as the Board of Selectmen this week – after months discussing the item – balked at giving the pair the easement.

A motion to grant a right-of-way at the end of Riverside Drive to Joshua Clark and Christopher Wierzbicki failed Tuesday by a 2-2 vote; selectwoman Cathy Desrosiers was absent from the meeting.

At a July referendum, voters approved, by a 211-133 tally, to grant the right-of-way to Clark and Wierzbicki, owners of a 60-acre piece of property at 64 Long Hill Rd. Since that time, the Board of Selectmen has discussed the easement at multiple meetings, making various requests and looking over several drafts of the easement agreement.

At Tuesday's meeting, Town Zoning Agent John Valente discussed the current status of the easement draft and shared his thoughts on the proposal.

He mentioned a special Planning and Zoning Commission meeting on the easement was held Feb. 29 and said the commission "felt the reworking in February was fair."

Originally, the easement contained a restriction that limited the number of houses to be built on the property to two. However, after the Feb. 29 meeting that was changed and now "there shall be no more than four single-family homes" on the property and the land can be divided into no more than four lots. But Valente

said only two dwellings would be accessed via the town easement, which kept in line with the original request; the others would be accessible via Long Hill Road.

Valente added Clark and Wierzbicki had also agreed to designate 30-41 acres of their land as open space. Valente mentioned their land was considered a "high-priority conservation area" by the town.

"I personally feel this is a good thing for the town," Valente stated.

He added he didn't think granting the easement would set a precedent in town, explaining, "If this was used as a benchmark for future landowners, I doubt anyone would be able to equal what these owners are giving the town."

Also included in the agreement is an annual fee of \$500 the owners would need to pay the town, as well as a requirement that they maintain public liability and property damage insurance in the amount of \$2,000,000.

Michael Bonanno, the property owners' attorney, furthered at the meeting, "All of these changes are in the town's favor and the easement only services two homes. Now there's an increased bond, an increased town fee; it locks in 31-40 acres of open space. ... They've conceded everything – and patiently."

Yet that just wasn't enough for the selectmen Tuesday. While Desrosiers had sent a letter to her fellow selectmen, asking them to table voting on the easement until next month's meeting when she'd be in attendance, the board de-

ecided to move forward. As a result, voting was split 2-2, with First Selectman Bob Burbank and Selectwoman Julia Haverl voting in favor, and vice First Selectman Jeff Maguire and Jay Lindy voting against. The motion failed as a result.

On Thursday, Lindy explained he wasn't in favor of the agreement because of the change in the number of houses that could be built on the property.

"Should they be allowed two houses? Yes," Lindy said. "Should they be allowed three houses? In my opinion, no."

Meanwhile, Maguire explained he didn't feel the agreement adequately protected the town from liability "and if the town has to assume any liability related to that easement, I can't vote for it."

To Burbank, however, the agreement was a "winning situation" for the town.

"We were getting a monthly fee for use of the driveway, were indemnified for any accidents that may take place, had a cash bond in place in case any repairs were needed and were also getting 30-plus acres [in open space] for the town – and to me, that is such a benefit to the town that I felt it was something that I could support," Burbank said.

During public comment at the end of the meeting, resident Curt Dowling said he was "disgusted" with the board's actions.

"I'm disgusted with the action of the Board

of Selectmen through this entire process, putting these people through hell," he said. "They've given into all of your demands; it's been disgusting to watch this whole thing unfold and I think there's some hidden agendas."

Meanwhile, speaking on the results Wednesday Bonanno said "we are disappointed, plain and simple."

He added, "We presented a comprehensive easement that provided significant value to the town in return for access to their property. Over five or six meetings, my clients capitulated to almost every additional request of the selectmen."

Bonanno furthered "we don't know how the town did not pass it," and said what was "perhaps most disheartening" was that the board went ahead with the vote despite Desrosiers' request they wait until she could participate.

Moving forward, Burbank said he was going to consult the town attorney as to what happens next, saying he didn't think the issue was over with, "because it was voted on at town meeting."

Bonanno, meanwhile, said his clients were "considering a variety of options."

He concluded, "Everybody loses, because the vote did not pass."

* * *

The next regular Board of Selectmen's meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 12 at 7 p.m. in the Town Office Building, 17 School Rd.

Traversa Proposes 5 Percent Tax Hike in Marlborough

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

First Selectwoman Amy Traversa Wednesday proposed a \$24.01 million town budget for the next fiscal year – a spending package that, if approved, will feature a 5.4 percent tax increase.

The \$24.01 million budget is an increase of \$943,000, or 1.78 percent, over current year spending. Once again, education is driving the spending – \$7.42 million for the local Board of Education and \$8.61 million for the town’s portion of the RHAM schools’ budget.

The budget also includes: \$4.86 million for town operations, an increase of \$179,478, or 3.83 percent, over the current year; \$2.24 million in debt service; and \$1.11 million in capital.

Of the town operations budget, Traversa said, “We have stripped away all the fat, eaten away the meat, we’re at the bone and at some places, chiseled away at the bone.”

The local school board’s proposed budget is \$26,587, or .36 percent, higher than the current year, while Marlborough’s portion of the RHAM budget is up 4.54 percent, or \$374,114. This is due not just to the proposed increase to RHAM’s overall budget, but also due to the fact the percentage of Marlborough students at the RHAM schools is going up next year – and thus the percentage of the RHAM budget the town is responsible for will rise accordingly.

The proposed increase would mean an increase of 1.78 mills to 34.67 mills – translating to a 5.4 percent tax increase. One mill is equal to \$1 in tax per \$1,000 of assessed property; under the proposed mill rate of 34.67, a resident with a home assessed at \$250,000 would pay \$8,667 in taxes on it.

Included in the presentation, Traversa recommended changing the way the fire marshal

works – a move that current marshal Joe Asklar said he was blindsided by.

Traversa said the fire marshal currently receives health and dental insurance, neither of which is offered to other part-time employees. To clear up the “unfair practice,” she is recommending the finance board take out \$22,759 in the budget for insurance. She is also recommending the salary account be increased by \$4,318, with the condition that the salary is dependent on the actual work.

Traversa also told the finance board she is requesting all fire marshal records to be kept on town property since currently the records are at Asklar’s business.

Although she acknowledged she had not told Asklar it was going to be presented, she said, “This is not going to be a surprise when he hears this. This is not out of the blue.”

However, Asklar found it very much out of the blue.

On Thursday morning, the *Rivereast* contacted Asklar to ask about the proposed changes. He said he found out 10 minutes earlier, from a call from another person.

“I went to a meeting [a month ago] with Amy and the assistant treasurer, Hayley [Wagner]. We agreed the insurance would stay in place and I would pay into it,” he said.

Asklar explained that when he was first appointed by the town’s Board of Fire Commissioners in 1980, there was an agreement with the Board of Selectmen that his insurance would be deducted from his salary. Under former first selectman Bill Black, Asklar said the insurance line was pulled out separately for “accounting purposes.”

He explained his salary appears on paper to be \$7,582 for the 2015-16 fiscal year, but that

amount is actually what’s remaining after Asklar pays for his insurance through the town; if deductions weren’t being made to cover insurance, his salary would actually be closer to \$30,000, meaning Traversa’s recommendation of a \$4,318 salary increase and the removal of his insurance doesn’t quite add up.

“I am just dumbfounded,” Asklar said Thursday. “I’m speechless right now.”

He said according to state statute, the fire marshal does not report directly to the selectmen. The marshal answers to the Marlborough Board of Fire Commissioners.

Regarding the records not being in the correct place, Asklar agreed that the records need to be moved.

“Because the town has not provided a location for the last 20 years, the records have been right at my fingertips,” he said. “I told them we can move them wherever you want.”

Asklar said the commissioners have suggested moving the records to the firehouse and that is where the records are in the process of going.

“What bothers me the most is the way I was blindsided by it,” Asklar said. “With other Board of Selectmen, we always had an excellent working relationship. If we had a meeting and agreed on something, we would keep to that agreement.”

He said to him, the recommendation to remove the insurance is “very political.”

Other changes in the proposed budget include adding an office clerical floater for \$8,146; increasing the salary for the parks and recreation director by \$4,743; adding \$5,000 to the fire department volunteer incentive pro-

gram; and \$9,900 for a lake weed control program.

The office clerical floater, Traversa said, is to cover the offices in Town Hall when employees go out to lunch or are at meetings so the office is not left empty. The increase to the parks and recreation director is in addition to 20 percent put in by the Parks and Recreation Department to make the position full-time.

Capital items include: \$45,000 for future capital reserves; \$10,000 for a five-year plan to save for revaluation; \$10,000 for a four-year plan for the Plan of Conservation and Development; \$25,500 for Town Hall energy and security upgrades; \$150,000 for water system phase two; \$465,500 for culverts and bridges; \$370,613 for local road improvements; \$38,500 for a five-year lease to own for a dump truck; and \$5,000 for the fire department UTV skid.

Traversa explained the town is responsible for \$853,926 while the rest is in grants. She said the town has to prove it has the money before it gets reimbursed for the grants and that is why the amount is shown to be \$1.11 million.

One issue with revenue, she said, is the town is counting on approximately \$188,000 of sales tax revenues from the state. However, she said she has been told “not to count” on it.

The finance board will hear from the local school board March 17 at 7 p.m. in the media center of Marlborough Elementary School. It will then hear from the RHAM school board March 24.

The RHAM referendum is scheduled for May 3 while the town’s annual budget meeting is May 9.

East Hampton Police News

2/20: Thomas Smith, 31, of 9 Bevin Blvd., was arrested and charged with disorderly conduct, second-degree criminal mischief, third-degree assault, second-degree threatening and illegal use of a fake firearm, East Hampton Police said.

2/22: Akeal L. Halliman, 18, of 7 Freestone Ave., Portland, was issued a summons for possession of one ounce of marijuana and operation of a motor vehicle without a license, police said.

2/23: Jeffrey Wright, 46, of 72 Middletown Ave., was issued a summons for driving under the influence, police said.

3/3: Matthew Allen Way, 18, of 100 Young St., was arrested and charged with second-degree failure to appear, police said.

Hebron Police News

3/5: State Police said Thomas Schreindorfer, 23, of 29 Senate Brook Dr., Amston, was arrested and charged with DUI, operating an unregistered motor vehicle, and with a stop sign violation.

Portland Police News

3/1: Thomas Anderson, 34, of 54 Bunker Hill, Waterbury, was charged with reckless driving, engaging an officer in pursuit, operating under suspension and operating an unregistered motor vehicle, Portland Police said.

3/3: Vanessa Muro, 45, of 6 Hickory Ln., Pawling, NY, was charged with operating under the influence, driving wrong way on divided highway and risk of injury to a minor, police said.

3/5: Joseph Mullen, 24, of 66 Strongs Ave., was charged with operating under the influence and improper operating of a golf cart, police said.

Colchester Police News

3/2: Colchester Police said Jay Wagoner, 33, of 51 Westchester Hills, was arrested and charged with breach of peace and threatening.

3/3: State Police said Billy McNamara, 41, of 59 Birch St., Manchester, was arrested and charged with two counts of failure to appear.

3/5: State Police said Victoria Rodrigue, 29, of 31 Kramer Rd., was arrested and charged with DUI and failure to drive in the proper lane.

Hebron Man Arrested in Home Improvement Fraud

A Hebron man was arrested last Friday after police discovered he took money and failed to perform work on a home in town.

David Zaino, 28, of 58 Elizabeth Dr., was arrested March 4 and charged with second-degree larceny, conspiracy to commit second-degree larceny, and violating a home improvement contract.

State police reported Zaino had been under investigation along with his brother, Wesley Zaino. According to Zaino’s affidavit, both Zainos committed to work on a chimney and steps on Elizabeth Drive, giving the person a contract, in May 2015. However, police said, Zaino Construction – which is owned by David Zaino is not in good standing with the Officer of Consumer Protection and is neither licensed nor insured.

Police reported the neighbor complained when he had given the brothers approximately

\$4,000 toward materials and repairs and work remained undone.

As of press time, Wesley Zaino has not been charged in connection with this case.

However, both Zainos were also previously arrested by the Vernon Police Department in July 2015 for allegedly committing home improvement fraud and larceny on an elderly victim in July 2014. Police said that, in that instance, the brothers are suspected of taking approximately \$49,000 from an elderly woman. According to police, the brothers didn’t do work they had agreed to do, and what work they did do was done incorrectly. Their work for the woman also coincided with the theft of \$20,000 of jewelry from her home.

The two brothers have each pled not guilty in that case, and the case is currently pending, according to court documents.

One Injured After Route 6 Crash in Andover

State police said a North Windham man sustained a minor eye injury after his vehicle went down an embankment off Route 6 March 3 in a one-car crash.

Paul Person, 58, of 559 North Windham Rd., North Windham, was transported to Windham Hospital for his injury after the crash around

6:20 a.m.

Police reported Person was driving a Chevy Silverado westbound on Route 6 near Route 87 when he traveled off of the road and down an embankment. The truck stopped in heavy brush down the embankment and Person sustained a laceration on his eye, police said.

Obituaries

Colchester

Gordon Wallace Pendexter Sr.

Gordon Wallace Pendexter Sr., 77, of Colchester, beloved husband of Donna (Houdlette) Pendexter, passed away Wednesday afternoon, March 2, at Lawrence + Memorial Hospital in New London. Born Nov. 11, 1938, in Waldoboro, Maine, he was the son of the late Alfred and Violet (Kennedy) Pendexter.



Mr. Pendexter had worked as a garment cutter for John Meyer Clothier in Norwich for many years before his retirement. An avid hunter and fisherman, he was a longtime member of the Sprague Rod and Gun Club and a Champion Skeetshooter. Gordon was also a former member of the Bozrah Moose Lodge 950.

Above all, he will be remembered for his dedicated work ethic and devoted to his family.

In addition to his loving wife of 57 years, he leaves two children and their spouses, Gordon Jr. and Laura of Colchester and Janet and Greg Hoover of Severna Park, Md.; six grandchildren, Rebecca, Jennifer and Gordon (III) Pendexter and Tuesday, Hailey and Lucy Hoover; three great-grandchildren, Jonathan, Christopher and Savannah; two brothers, Paul of Port Charlotte, Fla., and Ronald of Mystic; and numerous extended family members and friends.

The family received guests Saturday, March 5, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. Graveside services were observed Tuesday, March 8, at the Searls Mills Cemetery, Windsor Road, Chelsea, Maine.

In lieu of flowers, donations in his memory may be made to Colchester-Hayward Vol. Fire Co., 18-54 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester, CT 06415.

For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

Portland

Howard J. Helveston

Howard J. Helveston, 91, of Middletown, formerly of Portland, husband of the late Mary Jane (Bloomquist) Helveston, passed away Wednesday, March 2, at Middlesex Hospital. He was the son of the late Harold and Helen (Jones) Helveston.

Born on June 4, 1924, in Philadelphia, Pa., he lived in Portland for most of his life, before moving to Middletown recently. He was a graduate of Millersville State University in Pennsylvania, and received a master's degree from the University of Hartford. He was a teacher for the Rocky Hill School System for 30 years until his retirement. He was also a U.S. Army Air Corps veteran having served as ground crew in the 78th Fighter Group in Duxford, England during World War II.

He leaves his children, sons, Bill Helveston and wife, Rose of East Haddam, Ted Helveston and wife, Leisha of Schenectady, N.Y., daughter, Gail Helveston of Edgewater, Md.; grandchildren, Elizabeth Helveston, Blake Helveston, Tom Helveston and Bryan Helveston and two great-grandchildren; stepdaughters, Kimberly Fischburg and husband Kenn of Norwich, Katherine "Gidget" Matulis and husband, George of Unionville and Jacqueline "Jackie" Gotta and husband, Dickie of Portland; stepson, Robert "Skip" Wagner and wife, Mary of Portland; step-grandchildren Heather Kissinger, Kasie Eason, Jessica Tripicco, Jules Fischburg, Erica Matulis, Lindsey Matulis, Elizabeth Gotta and R.J. Gotta and five great-grandchildren.

Funeral services were held Wednesday, March 9, at Portland Memorial Funeral Home, 231 Main St., Portland. Burial was in the Swedish Cemetery, Portland. Relatives and friends called Tuesday, March 8, at the funeral home.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the American Warriors, P.O. Box 337, 35 Main St., Versailles, CT 06383, or to Middlesex Hospital Hospice 28 Crescent St Middletown, CT 06457.

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

Amston

Jonathan Kennedy Dounouk

Jonathan Kennedy Dounouk, 67, born Oct. 25, 1948, passed away peacefully, surrounded by his dear wife of 43 years, Sharon (Piscioneri) Dounouk and several family members. The son of the late Alexander Jacob and Charlotte Ann (Kennedy) Dounouk, he grew up in West Hartford.



Jonathan worked at AAA for many years and finished his career at Foley Services. Jonathan and his wife have been residents at Amston Lake for the last 42 years and have shared their home with several dogs, whom he loved. Jonathan enjoyed his life on the lake because it allowed him to indulge in one of his favorite pastimes, fishing, a hobby he shared with his father.

Jonathan was also an avid tennis player and was a member of the Glastonbury Tennis Club. Jonathan's wife and family would like to thank his tennis friends for their kindness and support. They would also like to thank the Hospice team at Hartford Healthcare for all their support and guidance.

Besides his wife, Jonathan leaves behind his brother, Alexander Sedgwick Dounouk; two sisters-in-law; a brother-in-law; several nephews; a niece; and several great nieces and nephews.

The memorial liturgy was celebrated Tuesday, March 8, directly at the Church of the Holy Family, 185 Church St. (Route 85), Hebron. There were no calling hours, and burial was private.

In lieu of flowers, donations in his memory may be made to the Connecticut Humane Society, 111 Russell Rd., Newington, CT 06111.

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

Marlborough

Eugene Lee Belk

Eugene "Gene" Lee Belk, 91, of Marlborough, formerly of Rocky Hill and Westminster, Md., passed away Friday, March 4, at the Marlborough Health Care and Rehab Center. Born in Greensboro, N.C., on Nov. 23, 1924, he was a son of the late Marion Jay and Maggie Purefoy Belch.



He was a proud veteran, having served with the Merchant Marines during World War II. Gene married Noralie Fae Grove Nov. 22, 1950. The couple shared 28 years of marriage before she died Feb. 25, 1978.

He retired many years ago after working as a chemist in industrial application development for Dutch Boy Paint, Sherwin Williams and Baltimore Paint and Chemical, where he invented new coatings for railroad and highway applications, including the first durable reflective paint for road markings.

He will be remembered for his enjoyment of art, photography, collecting memorabilia and hunting. His favorite hunting story involved shooting what he thought was a groundhog, at more than 200 yards, only to discover it was an especially high pile of horse manure. Regardless, it was an impressive shot.

He struck an imposing figure in his chinos, flannel shirt and "Life Is Good" cap, and always kept his beard nicely trimmed so you could see his dimples. He rightly bragged that he never had a headache in his life, although he was known to give away a few from time to time, and for that he can be (and is) forgiven.

He converted to the Roman Catholic faith at age 80, and his faith brought much solace and comfort to him over the last decade of his life. Most importantly, he will be remembered as a devoted family man.

He will be sadly missed but always remembered by his son, Eric and daughter-in-law Betty Belk of Marlborough; his daughter, Gwendolyn Kennedy of North Carolina; a brother, Robert Belch of Virginia; 12 grandchildren and numerous extended family and friends.

In addition to his wife Noralie and his parents, he was predeceased by a son, Richard Belch and a daughter, Olga Fae Fanion.

A Memorial Mass will be celebrated at 11 a.m. today, March 11, at St. John Roman Catholic Church in Westminster, Md.

Donations in his memory may be made to The Franciscan Sisters of the Immaculate, 106 Bullard Street, New Bedford, MA 02746.

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

Colchester

Bernard Edward Weis

Bernard Edward Weis, III, 84, of Colchester passed away peacefully at home Friday, March 4, surrounded by his loving family. Born in Teaneck, N.J., Aug. 18, 1931, he was the son of the late Bernard Edward and Norma (Martensen) Weis Jr.



Bernard was a proud veteran, having served in the U.S. Navy during the Korean War. He married his beloved Theresa Snyder July 4, 1953. The couple shared 50 years of happiness together until she predeceased him in 2003.

Bernard retired several years ago after having worked in quality control for companies including, United Technologies, General Electric and most recently he retired from Supship, Groton. He enjoyed painting and music, he loved his family pets and reading. Bernard's family and friends will remember him as having a quick wit and wonderful sense of humor. Blessed with a very large family, he was ever devoted to his children, grandchildren and siblings.

He will be sadly missed but always remembered by his children and their spouses, Bernie Weis of Colchester, Gerald Weis of Vernon, Jocelyn and her husband Glen Constant of Franklin and Lisa and her husband Jim Estabrooks of Bozrah; siblings, Gerald Weis and his wife Claudette of Plymouth, Donald Weis and his wife Nancy of Burlington, Barbara Dickinson of Enfield, Patricia Carr of Milford, James Weis and his wife Jan of Sun City, Fla., Vincent Weis and his wife, Karen of Sun City, Fla., Nathalie and her husband, Daniel Mabesoone of Uncasville and Carol Schulz of Pine Keys, Fla.; eight grandchildren, Nicole and Johnny Diaz, Gerald and Steven Weis, Nicholas and his wife Lindsey, Anthony and his wife Renee and Glen, Constant, Gregory and his wife Laura, and Chad and his wife Sara Estabrooks; eight great-grandchildren; as well as numerous extended family and friends.

In addition to his parents and wife, he was predeceased by two brothers, Thomas and John Weis, his sister Rosemary Mancini, and in-laws Rex Schulz, Donato Mancini, David Dickinson, Geraldine and Joseph Tardie and Raymond Carr.

Calling hours were held Wednesday, March 9, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. The funeral was celebrated Thursday, March 10, directly at the Westchester Congregational Church, Route 149, Westchester, with full military honors. Burial was private in the State Veterans Cemetery, Middletown.

Donations in his memory may be made to ASPCA.org, or mailed to ASPCA, P.O. Box 96929, Washington, DC 20090-6929.

The family would like to express sincere and heartfelt gratitude to Jeannie and Lindsay, loving caretakers of Bernard during his time of illness.

For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

Hebron

Patricia Carroll

Patricia (Sullivan) Carroll, 73, of Hebron, passed away Thursday, Feb. 18, at Hartford Hospital. She was the widow of David N. Carroll, late of Meriden and Hebron.

Patti was born and raised in Northampton, Mass., the daughter of the late Grace (Kablick) Sullivan and Patrick Sullivan. Prior to retirement, she had served as an executive secretary at ING and AETNA Insurance Companies in Hartford.

Patti worked at the voting polls in Hebron for a number of years. She was a communicant of the Church of the Holy Family, where she was a Eucharistic minister and worked in the prayer shawl ministry. In her later years, she enjoyed playing bingo in the area and attending theater productions of the Connecticut Repertory Theatre. She enjoyed several senior trips in addition to cruising to Alaska, Egypt, the Panama Canal and Russia.

In addition to her husband and parents, Patti was predeceased by a brother, Richard Sullivan, late of Holbrook, L.I., N.Y.

She leaves a brother, William Sullivan and his wife, Claire of Easthampton Mass., and a sister, Susan Swanwick and her husband, Michael of Newton, N.H. She is also survived by several nieces and nephews.

A memorial liturgy will be celebrated at 11 a.m. today, March 11, directly at the Church of the Holy Family, 185 Church St. (Route 85), Hebron, with a repass to follow. There are no calling hours and burial will be private.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to AHM Youth and Family Services, 25 Pendleton Dr., Hebron, CT 06248 (ahmyouth.org.donors) or to her church.

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

Glastonbury

Pegge H. Dennler

Pegge H. Dennler, 85, of Glastonbury, the beloved wife of the late Bernard W. Dennler Sr. since Feb. 23, 1952, passed away peacefully Friday, Feb. 25. She was born Aug. 25, 1930, in Randlett, Okla., a daughter of the late Cicero Thornton and Nancy Ann Wilson Hooper.

Pegge was a graduate of Temple High School in Oklahoma. As a young adult member, she sang and toured with the USO in Oklahoma and Texas. She later obtained her engineering degree moving east to Connecticut applying her acquired skills in her employment with Pratt & Whitney Aircraft. She became the manager of the wait staff at Mr. Turkey (Grayledge Farms), a position she held for several years.

In 1982, she opened the Country Cookie in Glen Lochen Mall which she owned for 12 years. She was a member of the Women's Auxiliary, Company No. 3, Glastonbury Volunteer Fire Department, and the PTO at Eastbury School. Pegge was a Girl Scout leader, den mother for Boy Scouts and assistant for Bluebirds.

She had a love of baking and took classes for cake decorating, and for years she baked and designed wedding cakes for her family and friends.

Pegge will be dearly missed by her children: daughter, Sharon Rose Dennler of New Symrna Beach, Fla.; son, Bernard W. Dennler Jr. and his wife MaryGrace Adams Dennler of Colchester; daughter, Nancy Ann Dennler of Cleveland, Ohio; grandchildren, Zachariah Shaskin and his wife Tabitha, Maleana Spera, Lyllette Ozimek, Bernard Dennler III; great-grandson Will Shaskin; brother, Sherral Ray Hooper of New Mexico; sisters-in-law Mary Marshall and her partner Hank LeBel of Stafford Springs and Sandy Robb and her husband Barrett of Spring Lake Heights, N.J.; nieces and nephews; Michael Marshall and his partner Anita Ilieve, John and Anne Marshall, Debbie Audette, Maureen and Dan LaPrad, Todd and Heather Marshall, Heather and Rob Grosso, Sarah and Sam Chiarella; and many grandnieces, grandnephews, special friend, Rick Adams of Charlotte, NC., and helpful, supportive neighbor, Barbara Brown of Glastonbury, along with many other cherished friends.

In addition to her parents and her husband Bernie, Pegge is preceded in death by her six siblings, Ruby Brewer, Marvin Hooper, Pauline Miner, Aline Wilkerson, Buddy Jo Hooper and Francis Hooper.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, 501 St. Jude Place, Memphis, TN 38105, or online at stjude.org.

Her funeral liturgy will be held Saturday, April 9, at 10 a.m., in St. Paul Church, 2577 Main St., Glastonbury. Burial will follow in Neipsic Cemetery, East Glastonbury. There are no calling hours.

To leave an online condolence, visit glastonburyfuneral.com.

Hebron

Genevieve Yolande Bogaczyk

Genevieve Yolande (Rubb) Bogaczyk, 45, of North Windham, formerly of Hebron, passed away at home peacefully Saturday, March 5.

She leaves to mourn her passing her loving husband of 19 years, David, and their beloved daughter, Jenna Marie; her parents, Donald and Yolande (Corbeil) Rubb of Columbia; two siblings and their spouses, Monique and Thomas Ryan of Hebron and Stephen and Susan Rubb of Glastonbury; her father-in-law, Clement Bogaczyk of Horseheads, N.Y.; her beloved pugs, Emmy and Missy; and numerous extended family members and friends.

Born in Manchester Sept. 13, 1970, she grew up in Vernon and went on to earn her Bachelor of Science degree from Quinnipiac University, becoming a licensed physical therapist. In 1994, she moved to Amarillo, Texas, where she met her husband, David, and they were married July 20, 1996. While in Texas, she owned and operated "Total Enhancement Physical Therapy," until moving back to Connecticut in 2001. She continued her career working as a physical therapist for various convalescent homes in the area.

In her spare time, she was an avid reader, *Star Wars* fan and loved to spend time at the beach, especially on Cape Cod. She will be remembered for her vibrant nature (both in personality and dress) as well as her compassion, love and dedication to her family, especially her cherished daughter, Jenna Marie.

The family will receive guests from 5-7 p.m. today, March 11, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. The memorial liturgy will be celebrated at 10:30 a.m. Saturday, March 12, directly at the Church of the Holy Family, 185 Church St. (Route 85), Hebron. Burial will be private.

In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to the Genevieve Bogaczyk Memorial Fund online at gofundme.com/dgtcd4rw or auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

Colchester

Paul M. Marcaurel

Paul M. Marcaurel, “Mike,” 66, of Colchester, passed away Wednesday, March 2, after a courageous battle with cancer.

Mike, as he was known to most, was born in Norfolk, Va., on Oct. 1, 1949, to the late Paul U. Marcaurel and Melanie (Zagurski) Marcaurel. He was retired and enjoyed spending time gardening, watching and betting horse racing and taking care of his cat Gizmo (Daddy’s “Baby”).

Mike served his country faithfully and honorably as a U.S. Marine during the Vietnam War. Mike was a proud patriot and Vietnam veteran, a loving brother, father, grandfather, great-grandfather and friend.

He was preceded in death by his two parents, Paul and Melanie and his two brothers, James and Andy.

He leaves to cherish his memory one brother, Richard Marcaurel of Colchester; his daughters, Melanie Marcaurel of Laguna Niguel, Calif., and Jennifer Marcaurel of Colchester; his grandchildren, Trevor Foster and Tayler Foster of Colchester; great-granddaughter, Caydence Foster; along with other loving relatives and friends.

Mike will be missed by many.

The family is hosting a memorial service celebrating his life today, March 11, from 6-8 p.m., at the St Joseph Polish Club, 385 So. Main St., Colchester, and is open to all.

Memorial donations may be made to the Disabled American Veterans (dav.org).

For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

Hebron

Stanley Harold Fuller

Stanley Harold Fuller, (Yeoman 1st Cl., USN Ret.), 74, formerly of Hebron passed away peacefully Sunday, March 6. Born April 21, 1941, in Berlin, N.H., he was the last surviving child of the late Harold and Helen (Merrill) Fuller.

He leaves to mourn his passing but cherish his memory his loving wife of nearly 50 years, Karen (Glidden) Fuller of No. Franklin; three children, Pamela Endsley and her husband, Edward of No. Franklin, David and wife Teri of Port St. John, Fla., and Timothy and wife Jessica of Killingly; six grandchildren, Kylie, Kayla, Mackenzie, Riley, Madison and Greyson; Karen’s siblings, Kathy Hinojos of Canterbury, Darlene Glidden and husband, Bill Swale of Norwich and Douglas Glidden and wife, Jayne of Gainesville, Ga.; and numerous extended family and friends.

He served his country proudly with the United States during his 22 1/2 year career which included the entire Vietnam War. Following his retirement from the service, he had worked as a talented floral designer in eastern Connecticut for many years. Stan then went on to work as an administrative assistant for the AETNA until his “second” retirement in 2006.

Over the years, he and Karen had made their home in Norwich, No. Franklin, Lebanon and Hebron. Since 1981, they have been active parishioners of the First Congregational Church of Lebanon.

A true lover of music and the arts, Stan was a talented tenor, singing in numerous barbershop groups and enjoyed volunteering at The Bushnell.

A memorial service celebrating his life (with full military honors) will be observed at 11 a.m. Saturday, March 12, at the First Congregational Church of Lebanon (located at the junction of routes 87 and 207). The family will receive guests one hour prior to the service at the church. He will be laid to rest at sea by the United States Navy.

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

East Hampton

Theresa Hurlbert

Theresa (Ridout) Hurlbert, 80, of East Hampton, widow of Thomas Hurlbert, died Tuesday, March 8, at Middlesex Hospital Hospice, surrounded by her loving family. Born Jan. 4, 1936, in Amsheram, England, she was the daughter of the late William and Catherine (Wady) Ridout.

Theresa had lived in East Hampton for more than 50 years and had worked at Connecticut Valley Hospital as a registered nurse until her retirement.

She is survived by her daughter, Cathy Nye and husband David of East Hampton; two sons, Hugh Hurlbert and wife Virginia of Colchester, Robert Hurlbert and wife Karen of Middletown; a sister, Olive Tingle of England; five grandchildren, Stephanie Nye, Matthew Hurlbert, Jacob Hurlbert, Krysten Nye, Ryan Hurlbert; and many beloved brothers- and sisters-in-law and nieces and nephews in both the United States and England.

She was predeceased by her brother, Bill Ridout.

Friends may call at the Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton, today, March 11, from 6-8 p.m. Funeral services will be held Saturday, March 12, at 10 a.m., in Spencer Funeral Home, followed by burial in the family plot in St. Patrick Cemetery.

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.

To leave online condolences, visit spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

Amston

Andrew Bartholomew

Andrew Efenger Bartholomew, 26, of Amston, died unexpectedly Tuesday, March 8, in Norwich. Born April 11, 1989, in Hartford, he was the son of Efenger “Bart” and Garrie (Shok) Bartholomew of Amston.

Andrew was a lifelong resident of Amston and was a 2007 graduate of RHAM High School in Hebron. Andrew loved acting and was a member of the Drama Club in high school. He liked hiking and wildlife. Andrew was an avid reader and enjoyed playing his guitar and also enjoyed cooking. He was a graduate of CT Center for Massage Therapy and was a licensed massage therapist.

Besides his parents, he is survived by his sister, Olivia Bartholomew of Rocky Hill; aunts and uncles and cousins, Marc and Judi Shok and their children Richard and Emily, Nancy and Robert Moisuk and their children Elizabeth and Stacey, Linda and Carl Tamborello and their daughters Sara and Lisa.

He was predeceased by his cousin, Alexander Shok.

Friends may call at the Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton, Sunday, March 13, from 5-7 p.m. A memorial service will be held Monday, March 14, at 10 a.m., in Bethlehem Lutheran Church in East Hampton.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to S.C.A.D.D., 47 Coit St., New London, CT 06320 or to Horizon Rapture Rehab, P.O. Box 238, Ashford, CT 06278.

To leave online condolences, visit spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

From the Editor's Desk

Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

I watched Sunday’s Democratic debate from beginning to end. It was quite interesting – and impressive. It’s how a debate should be done.

The two candidates definitely had their disagreements, and one would occasionally interrupt the other, or tell the other candidate firmly to let them finish. But it was all done very respectfully. Unlike last Thursday’s GOP debate, there was no childish taunting or name-calling, or candidates remarking on the size of their genitalia.

There were still moments that left me befuddled – chief among them being Hillary Clinton’s continued refusal to provide transcripts of the speeches she gave to Wall Street. She once again clung to the statement that she’ll do it when the Republican candidates do it. Well, what difference should it make what the Republicans do or not? She’s not running for the Republican nomination.

Should Clinton want Bernie Sanders to release his? Absolutely. But Sanders doesn’t have any such transcripts to release. Clinton does – and she should release them.

Her continued refusal to do so just makes her look bad, like she’s really hiding something. And until she does, she’s going to leave herself open to instances like last month, when an anonymous alleged attendee at one of Goldman Sachs speeches told *Politico* the words were “so far from what she sounds like as a candidate now. It was like a rah-rah speech. She sounded more like a Goldman Sachs managing director.”

Is that true? It could very well be. As *Politico* put it, no one’s going to pay somebody a quarter of a million dollars to have that person stand up and criticize their actions. Clinton’s spokesman, however, dismissed the anonymous quotes as “pure trolling.” But the bottom line is, until Clinton puts those speeches out there, people are going to continue to wonder what she said – and likely assume the worst.

During the debate on Sunday, Clinton repeatedly criticized Sanders for living in the past, whenever he would bring up things Clinton did or said as First Lady in the 1990s. Well, Clinton herself needs to catch up with the times. It’s 2016; whenever a politician isn’t transparent, sooner or later something surfaces to expose them. So shouldn’t Clinton want to control the narrative?

Now, I realize all of these above comments may make it sound like I’m anti-Clinton. I’m not. To be honest, I’m still undecided when it comes to Clinton and Sanders. I’m probably leaning toward Sanders, but I really don’t know who I’ll vote for come the April primary. But if it’s Sanders and Clinton winds up getting the nomination, I’ll fully support her for the general election – and likewise if I vote for Clinton next month and Sanders winds up with the nod. Because looking at who the Republicans have, I just can’t cast a ballot for one of those guys. I just can’t.

* * *

Universal health care is something I’m a big proponent of. And frankly, I’m worried about the future of it in this country if a Republican gets elected. I’m sure that if a Republican wins in November, he’ll waste no time in scrapping the Affordable Care Act, as that’s what Republicans have vowed to do for years.

Well, here’s the thing: People I know and hold dear rely on the Affordable Care Act for their health insurance. Without it, they don’t have health insurance; it’s that simple. So is getting a Democrat elected in the fall personal to me? Yes, it’s very personal.

Both Clinton and Sanders are proponents

of universal health care. Clinton has said she wants to expand upon the existing Affordable Care Act. Sanders, meanwhile, wants to introduce a “Medicare for all” type of plan.

Anyway, this week Sanders said something about universal health care that incredibly impressed me. Monday night, he and Clinton appeared on a Town Hall forum on the Fox News Channel. At one point, Sanders started talking about health care, and said, “I believe that health care is a right of all people.”

At this point, moderator Bret Baier said, “Where did that right come from, in your mind?”

“Being a human being,” Sanders responded. “Being a human being.”

* * *

In other news, Portland readers may have noticed the past couple of weeks we’ve been running a notice about a household goods drive St. Mary Church was conducting, to benefit Catholic Charities’ department of refugee resettlement. The drive was supposed to continue this Saturday, March 12, and next Saturday, March 19.

But a notice floated across my email inbox this week letting me know the drive’s already been such a success, those last two collection dates aren’t needed. “The response was more than ever expected,” the church said.

So, way to go, all who donated. I know the goods are going to a worthwhile cause. I always like it when I hear events listed in the *Rivereast* turn out to be huge successes – it shows people are reading and, beyond that, responding. And to find out a drive was so successful it ended two weeks ahead of time – well, that’s great news.

* * *

I also got something in my inbox this week from the people at the Fresh Air Fund. Since 1877, the independent, nonprofit organization has provided free summer experiences to more than 1.8 million New York City children. The kids get to go to more rural parts of the country, and experience the simple joys of summer in the country.

For all 140 years of the program, Connecticut’s been a participant. And in fact, Gov. Dannel Malloy recently proclaimed March 20 to be “Fresh Air Fund Day” throughout the state.

Families who participate in The Fresh Air Fund’s Friendly Towns Program open their homes to NYC kids in the summer. “Participants are given the opportunity to explore new environments, meet people from different cultures, and have enriching experiences,” says Fatima Shama, executive director of The Fresh Air Fund. “On Fresh Air visits, children may visit a farm, milk a cow, engage in the arts, go swimming, learn about the wonders of the nighttime sky, and pick vegetables from a garden. Our participants discover and learn in an outdoor setting, building skills that can be utilized year-round, and unlock their limitless potential.”

This year, the Fresh Air Fund is looking for new host families in central and northeastern Connecticut to give children, as the fund puts it, “a chance to run barefoot through the grass or gaze at the star-filled skies.”

First-time Fresh Air visitors are between 7 and 12 years old and, the fund said, families often find hosting so rewarding, most Fresh Air children are invited to visit the same host families year after year.

If you’re interested in being a host family, give Dawn Speer a call at 860-967-9862, or visit the Fresh Air Fund online at freshair.org.

* * *

See you next week.