

RIVEREAST

News Bulletin

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

Volume 41, Number 15

Published by The Glastonbury Citizen

August 12, 2016



If proponents of a mixed-use development on the site of the former Elmcrest Hospital get their way, the 22,000 square foot Hart-Jarvis building – with its four massive, two-story columns – could be greeting those coming off the Arrigoni Bridge by next spring. The developer has pledged to relocate the 1829 structure as part of his application for a tax abatement on the \$30 million project.

Plan Would Save Portland Historic Home

by Elizabeth Regan

The Danbury-based developer gambling on bringing 240 apartments and about 75,000 square feet of commercial space to the former Elmcrest Hospital campus has laid a new card on the Portland Board of Selectmen's table.

Dan Bertram, of BRT Corporation, said Wednesday he would pay to relocate the 1829 Hart-Jarvis House from an intended parking lot in the middle of the property to the southwest corner facing the Arrigoni Bridge. The details were outlined in a tax abatement application submitted the day before to First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield.

The former psychiatric facility sits at the intersection of Routes 66 and 17A, where it's been vacant for over a decade.

Bertram, in partnership with the Rochester-based DiMarco Group, is asking for a seven-year freeze on property taxes to begin when the certificate of occupancy is issued for each building.

The developer described the tax abatement as part of a public/private partnership necessary to make the \$30 million project work. A tax break would reduce his operating costs once

he has a finished building but doesn't yet have the cash flow from a full roster of tenants, thus enabling the preservation of the three historic homes he said the town would be hard-pressed to save on its own.

The Hart-Jarvis House is one of the three most prominent historical structures on the property, along with the 1852 Brainerd House and the 1884 Sage House. They were added to the National Register of Historic Places in 2012 along with about a dozen other homes and out-buildings on Marlborough Street. The historic district represents Portland's bygone era of concentrated wealth built on the brownstone industry.

Bertram said the 22,000-square-foot Hart-Jarvis building – with its four massive, two-story columns with intricate moldings – will greet those coming off the Arrigoni Bridge as a symbol of the attractive and upscale development he envisions for the property.

The proposed development is called Brainerd Place after the Italianate villa-style home made of brownstone and covered in smooth stucco that Bertram plans to preserve as a clubhouse

See Historic Home Page 2

School Resource Officer Returns to RHAM

by Geeta S. Sandberg

After six years without one, the RHAM middle and high schools will have a school resource officer (SRO) once again when classes start later this month.

At a special meeting Aug. 4, the RHAM Board of Education voted unanimously to approve a contract with the Town of Hebron that will return an SRO to the regional school district.

It'll be the first time the RHAM schools have had such a position since 2010, when the state made a budgetary decision to suspend the SRO program. As a result, RHAM's SRO at the time, state trooper Denise Sevigny, was reassigned to patrol duty.

Prior to 2010, High School Principal Scott Leslie said there had been an SRO at the RHAM schools "for at least six to eight years."

The new deal calls for bringing a uniformed police officer to the district who will have a number of duties and responsibilities, including assisting in law-related education and instructing students about the role of police, making students aware of the consequences of juvenile delinquency, and being a positive role model and mentor.

In addition, the school resource officer will be responsible for acting as a liaison to the principal in investigating criminal law violations in the school or on school property, and will attend regular meetings with the principal to share information about safety and security. The officer will also, among other things, formulate educational crime prevention programs, participate in Parent Teacher Association meetings as requested, and be

responsible for maintaining a duty log and producing a monthly report for the school board and the town.

The agreement points out, however, that the SRO "is not a school disciplinarian. Disciplining students is a school responsibility."

Leslie elaborated on that point, saying this week "the key thing about the SRO is that they're not involved in school discipline so they don't take that job away from us – that's not their purpose for being here."

He added, "Their purpose for being here is really to focus on enhanced safety of the kids in the building – and everyone in the building. And should students be involved in any illegal activity like drug dealing or something along those lines, they become an invaluable resource to address those issues."

Leslie said he also believed the SRO "can also work on the traffic and will get to know our needs much better by being here all day, so I'm hoping that'll enhance our ability to maintain safe traffic before and after school."

Under the agreement, Hebron Police Officer Ricardo Martinez, who started working with the town two years ago following his retirement from the Hartford Police Department, will be assigned to the school district with the aim of achieving a number of goals.

These goals include: the establishment of a positive working relationship to prevent juvenile delinquency and assist in student development, to maintain a safe and secure environment conducive to learning, to promote positive attitudes surrounding the role of police officers in today's society, and, according to the

contract, "to strive to ensure a consistent response to incidents of student misbehavior, clarify the role of law enforcement in school disciplinary matters, and reduce involvement of police and court agencies for misconduct at school and school-related activities."

The SRO agreement was the result of more than a year's worth of work between the parties involved and was formed around several principles, including the belief that "the vast majority of student misconduct can be addressed through classroom and in-school strategies and maintaining a positive climate within schools rather than by involvement of the justice community."

In addition, the agreement asserts "disruptive students should receive appropriate redirection and support from in-school and community resources prior to the consideration of suspension, expulsion, involvement of the police, or referral to court" and that "clarifying the responsibilities of school and police personnel with regard to non-emergency disruptive behavior at school and school-related events promotes the best interests of the student, the school system, law enforcement and the community at large."

The salary and benefits for Martinez, as well as the costs for liability insurance, workman's compensation insurance and a vehicle with a three-year lease (payable annually), will be reimbursed to Hebron by the school district; the RHAM Board of Education will provide \$91,352 to the town for the SRO for the 2016-17 school year in equal quarterly installments.

Hebron Town Manager Andrew Tierney said of the approval this week, "I think it's a step in the right direction. It took a lot of work on both sides to create this new position. It was kind of uncharted waters as far as the small police department we have here in Hebron, but we seemed to work it out."

Tierney concluded, "I think it's a good thing with what's going on in the world today. We've been working on [the agreement] well over a year and we finally got a contract. It's all good; I'm very glad it was approved."

Leslie, who was with the school during the time of the previous SRO, said this week he was a proponent of the position's return.

"I think having an SRO in the school was always a really great thing in that it kind of created that connection between the community and the school in one area."

He added the new arrangement – which fills the role with a Hebron police officer – "is going to be an even better connection in that the previous SROs were state troopers so there wasn't a direct connection necessarily between one of the three towns. ... Now that we're pulling one of the officers from the Hebron police force, that really is going to help even further create more ties between the schools and the community."

Schools Superintendent Bob Siminski also spoke to the contract's approval this week, saying, "I'm excited about it because I think that it'll provide an additional resource for us. I think that the position will help us review our security safety plans and to revise them to re-

See Resource Officer Page 2

Historic Home cont. from Front Page

for the high-end apartments.

Bertram put the start of construction at spring 2017, assuming approvals from the selectmen, the Planning and Zoning Commission and state agencies governing traffic and historic preservation come through in “a timely manner.”

He said the house would be moved to its new location at the beginning of construction. A non-historic annex at the back of the home would not be included in the move.

The town would be responsible for “fitting up” the space and using it for its own purposes, according to Bertram’s tax abatement application.

It should take about 3.5 years to finish the development, he said.

This is Bertram’s second application for a tax abatement on the Elmcrest project. In February 2015, the previous Board of Selectmen approved a resolution authorizing Bransfield to execute a deal that would give him a property tax break for up to seven years.

The current board rescinded the resolution in late June because of concerns it gave all the authority to Bransfield to execute the deal without a provision for the full board to either accept or reject the negotiated agreement. Selectmen also noted Bertram’s development proposal had changed significantly since he came before the board last year.

According to Bertram, a clear blueprint for the public/private partnership he’s seeking can be found in the 2015 Vibrant Communities Initiative report, compiled with input from the developer himself as well as members of the town’s municipal, business and volunteer community. The 111-page market study for the former hospital site, funded by the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation, described the community’s vision for the property as one that “has a mix of uses, is compatible with the historic buildings and provides village center character and shared amenity like a town green.”

But not everyone buys the developer’s professed faithfulness to preserving the town’s heritage or making its shared vision a reality.

Wint Aldrich, a part-time Middle Haddam resident and the former deputy commissioner for historic preservation in New York, wrote an email to the executive director of the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation to express his concerns.

Aldrich told Daniel Mackay that the town of Portland, with any assistance the state can provide, must insist on the preservation not only of the Brainerd House but also of its attendant carriage house – and that the restoration must occur before any residential or commercial development breaks ground.

“Otherwise, I can guarantee (based on innumerable sad experiences I have seen in NYS over 40 years) the historic preservation work will be deferred for years or ultimately abandoned as ‘infeasible,’” Aldrich wrote.

A variation of the theme was reiterated by Michael Woronoff, an alternate member of the Planning and Zoning Commission. He told selectmen in an Aug. 5 email that revised zoning regulations approved last month aren’t detailed enough to ensure the restoration of the homes.

The revised mixed-use zoning regulation allows a developer to apply for a special permit

to build up to 240 housing units based on a ratio of 16 housing units for each 5,000 square feet of commercial space – but only if the proposal incorporates “the preservation of significant historic resources identified in the town’s Plan of Conservation and Development.”

Woronoff said selectmen should advise the commission to file another application with additional details and definitions.

“This added text, whether you think it is necessary or not, is good business for the town,” Woronoff wrote. “I believe this is time-sensitive and needs to happen before any tax abatement is negotiated. Otherwise, the beloved historical structures are a bargaining chip when they have already been wielded as such with the Planning and Zoning Commission.”

Woronoff went before selectmen in July to ask for their financial support in appealing to the state Superior Court the zoning regulation change approved on July 14 by the commission.

Woronoff, who was precluded based on state statute from deliberating on the ultimately approved zoning regulation change because he wasn’t a seated member, said he wanted to appeal the commission’s decision based on a violation of his own civil rights, spot zoning, pre-determination and the inclusion of irrelevant information and false testimony.

Selectmen failed to act on Woronoff’s request by the Aug. 8 deadline for filing an appeal.

He said last week he would not pursue legal action on his own.

Economic Development Commission Chairman Elwin Guild, an active supporter of grassroots efforts to revitalize the Elmcrest property, said he believes zoning regulations and statutory protections, combined with Bertram’s stated goals, are enough to ensure the restoration of the homes.

While one could argue the zoning regulations are vague and could use more teeth, he said it’s not the commission’s role to define historic preservation.

“That’s what the state does. It’s already there,” Guild said. “It’s not a town issue. It’s a state issue.”

Properties on the National Register of Historic Places are protected from “unreasonable destruction” under the Connecticut Environmental Preservation Act. The state statute empowers citizens to file lawsuits if there are “feasible and prudent” alternatives to the demolition of a historic property.

According to Bertram, who will be presenting his tax abatement proposal to selectmen on Wednesday, time is of the essence. Economic realities on a national and global scale could threaten the project if interest rates rise or if the November presidential elections destabilize the stock market.

“We can have a completely different investment environment come the fall,” he said.

Back in 2009, the planning and zoning commission issued a special permit for the same property to developer Anthony Fonda of Rhode Island. The permit authorized a mixed-use development with 149,127 square feet of commercial space and 82 housing units.

The project stalled due to the economic downturn.

Siminski explained Martinez’s training started Monday, and he’s already started to take a look at safety and security at the school. Siminski said Martinez’s training would continue next week and he’d “absolutely” be ready for the start of school.

“He’s got a computer, he’s on the school network, so he’s going to get email,” Siminski laughed. “That’s like initiation.”

School starts Aug. 31.

Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

I was recently having a chat with my friend Dave, who, in response to me sharing something a mutual acquaintance had said, commented, “That’s the pot calling the kettle black.” Well, he started to comment that anyway. He stopped midway through and said, “I don’t know about that expression. I think it might be racist.”

I told Dave I really didn’t think that was the case, that the expression goes back hundreds of years (not that that would necessarily rob it of any racism, mind you) and that it seems to have a practical meaning to me. But he wasn’t convinced. “Why is it a bad thing to be black?” he asked rhetorically.

With no easy answer at my fingertips, I just let the subject drop. But later, when I was in front of my computer, I decided to look it up. I admit that, while I told Dave I didn’t think it was a racist expression, I didn’t know for sure. It just didn’t *feel* to me like it was. But I wanted to be sure – and if it turned out I was wrong, I’d have sufficient egg on my face.

As it turned out, I was right.

I found a 2014 article by Slate’s Katy Waldman that points out the phrase dates back to the 1600s, when pots and kettles were made from cast iron, and heated over an open flame. It would tend to blacken with use, due to collecting oil and food residue – and also smoke. It being the 1600s, the way to cook using those cast iron pots and kettles would be over a flame – which would usually result in streaks of black smoke that were difficult to clean.

So, a heavily-used kettle would turn black. So would a heavily-used pot – but, in the case of this idiom, the pot is laughing at the kettle for having a grimy, sooty look to it, all while failing to recognize (or refusing to admit) that he himself is also grimy and sooty. The expression is a handy – and ancient – way of conveying someone’s hypocrisy, or blindness to their own characteristics.

Indeed, Waldman notes, almost as soon as the saying came about, variations on it were being developed. A 1639 collection of proverbs by John Clarke, for example, included the expression, “The pot calls the pan burnt-arse.” And in a 1922 book of international folk sayings, Dwight Edwards Marvin pointed out that different countries had their own, similar takes on the expression; in France, it was “the saucepan laughs at the pipkin,” Russia used “the shovel insults the poker,” and in Ireland, the saying was “the kiln calls the oven ‘Burnt House.’”

The bottom line is, feel free to use “pot calling the kettle black” without fear of being racially offensive. I certainly understand why, on the surface, it *feels* like a saying that should be retired from the lexicon, but there really is no need to do so (unless you like your idioms to be a little more modern, that is). As Waldman concludes, the cast iron pot and kettle in this expression “embody human dynamics that have nothing to do with race.”

* * *

As I’ve written before in this space, I’m an organ donor – and proud of it. There are countless stories of people whose lives have been saved thanks to donated organs. It’s one last thing you can do for somebody after you’ve gone.

I was recently touched by an organ donor story I’m sure many of you have heard about.

A Pennsylvania bride was walked down the aisle last week not by her father – but by the man who’d received her father’s donated heart.

In September 2006, according to the *New York Times*, Jeni Stepien’s father Michael was walking home from his job as a head chef at a restaurant. Michael, 53, was cutting through an alley when he was robbed at gunpoint by a 16-year-old, who then proceeded to shoot Michael in the head, at close range.

As Michael lay dying in a hospital bed, the family, as Jeni put it, “decided to accept the inevitable,” and donated his organs. The family chose an organization called the Center for Organ Recovery and Education, which allows donor families, and the recipients, to keep in touch with one another after the transplant.

Michael’s heart went to a New Jersey father of four named Arthur Thomas, who was within days of dying, according to Jeni. Arthur had been diagnosed with ventricular tachycardia about 16 years earlier, and was in congestive heart failure when he learned his doctors had found a heart.

After receiving his transplant, an eternally grateful Arthur wrote a thank-you note to the family – and a relationship was forged, through monthly phone calls, emails and letters. Michael’s wife, Bernice, exchanged Christmas cards with Arthur – whom the family calls Tom – and flowers on birthdays.

And then, last October, Jeni Stepien, 33, got engaged. One of her first thoughts, Jeni told the *Times*, was “Who will walk me down the aisle?”

“I was thinking, ‘Oh my gosh, it would be so incredible to have a physical piece of my father there,’” she said.

So, at her fiancé’s suggestion, Jeni wrote to Tom and asked him to walk her down the aisle. He said yes – but warned her his emotions might get the best of him. Jeni told him she felt the same, and said, “I’ll be right there with you.”

The wedding took place last Friday, in the very same church where Jeni’s parents were married. (Interestingly, the murder and the wedding occurred within a three-block radius of each other; the 16-year-old who killed Michael, by the way, was ultimately arrested and charged with second-degree murder, and sentenced to 40 years in prison.)

Tom and Jeni met face-to-face the day before – and he suggested that, at the ceremony, she grip his wrist, where his pulse is strongest.

“I thought that would be the best way for her to feel close to her dad,” Tom said. “That’s her father’s heart beating.”

The story was just incredibly moving – particularly a photograph taken at the ceremony, of Jeni touching Tom’s chest. You often hear of a deceased friend or relative being “there in spirit” at an event like a wedding. Michael, while no doubt looking down from above, was also there in the form of his beating heart – the heart that I’m sure beat for his daughter, and his whole family.

I was just so touched by reading the story – and it reaffirmed my decision (not like it really needed reaffirming) to be an organ donor. It’s a great gift to provide someone.

* * *

See you next week.

Resource Officer cont. from Front Page

flect current thinking and to ensure we have the best plan in place that we can.”

Siminski added that school will be looking for Martinez “to befriend some of the students to become a role model for some of the students and to help guide them. We’re fortunate in the fact that he was a school resource officer in another district and one of things we talked about is some of the relationships he had and how he developed them and how he used those relationships to help kids.”

Colchester Firefighters' Tax Abatement Plan Proposed

by Julianna Roche

Retired volunteer firefighters that have offered their services for at least 25 years may soon be able to receive tax abatements as a result of new state legislation change.

At the Aug. 4 Board of Selectmen meeting, Dave Martin, president of the Colchester Hayward Volunteer Fire Company, presented a new tax abatement plan for these firefighters, which he said would take the current plan to another level.

A life member, he said, is a firefighter who has reached 25 years of providing emergency services in Colchester. Eleven of those life members, he said, are still active, meaning they are still responding to emergency calls.

Presently, the tax abatement schedule applies to current active members who qualify with a defined amount of calls responded to each year. According to Martin, the exemption is \$1,000 if a member responds to 175 or more emergency calls within one tax year, and \$500 for responding to 125 calls.

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

According to Martin, retired inactive members would qualify for the proposed tax abatement plan if they have served for more than 25 years and have also qualified for the current exemption for the previous five years.

"Once those members decide they've finally had enough and it's just not something they want to do anymore... the town would continue to carry on that tax abatement until they've either passed away or no longer own property," Martin said.

Martin said some of the fire department's members have been volunteering for 30-40

years.

However, as is the case with fire departments in other towns, Colchester has had difficulty retaining volunteers in recent years, Martin added, due to commitments to other jobs, family, or even school obligations. Martin said he also hopes the tax abatement plan, if passed, will give volunteers more incentive to stick around, since it's typically a challenge to retain volunteers beyond seven years.

Following Martin's proposal at the meeting, selectman Stan Soby stated that, for planning purposes, it would be helpful for the board if they had calculations based on how many individuals the plan would impact over a reasonable period of time. Selectwoman Denise Mizla agreed, saying, "projections would be helpful."

Soby added that while he was not against "the concept of passing the proposal," it would be necessary to make citizens understand the tax abatement plan is an inexpensive way to get top notch service in town.

This is considering that with less volunteerism, the town would have to hire more professional staff members, which could potentially cost more than extending the tax exemptions to inactive retired volunteer firefighters.

Following the meeting, Martin said that, while he believes the consensus among the Board of Selectmen was mostly favorable, the tax abatement plan will still need to go in front of the Board of Finance before selectmen can vote on it. He said the selectmen's vote will likely be at their Sept. 1 meeting.

"I'm sure it would have the support of those officials and those citizens that may have a say in getting this moving forward," he said. "I think this is long, long overdue and I think it's time for the town to step up and give them the recognition they deserve."

After the meeting, Coyle said she is indeed a fan of the proposal – though cautioned it would need full board approval.

Upscale Laundromat Comes to Colchester

by Julianna Roche

Going to the laundromat has never looked so good – thanks to the recent opening of The Corner Wash, an upscale laundromat on 159 Norwich Ave., which the owners said will bring professional laundry and dry cleaning services to the Colchester community.

According to owners and spouses Jimmy Pan and Yahzi Lin, the laundromat, which had its soft opening in mid-July, will also start offering its dry cleaning services to the public sometime next week.

With bright orange and white-painted walls, and stainless steel washers and dryers, The Corner Wash is both clean and welcoming. Large open windows drown the laundry room with sunlight, and the space's sleek design is a stark contrast from the stereotypical dark and damp laundromats many customers may be used to.

Pan is no stranger to running a business; he's also a co-owner of Toyo Hibachi & Asian Fusion on 464 S. Main St., which opened in early 2013. He said the inspiration to open a laundromat stemmed from suggestions of many of the couple's friends that Colchester was in need of a place like The Corner Wash.

"Friends told me we should start one," Lin agreed. "They said we needed [an] upscale and clean laundromat here."

While Colchester already has two other laundromats in town, Pan said The Corner Wash will be a much newer and more upscale addition.

In April, the couple began remodeling the building, which Pan said was passed down to him from his grandfather. However, it had been

empty for two years before any renovations took place. Pan said he also purchased the property directly next to the laundromat, which used to be dirty and full of overgrown weeds, to make the area more appealing for customers.

"You should have seen it before," he said. "I bought the land and cleaned it up. [We] did a lot of work to it."

The Corner Wash has 20 washers and 20 dryers, all of which Pan stressed, were top-notch brand new machines. According to Lin, customers will also be able to do different-sized loads of laundry, including small (\$2.25), medium (\$3.75), large (\$4.75), and triple-sized loads (\$6.50). Dryers are 25 cents for seven minutes. Customers also have the option of a folding service, which costs 89 cents per pound.

"This will help customers," she said. "People can come here and save a lot of time and money with our services."

"The prices are competitive," Pan added.

The Corner Wash also has amenities to make customers' wait less painful – including free Wi-Fi and two large flat-screen TVs. Inside the dry cleaning section of the laundromat, there is a mini-grocery with a snack bar (which Pan built), and they are waiting on soda and vending machines to be delivered. The couple also had a handicapped ramp installed outside to make the laundromat wheelchair-accessible, and a drop-off spot where customers can park their car close to the door and easily carry laundry to and from the building.

Lastly, Lin said, the laundromat will be heavily monitored, with four security cameras inside and one camera outside, so customers



With 20 brand-new washers and dryers installed, The Corner Wash will offer customers laundry, folding and dry-cleaning services.

"won't have to worry."

"You won't see a laundromat like this unless you're in the city," Pan said. "That's why we had this idea to put it together. ... We just want to bring people good service."

Colchester is "a nice small town, it's beautiful and we can help the community," Pan added.

"That's my main focus."

The Corner Wash will be open daily, offering its washer and dryer services from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m., and dry cleaning services from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. For more information, call 860-603-2182 or go to Facebook and search for Corner Wash Laundromat.

Andover Receives Grant for Transportation Vehicle

by Geeta S. Sandberg

The town recently received a grant that will help pay for a new senior transportation vehicle.

The funds, awarded through the Federal Transit Administration Program and administered through the state Department of Transportation's Office of Transit and Ridesharing, will cover 80 percent of the purchase for a new 12-passenger van that will replace an older van used to transport area seniors to medical appointments and events such as Foodshare.

The grant was applied for in March, and notification of the award came last month. The grant will cover \$53,400 – 80 percent – of the estimated \$68,000 vehicle cost, with the remaining 20 percent or \$14,600 to come from the town's Capital Improvement Plan account.

With the grant program, Lisa Rivers, transit manager with the DOT, explained this week,

"the applicant looks over a variety of [vehicle] options; they decide whether they want a larger vehicle like a 20-passenger bus, or if they want something smaller. They make the decision based on what their demand is."

A requirement of the grant is that the vehicle that's purchased be new; Rivers said "we now set out preparing an agreement, then they'll [the applicant] come out and order the vehicle and it's built to specifications. A requirement of the grant is that it's a new vehicle. It also has to be accessible."

Rivers added, "The program is designed to assist seniors and people with disabilities. Municipalities are eligible to apply, but also other entities like non-profit organizations such as Easter Seals and Hockanum Valley Community Council and other councils can apply. We ask

that they coordinate so that more people can have their needs met."

Senior Coordinator Cathy Palazzi explained this week the new vehicle will replace a multiple passenger van "that's on its last leg."

"The smaller bus, we're just going to have to remove that from the road because it's so bad," she stated. "It's old and it just has had so much use it now needs to be replaced."

First Selectman Bob Burbank said the van in question has been used by the town for about 10 years, prior to which it was used by CT Transit.

"We have three vehicles right now," he explained. "We just got one last year, like a minivan, but we had the other two; we bought them about nine or 10 years ago and before that they were part of the CT Transit program and

owned by the state. They were on loan to us and then [the state] decided they didn't want to do that and we were able to purchase the vans at a substantially reduced rate."

Burbank added of receiving the grant, "I think it's a good move anytime we can upgrade our transportation because several of our buses are well in excess of 10 years old and with an 80/20 match it's a win for the town of Andover." He added, "We have many more seniors and the ridership of the senior vans has increased substantially every year since we've been in the program."

Meanwhile, Palazzi said receiving of receiving the award. "I am thrilled for the seniors because I have been so worried, I don't like the idea of the bus being on the road when there's a chance something could go wrong."

Hebron Student Shares Wisdom from Leadership Conference

by Geeta S. Sandberg

Hebron resident and RHAM High School rising senior Madeline Fitzgerald was one of 100 young women – two from each state – to participate in the American Legion Auxiliary Girls Nation, a patriotism and government leadership conference held in Washington D.C. last month.

Fitzgerald, who shared this week she's had a passion for politics her entire life, said she learned about the program from former President Bill Clinton – sort of.

"I was reading a book about Bill Clinton and he went to the male equivalent of the program," Fitzgerald explained. "So I found out you could still go to it," which led her to get involved with the American Legion Auxiliary (ALA) this past spring, in the hopes of being selected to participate in the program at the state level.

She was, and in June she joined around 150 girls from Connecticut who attended ALA Girls State at Eastern Connecticut State University – a weeklong program where Fitzgerald said she learned about state and local government, participated in mock elections and was responsible for writing a federal bill that could be presented to congress.

The bill, which Fitzgerald said was about reforming the prison system, as well as her response to two questions she was asked about current events, led to her selection as one of two Connecticut "senators" – the other was Emma DiLauro of Glastonbury – who would represent the state at the national conference July 23-30.

While in the nation's capital, Fitzgerald toured the Pentagon, saw Arlington Cemetery and placed a wreath on the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, sang on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial, and spent the day on Capitol Hill and in the office of Connecticut Senators Richard Blumenthal and Chris Murphy where, she shared, "we saw the nitty-gritty aspects of politics."

Fitzgerald also took part in more mock elec-

tions, and the presentation of another bill she crafted with DiLauro regarding funding for education.

"We did a mock senate session and out of all the bills brought forward [by the participants] ours was one of around 13 that passed," she shared.

Also during the week, participants had to develop party platforms and primaries and, at the end of the conference, elect a president and vice president.

Speaking about the experience, Fitzgerald stated, "I think my favorite aspect of the program was the day we spent on Capitol Hill because, to me, it was evidence that most politicians are involved because they do care deeply about the interests of their states and constituents, and not, as many people cynically say, special interest groups and the wealthy. I made friends with girls all across the country that week, and we all visited our senators' offices."

Fitzgerald added, "Regardless of state or party affiliation, I think most of my friends found the people working on Capitol Hill were really interested in doing what was best for the people who elected them. The thing is that in different parts of the country and in different cultures within our country, what's best can be wildly different."

Fitzgerald added those differences in opinion as to what's best is what can then lead politicians to come across as uncaring, lazy, or as having "sold out" when they don't live up to their promises.

"They leave their region of the country and the culture they're a part of and arrive in D.C." where, she explained, "they're confronted by the fact that what makes perfect sense in Massachusetts and Connecticut is illogical or even harmful to Mississippi and West Virginia and inapplicable to Texas and California, just to give an example. When we, as a culture, reject compromise and see the world in the black and white, fake reality presented by Fox [News] and MSNBC, it can be good for our little cor-

ner of America, but bad for the country as a whole."

Fitzgerald added the experience with Girls Nation made her realize she wants to become an elected official or work on Capitol Hill in some other capacity. In addition, she said the program – as well as this year's election – reaffirmed her belief that "civic duty and patriotism are incredibly important."

But patriotism, she said, is not about saying "America is perfect and you can't ever criticize it" but instead, "I love America and I want what is best for everyone here, and sometimes that requires change."

And that patriotism, she furthered, is wrapped up in civic duty.

"If someone truly wants America to be their definition of great, they can't just 'burn down the system,' like certain people have been suggesting," Fitzgerald said. "The system is fine, the founders did a very good job designing it – the problem is us as a society. When people don't vote, don't contact their congresspeople, don't watch the news, and don't get involved in their community, they shouldn't be shocked when nothing goes their way."

She explained if people don't remain invested in the political process, when things change that they don't support and "they react with anger and vitriol, they're solving nothing."

"You can fix the problem before it exists if you're involved from the start and speak up before something happens and explain why you think it's wrong."

In short, Fitzgerald had a very rewarding, and enlightening, experience at Girls Nation.

"Girls Nation emphasized that sort of civic duty and patriotism by encouraging active involvement and investment in the political process," she said. "The ALA is, fortunately, a non-partisan group that really just wants to foster civic involvement and patriotism. Every girl there was passionate about politics with views that ranged from extreme conservatism to so-



Madeline Fitzgerald of Hebron represented Connecticut at the American Legion Auxiliary's Girls Nation, a patriotism and government leadership conference held in Washington, D.C., from July 23-30. During the conference, young women from all fifty states had the opportunity to tour the capital city and learn firsthand about the inner workings of the federal government.

cialism. But despite our different beliefs and backgrounds, I truly believe that we were an effective group because we all wanted what was best for our communities and were invested in actually making that change."

Lessons, undoubtedly, that many adults could serve to learn.

To learn more about ALA Girls Nation go to alaforveterans.org/ALA-Girls-Nation.

Marlborough Board of Finance Balances End-of-Year Accounts

by Julianna Roche

At their Wednesday meeting, Board of Finance members reviewed end of the year accounts and discussed what would be done with the \$86,710 of unused funds resulting from the FY 2015-16.

According to the Board of Finance transfers document, which was provided to board members during the meeting, \$9,500 worth of funds would be transferred from the contracted services account to the Marlborough Municipal Water System Fund in order to cover expenses of operating and testing the new water system now that the town is taking over.

"It would also be for the cost of [hiring] a certified operator, which the school is currently in charge of," said Town Planner Peter Hughes. "We'll get together with the school and work out an agreement."

Hughes also noted that other businesses have started to express interest in connecting to the water system in the future, including Middlesex Hospital.

Additionally, \$6,455 of unused funds from the educational dues and expenses, and physical exams accounts will go towards providing new technology for the Marlborough Fire De-

partment, which would allow its database system to become compatible with Tolland County Mutual Aid Fire Service, Inc. (TN)'s database. Marlborough emergency dispatch last month moved over to TN, as its longtime dispatch provider Colchester Emergency Communications (KX) dissolved at the end of June.

"Our existing software at the firehouse is not compatible with linking up to the TN database... so at least with this, they'll be compatible," said Board of Finance Chairman Doug Knowlton, who pointed out the software wasn't compatible with KX either. "The new technology came recommended from the fire department... because right now, the system that tracks our calls requires a lot more manual input."

"The new technology will provide real time, specific data that can be reviewed and analyzed to help emergency services personnel continue to refine and improve their response to all types of emergent situations," said First Selectwoman Amy Traversa after the meeting. "We'll be able to spot ongoing issues or trends that will help us – as a community – to be better prepared for future needs."

Following the discussion regarding transferred funds, Traversa also brought up the town's current Capital and Non-Recurring Expenditure policies, and suggested the board consider focusing on building reserves to purchase capital items in the future.

Knowlton acknowledged the suggestion, but tabled the discussion for the next meeting.

"I want to have a conversation regarding our policy of undesignated fund ratios, but I don't want to get into it tonight because I want people to be prepared for it," he said. "From a debt and surplus point of view, we're in trouble. So let's look at it and address some policies next month."

During the meeting, Knowlton also presented board members with a new formatted document he said would better keep track of details regarding capital projects, such as the water system, construction on Austin Drive and the South Main Street road repaving.

"This is a new format to track these projects to see if we're meeting the milestones and watching financials," he said.

Knowlton said he wanted the board to better track expenses regarding projects as they move

forward, as well as be provided with more detail, including set dates.

"We'll get reports on more of these as we go on, but I took a hard look at all the ones in the capital budget... you have to have hard dates," he added. "Even when you're looking at some of the [projects] now, there were dates – 2018, 2019, 2020 for a lot of them."

Board members also noted during the meeting that the end-of-the-year audit will be finalized next week, which will determine whether or not the town will end the year with a surplus.

"From what I've heard, I think we are ending the year with a significant surplus," said Board of Finance member Ken Hjulstrom. "The primary factors in the surplus were the passing of the public works employee, which led to lower payroll and benefit costs in that department, as well as a mild winter, which led to lower costs in snow removal and less overtime."

Hjulstrom said it would likely be discussed at the next Board of Finance meeting, on Sept. 14 at 7 p.m., at a location yet to be determined as of press time.

A Look at Elmcrest's Historic Homes in Portland

by Elizabeth Regan

A century before Elmcrest Hospital took up residence east of Main Street during the advent of World War II, the area was an enclave for the Portland elite who built their faith and fortune on brownstone.

They had names like Elizabeth Hart Jarvis, who married a pastor of Trinity Episcopal Church and moved into a home built for them by her father in 1829. The Greek Revival house rose up behind grand ionic columns fit for Connecticut kingmakers. Their daughter, also named Elizabeth, went on to marry firearms manufacturer Samuel Colt and become one of the state's preeminent businesswomen and philanthropists.

Then there was Erastus Brainerd Jr. His lineage combined two families steeped in the wealth of Portland's quarries. He built an Italian villa in 1852 not long after his father moved into the neighboring Hart-Jarvis House. Historians attribute the home's design to Henry Austin, the self-made and prolific architect responsible for the Wadsworth Athenaeum in Hartford.

The serious and disciplined John Hall Sage was a banker who moonlighted as a published bird expert. His Queen Anne-style home was constructed in 1884 as a mass of asymmetrical angles, jutting rooflines and diamond-paned windows.

The details of the area's unique and moneyed history are outlined in the application form that earned the Marlborough Street Historic District a place on the National Register of Historic Places in 2012.

That historical designation has become a bargaining chip as proponents of a 238-unit apartment complex and neighborhood shopping center square off against those who think there are better uses for the well-placed site at the base of the Arrigoni Bridge – the same bridge that in 1938 helped open the lines of travel and communication and erase the chasm between the town's wealthiest citizens and the newly formed middle class.

Dan Bertram, of the Danbury-based BRT Corporation, hopes to make the area trendy again to Millennials and empty nesters by building up to 240 small but luxurious apartments on one side of the property and about 75,000 square feet of shops, restaurants and offices on the other.

The developer's plan has earned the seal of approval from an unlikely alliance: The Portland Historical Society and the Economic Development Commission. Their support hinges

on Bertram's promise – supported by language in a new zoning regulation that ties development to historic preservation – to restore the Brainerd House in its entirety as well as the exterior of the Sage House.

He will announce plans to relocate the Hart-Jarvis House to the southwest corner of the property when he goes before selectmen on Wednesday to apply for a tax abatement, he said.

The specifics behind preserving the homes are likely to dominate the next phase of the process, which Bertram said hinges on that tax abatement. He said anything less than a seven-year freeze on property taxes for the new construction would compromise efforts to save the historic homes.

Property owner Fouad "Fred" Hassan described the abatement as a necessary means to help defray upfront costs resulting not only from the preservation of the homes, but also from the construction of new entrances on both Marlborough Street and Main Street as well as the underground parking garage necessary to meet the community's vision for an attractive village center.

Last month, Hassan gave reporters a tour of the 14.9-acre property as his dog, a fluffy Havanese named Charlie, led the way on a retractable leash.

The beauty of the three grand, old homes was partially obscured as time crawled up the walls in vast networks of vines. Unsightly boards were nailed to doors and windows in what Hassan described as an unending effort to keep people from coming in, stealing copper pipes and leaving a trail of graffiti.

Spray-painted in a sweeping scrawl, the word "Boys!" could be seen on the homes and the numerous buildings that were constructed around them as the psychiatric hospital grew to accommodate about 125 residential patients and more than 300 employees by the late 1990s.

Hassan said vandals in 2009 flooded the vacant Brainerd Home by turning on the water and stuffing the drains.

Now there's taunting graffiti on the back of the house over a small Anarchy symbol: "We need water, S.O.S."

Hassan called on his four-and-a-half decade association with Elmcrest Hospital to describe the activities that once enlivened the spaces visible only through gaps in plywood or broken glass. There were administrative offices, sleeping quarters, classrooms, dining areas, a gymnasium and expansive rooms devoted to art, music and dance.

The once-innovative facility has been dormant for more than 10 years.

Hassan said a prospective but unnamed drug store tenant had been clamoring for the demolition of the Sage House because it would limit the store's visibility from the street. Prolonged negotiations led the drug store representatives to agree to the home's continued presence on the property, he explained, and the company is still on board as a future tenant.

He added that plans, as they stand now, involve tearing down the newer addition at the back of the home.

Talk about the Hart-Jarvis home revolves around moving the structure, dominated by four massive pillars, to the southwest portion of the property encroaching on town-owned land between the Gulf gas station and the storage and truck rental facility. The more modern annex at the back of that building would be demolished.

"You'd come over the bridge and you'd have the columns staring out at you," Hassan said. "It'd look kind of nice, I guess."

Hassan's relationship with Elmcrest was forged in 1971, when he signed on as the financial advisor for doctors Louis B. Fierman and Lane Ameen, the hospital's medical directors. The doctors, both longtime Yale professors, leased the property from a former owner and then from a national psychiatric provider until they were able to buy it in 1994.

The doctors then sold the hospital to St. Francis Inc. in 1997. Newspaper reports show the high-profile death of a child and the overdose of a 30-year-old woman under the hospital's new ownership, combined with abuse allegations, contributed to the closure of the facility in 2005.

That's when Fierman and Ameen, joined this time by Hassan, reacquired the property.

The two doctors have died; only Hassan remains.

The facility served residential and outpatient clients in groundbreaking ways, according to obituaries for Fierman in 2012 and Ameen in 2009.

"The hospital was the first to prohibit tobacco use on the grounds and provided patients with opportunities to engage in art, music and horticulture therapy," Fierman's obituary said. "Dr. Fierman put together a team of therapists, architects and designers to create a truly 'therapeutic environment.'"

Ameen's obituary in Massachusetts' *Vineyard Gazette* described Elmcrest Hospital as an early leader in the movement from residential to outpatient treatment.



Fouad "Fred" Hassan, a Shelton-based accountant and owner of the former Elmcrest Hospital property, is working to revitalize the decaying site.

"In addition, the Elmcrest approach helped pioneer many techniques which have since become the norm in many current psychotherapies, including discouraging the locking of doors, innovative therapies incorporating the arts, and no uniform requirements on the part of the patients or staff," the obituary said.

Along well-worn paths in the mid-day sun, Hassan seemed to carry those legacies on his own aging back. After an hour or so, he sat down on a shaded bench near the carriage steps that had risen to the feet of Brainerds and Jarvisses almost two centuries ago.

Hassan said in June that the doctors had always been committed to the Portland community.

"They donated to the fire department, donated to the police department, donated to the food bank," Hassan said. "They opened up their community rooms to town meetings, created countless jobs. We're trying to come in and do something, continue representing the doctors. They would have liked to see that same concept followed through."

Having been involved with the hospital for over half his life, the almost-octogenarian scoffed at the locals-only mindset so prevalent among the small town's life-long residents, and the fierce resistance he's received from many residents at public meetings over the past year.

"They think we're outsiders or something," Hassan said.

Saltus Caught After Police in East Hampton Tipped Off

by Elizabeth Regan

Gail Saltus, a convicted felon facing more than 80 charges for a crime spree targeting people's mailboxes and personal information, is behind bars after having been on the lam since May.

State police said the East Hampton resident was arrested July 2 at Guida's Restaurant in Middlefield after a tip came in saying she'd be eating there.

Saltus was picked up on multiple failure-to-appear charges following arrests in Cromwell, East Hampton, East Haven, Meriden, Middletown, Portland and Southington – and now Colchester.

She was brought to Norwich Superior Court on Aug. 2 to be processed for outstanding warrants related to three alleged cases of identity theft investigated by the Colchester Police Department, state police said. She was charged with multiple counts of identity theft and larceny, including four felonies.

She's been held at York Correctional Institution in Niantic since her July arrest, according to the Department of Correction.

The latest arrest brings to 30 the number of

pending felony charges against Saltus. They include first-degree failure to appear, second-degree forgery, second-degree identity theft and third-degree identity theft. Misdemeanors include criminal impersonation, issuing a bad check, fifth- and sixth-degree larceny, and breach of peace.

Saltus has said in a sworn statement that she stole credit card information and used it "for shelter and to survive."

The arrest by Colchester Police resulted from an investigation alleging, in one case, that Saltus stole mail from a resident in February and attempted to use that personal information to withdraw \$275 from Liberty Bank. Saltus left the drive-through window without completing the transaction after the teller asked for identification and the last four numbers of her social security number, the arrest warrant affidavit said.

A Liberty Bank employee counted seven customers who had been compromised – or almost compromised – by Saltus between September and February, according to the affidavit.

In the Southington case being handled at the

Bristol courthouse, police said Saltus is accused of pocketing \$975 after she deposited five checks at TD Bank using someone else's identity and bank account information. The deposits were made over a two-day period in early March.

An East Hampton arrest warrant affidavit from her March arrest said she used credit card information from two local women to pay more than \$1,300 for a hotel room in Meriden last November.

Saltus' charges in Middletown stem from \$320 in fraudulent checks – one for \$145 and one for \$175 – passed at Liberty Bank's Washington Street branch in late November.

According to an arrest warrant affidavit from the Cromwell Police Department, Saltus used personal information belonging to an elderly Cromwell woman to cash five checks totaling \$1,413.31 at the drive-through of the Liberty Bank in Portland last fall. A sixth transaction was thwarted when a teller asked Saltus for identification, which led Saltus to drive away.

Police from multiple jurisdictions cited an extensive criminal history going back 20 years



Gail Saltus

that includes convictions for criminal impersonation, forgery, larceny, credit card theft, credit card fraud, identity theft, drug possession, failure to appear and probation violation.

Bifurcation, Filling Vacancies Highlight East Hampton Charter Changes

by Elizabeth Regan

Changes proposed by the Charter Revision Commission would affect how taxpayers vote on budgets, who fills vacancies to elected offices, and when officials are sworn into office.

The suggested changes will be presented at a public hearing of the Charter Revision Commission on Wednesday, in accordance with a process outlined in state statute. People will have another opportunity to weigh in on Aug. 30 when it's the Town Council's turn to host a public hearing on the changes.

Melissa Engel, a Republican on the Town Council and the chairwoman of the commission, said the seven members came to the recommendations through their own online research, outreach to other towns, and months of discussion.

They also mined the experience and expertise of its membership, like employment law attorney Michael Rose.

"It was nice to have a legal opinion we didn't have to pay for," Engel said.

The members were charged by the council with examining six topics, ranging from large-scale changes like separating the general government and education budgets on referendum ballots to smaller revisions meant to clean up outdated references. The commission was also empowered to investigate changes not included in the town council's charges.

The idea of budget bifurcation came up because of multiple failed budget referendums over the past several years. Many were surprised this year when the budget passed on the first try.

Bifurcation refers to voting on the local municipal budget and the local education budget as separate items at referendum.

The commission's recommended language states "the ballot questions shall provide for

separate approval/disapproval of the Town Government Budget and the Board of Education Budget."

The language also specifies the town manager and Board of Education must provide their respective proposed budgets to the finance board by April 15.

Board of Education Chairman Christopher Goff, who replaced former chair Kenneth Barber in June, said he has not discussed the proposed revisions with the board yet but offered some of his own perspective.

"On one hand, seeing what happened in the last referendum, I think there would be great parental support for education if separated," he said. "On the other hand, I'm afraid of it creating an 'us vs. them' environment. With our new superintendent, I feel we have opened the door to presenting realistic and collaborative budgets to the voters and would hate to see that process lost."

Charter revision has also been invoked by councilors of both parties as a permanent solution to a legal dispute that played out following last year's municipal election to clarify who has the power to fill vacancies on the Board of Education.

The commission's recommendation gives the Town Council the authority to fill vacancies on boards and commissions. It also requires that any vacancy be filled by a member of the same party as the one who left the seat. Appointments will be made for the unexpired portion of the term or until the next regular election, whichever comes first.

A review of policies in Colchester, Cromwell, Glastonbury, Haddam, Marlborough, Middletown and Portland shows only Colchester and Portland empower their school board to fill their own vacancies. Most of the towns include a

same-party provision.

Goff said he has concerns about leaving appointments to the council because he feels boards and commissions are best qualified to fill their own vacancies.

"As an example, I remember a vacancy in the Board of Education at a time when we were headed towards teacher contract negotiations. As a board, we were focused on filling that seat with someone who had experience with unions and negotiations," he said.

Another charter revision would ensure all elected officials are sworn into office the day after they are elected.

Engel said the revision evens the playing field across the board. Currently, different elected bodies have different timetables for being sworn in.

"It certainly seemed to make sense that when you're elected, you assume the duties of your newly elected position," she said.

The final non-technical recommendation states a member of the Town Council shall hold no more than one elected or appointed office while serving as a councilor and for one year after, but can volunteer in any capacity.

The charter currently reads no council member "shall hold any other office under the government of the Town of East Hampton."

The change states "no member shall hold more than one elected or appointed office."

Engel said the reworked line means the same thing.

The recommendation also changes the length of time during which a councilor or former councilor is not eligible to take on paying jobs with the town. The current charter specifies the prohibition extends two years beyond the member's term; the recommendation would

shorten it to one year.

The Town Council voted unanimously in January to establish the commission to carry out the extensive work of changing the town's foundational document. State statute specifies the commission has no more than 18 months and no less than 90 days to submit their draft report to the town clerk.

The commission's schedule was also dictated by deadlines for submitting referendum questions in time to include them on the November general election ballot, when the presidential race is expected to result in high voter turnout.

Two Charter Revision Commission members – Engel and Councilor Pete Brown – were announced as members at a Town Council meeting in January. According to state statute, only one-third of the commission's membership may be public officials, meaning the remaining five seats had to go to non-elected residents. No party can have more than a bare majority.

Engel said there were no other elected officials who applied for a seat on the commission.

The rest of the members were appointed at the next regular meeting of the council two weeks later. They were Lori Lanzi, vice chairwoman; Diane Achenbach-Zatorski; Rolland Jackson; Anne McKinney; and Rose.

A charter revision question failed on the 2010 general election ballot. Multiple proposed revisions, the largest of which was a move to four-year terms for Town Council members, were combined into one referendum question. Critics of the combined approach characterized it as throwing the baby out with the bathwater – rejecting all changes when they only objected to some of them.

Lake Pocotopaug Closed to Swimmers

by Elizabeth Regan

Swimmers are being warned to stay away now that a blue-green algae advisory has blossomed into the full-fledged closure of public swimming areas on Lake Pocotopaug.

Lifeguards who would otherwise be keeping watch over the water are now alerting visitors to the closure and handing out literature about the dangers of the potentially toxic blue-green algae bloom.

The signs went up Monday, after Chatham Health District Director Don Mitchell told Town Manager Michael Maniscalco that levels of blue-green algae, or cyanobacteria, in water samples had exceeded recommended levels.

The unsightly mass is made up of bacteria that can multiply fast in hot and bright conditions where certain nutrients, such as nitrogen and phosphorous, are concentrated.

A blue-green algae bloom is characterized by green or brown water that may be cloudy or even thick like pea soup, according to the state Department of Energy and Environmental Protection.

Low amounts of exposure to an algae bloom can cause allergic-type reactions, skin irritation or nausea and diarrhea in humans and animals, the Department of Public Health said. The agency cautions that swallowing relatively large amounts of tainted water can cause liver damage and nervous system effects.

Results came in at 120,000 blue-green algae cells per milliliter in a test conducted by the health district on Aug. 3. The state-recommended threshold for closing the public beaches is greater than 100,000 blue-green algae cells per milliliter, according to guidance published jointly by the state Department of Public Health and the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection.

While not all blue-green algae is harmful,

the Aug. 3 test revealed higher numbers of more specific and concerning forms of the cyanobacteria known as microcystis and anabaena.

"The nature of the algae is changing," Don Mitchell, director of the Chatham Health District, said this week. The district serves the *Riverest* towns of Colchester, East Hampton, Hebron, Marlborough and Portland, as well as East Haddam.

The health district only takes samples from the public swimming area at Sears Park, but Mitchell cautioned blue-green algae could be present lakewide. He said those who see algae formations similar to those present at the public beach can reasonably assume their area of the lake isn't safe.

"There's a risk when you're exposed to algae at these levels, so don't swim in it, don't send your pets to swim in it," he said.

Guidance from the state Department of Energy and Environmental Protection and the state Department of Public Health said blue-green algae blooms can be localized and can change locations. One shoreline may be experiencing a bloom while another shoreline of the lake may not.

Public beaches on Lake Pocotopaug were closed last year for three weeks starting on Aug. 5 due to an algae bloom. The ban came about a month earlier than the prior year, when an algae bloom shut down public lake access over Labor Day weekend.

But blue-green algae levels at this time last year were significantly higher than they are now, according to Maniscalco – "so if there's a silver lining, that would be one."

Last year's numbers came in at 400,000 blue-green algae cells per milliliter compared to this year's 120,000 cells, he said.

Research from the town's lake consultant, George Knoecklein, has shown the cure for the lake's ills involves stabilizing shoreline erosion to limit the amount of fertilizer-containing runoff that the lake receives from being surrounded by developed land.

The problem is exacerbated because so much surface area within the lake's watershed has been developed and paved. This results in excess phosphorous getting into the lake, because paved surfaces don't absorb the excess nutrients in runoff like normal ground does.

Previous reports by Knoecklein have recommended making sure that lawns and gardens contain absorbent surfaces, including plants with especially absorbent roots, to clear up runoff draining into the lake, limiting or eliminating phosphorous fertilizer use and being careful when working on seawalls to minimize the amount of material that falls into the lake.

The state guidelines for local health departments governing blue-green algae blooms were instituted in 2012 after a high-profile algae bloom in Bolton. But the recommended response plan is advisory only, as the state public health department does not have relevant regulations for lakes and ponds.

Chuck Lee, with the state Department of Energy and Environmental Protection's Bureau of Water Protection and Land Reuse, said the Chatham Health District and the New Fairfield Health Department, which governs Candlewood Lake, are the only two public health agencies who report blue-green algae levels to the state – even though he is aware of other areas likely to have blooms each year.

The state tests all its own swimming beaches for blue-green algae as well.

Lee said he did not have any statistics on the

number of beach closures due to blue-green algae statewide.

Once a swimming ban is instituted, state guidelines recommend it remain in effect until at least two weeks of successive testing show levels below the danger threshold. The tests should be conducted one week apart.

According to Mitchell, it often takes many cycles of weekly testing to get to the point where two tests in a row yield acceptable results.

"Experience shows we would get a good test, then a bad test," he said.

Water is sampled every Tuesday and the results take about a week to come back from Northeast Laboratories in Berlin, CT. That means representatives from Chatham Health District are out testing the lake right around the same time the previous week's results are received.

Town Manager Michael Maniscalco said once a test comes back below the danger threshold, he will expedite the next test in hope of getting another acceptable result as quickly as possible.

Testing is \$90, according to Maniscalco; expedited handling is about twice that much.

Town Council members at their regular meeting this week said that's a small price to pay to get the beach opened up again soon.

According to Lee, what Lake Pocotopaug needs is a costly watershed overhaul to fix an antiquated system.

A nine-point watershed management plan prepared by Knoecklein, which is currently awaiting DEEP approval, puts the dollar figure at about \$2 million.

"Something like that would be very difficult to get through the budget process," Lee said.

Obituaries

East Hampton

Douglas Jack Paradis

Douglas Jack Paradis, 46, a lifelong resident of East Hampton, passed away unexpectedly Wednesday, Aug. 3. He was the devoted husband of Jennifer "Nif" (Galvin) Paradis and loving, caring son of Wilfred and the late Priscilla (Voisine) Paradis.

Doug was a graduate of the East Hampton Public Schools. He was self-employed, working many years in various areas of the construction industry.

Besides his wife and father, he leaves behind his two brothers, Dr. Jeffrey A. Paradis and brother-in-law Satouchi Okuna of Sacramento, Calif., and Gregory Paradis and his partner Meghan Carden of Middle Haddam. He will be greatly missed by his father-in-law Peter Galvin of East Hampton, Linda Galvin of Florida, his sister-in-law Melissa Galvin and nieces Shelby and Sabrena.

Doug especially enjoyed being outdoors, whether it was fishing, working on his Koi Pond, or landscaping. He also enjoyed spending time with his dogs.

Friends called at the Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton, Monday, Aug. 8. Friends dressed in casual clothing, as Doug never liked to wear a suit and tie. Burial will be private at the convenience of the family.

To leave online condolences, visit spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

Marlborough

William Caffyn Jr.

William Caffyn Jr., 91, of Marlborough, beloved husband of Anetta (Marsh) Caffyn, died Sunday, July 24, at his home, surrounded by his loving family. Born Feb. 3, 1925, in Marlborough, he was the son of the late William and Ruth (Lord) Caffyn Sr.

William married his wife Anetta on May 4, 1943, and had been married for 73 years. He had retired from Pratt & Whitney, where he had been employed as an electrician. William was a lifelong member of Marlborough Congregational Church, a member of the Moose Lodge in Marlborough and in Alaska.

William spent his summers in Alaska, where he enjoyed hunting, fishing and gardening. He enjoyed traveling with his wife and he dearly loved his family including his children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren and great-great-grandchildren. William especially enjoyed his wife's homemade apple pies.

Besides his beloved wife he is survived by his son, William Caffyn III and his wife Mary Jane of Marlborough; two daughters, Marion York and her husband Morris of Marlborough, Linda McKelvey of Marlborough; three brothers, Allan Caffyn of Manchester, Lucius Caffyn of Vermont, Thomas Caffyn and wife Diane of Maine; 13 grandchildren, 17 great-grandchildren and six great-great-grandchildren.

He was predeceased by his son, Lawrence Caffyn.

Funeral services were held Saturday, July 30, in the Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St. East Hampton. Burial followed in the family plot in Marlboro Cemetery. Friends called at the funeral home Friday, July 29.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the Roy B. Pettengill Ambulance Assoc., P.O. Box 308, Marlborough, CT 06447.

To leave online condolences, visit spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

Marlborough

Eleonora Popova

Eleonora Popova, 49, of Enfield, died Friday, Aug. 5, after a courageous battle with cancer, at St. Francis Hospital in Hartford.

Eleonora came to the United States from Athens, Greece in 2000, she said that it was her true home. She loved going to church on Sunday, spending time with her family, reading, cooking, and flowers. She worked in Enfield public schools in the special education department for many years.

Eleonora is survived by her loving husband Dimitrios Patetsos, her daughter Anastasia Patetsos and her son Antonios Patetsos of Enfield. She is also survived by her mother, two sisters, two brothers and many nieces and nephews of Greece, as well as many close friends.

The funeral was Wednesday, Aug. 10, in St. George Greek Orthodox Cathedral, 433 Fairfield Ave., Hartford with the Rev. Dr. George F. Zugravu, Dean officiating. Burial followed in Cedar Hill Cemetery, Hartford. Friends called Wednesday morning at the church, prior to the service.

To share a memory with the family, visit dillonbaxter.com.

Colchester

Joseph John Villani

Joseph John Villani of Colchester, died peacefully, surrounded by his children, in Hartford Hospital (Hartford) on Wednesday, July 27. He was 92 years old.

Joseph is survived by his wife Anna; his sister Theresa; his brother Salvatore; and his children, Tino married to Barbara, Francesca married to Peter, Paul married to Nora and James married to Debra.

He was preceded in death by his sister Victoria.

Joseph was born Aug. 5, 1923, in the Bronx, N.Y., to Agostino and Alessandra Villani. He served as a medic in the 11th Armored Division in Europe during World War II. Shortly after completing his term of service in the military, Joseph began a 32-year career with the New York City Fire Department.

He was married to Anna Tornello on July 11, 1954. Their 62-year marriage produced a loving home and an enduring example for their four children and their 12 grandchildren.

Joseph was a passionate and accomplished golfer, craftsman and winemaker. He was an avid reader and was self-educated in finance and business. Beginning as a child, he dedicated his entire life to his family, their welfare, safety and happiness. He was a friend to all he met and knew.

In lieu of flowers, please consider offering your own act of good will in his name.

Our family would like to thank the caregivers at Hartford Hospital for the dignity they added to his last days.

Colchester

George Francis Clark

George Francis Clark, 79, of Lake Hayward, husband, father, grandfather, brother, uncle and friend to many, passed away Sunday, Aug. 7.

A memorial service celebrating his life and faith will be held Monday, Aug. 15, at the Christian Life Chapel (located in the Homestead Center Plaza at 392 South Main St.) in Colchester at 6 p.m.

Donations in his memory may be made to the Grace House for Women, 251 Pleasant Ave., Portland, ME 04103 or Christian Life Chapel, P.O. Box 91, Colchester, CT 06415.

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

Amston

Charles Merton Harvey

Charles Merton Harvey, 32, of Amston, passed away Wednesday, Aug. 3, at Yale-New Haven Hospital, due to complications after heart transplant surgery. Born July 6, 1984, in New Haven, he is the son of Charlene (Harvey) Laws of Amston and Daren P. Harvey Sr. of Woodstock.

Charlie was the most kind-hearted, loving person anyone could ever meet. He loved spending time with family and friends. He also loved basketball, dancing, playing pool, video games and his dogs Shadow, Snoopy and Miguel. Charlie loved his life and everyone in it.

In addition to his loving parents, Charlie is survived by his stepfather, Mike Laws of Amston; brother Daren P. Harvey, Jr. and his wife Kelley of Colchester and their son, Charlie's beloved nephew Jason Harvey; his two loving sisters, Maegan and Brylene Laws of Amston; the love of his life, Kelly Walz of Amston; maternal grandparents Darrell and Marlene Keefe and paternal grandparents Merton and Joan Harvey; his stepmother, Annie Harvey; aunts Brenda and Luisa DeLuca, aunt Colleen Harvey and her daughter Alyssa Harvey as well as numerous aunts, uncles and cousins who dearly loved him.

Charlie is predeceased by his younger brother Jeremy Harvey and his uncle Barry Harvey

Charlie's family received relatives and friends Thursday, Aug. 11, at Potter Funeral Home, 456 Jackson St. (Route 195), Willimantic. Burial will be at the convenience of the family.

In lieu of flowers, donations in Charlie's memory may be made to the American Heart Association, 1550 Rte. 1, No. Brunswick, NJ 08902-4301.



Courant Colchester

Martin Kaplan

Martin Kaplan, 67, passed away unexpectedly Tuesday, Aug. 2. Marty was born in Hartford, the son of the late Irwin and Mildred (Levy) Kaplan. He grew up in Colchester and made his home in Coventry with his wife, Mary Ellen (King) Kaplan.

He leaves behind his loving wife and two children, daughter Jaime Kaplan Bancroft and her husband James, and his son Jonathan Kaplan; his greatest joy, his precious grandchildren Isabelle and Jacob Bancroft, who kept him active and on his toes; his twin brother, Norman Kaplan and his wife Patricia; his sister, Arlene Dressler; his mother-in-law, Helen (Moran) King; and many nieces, nephews and friends.

He spent most of his career at the Travelers Insurance Company in Hartford. Those of you who knew Marty knew what an outgoing and loving person he was. He will be missed by so many and I am sure he is placing bets at the craps table looking down on us and smiling.

Calling hours were held Sunday, Aug. 7, at the Coventry-Pietras Funeral Home, 2665 Boston Tpke., Coventry. A memorial service was held Monday, Aug. 8, at the funeral home as well.

In lieu of flowers, contributions in Marty's memory can be made to Network Inc. Human Services, 23 Route 6, Andover, CT 06232.

For online condolences, visit smallandpietrasfuneralhome.com.



East Hampton

Chester W. Hinton Jr.

Chester W. Hinton, Jr., 82, husband of the late Marjorie Swiger Hinton, died Wednesday, Aug. 3, at Marlborough Medical Center, after a lengthy illness. Born in East Charleston, Vt., on July 8, 1934, he was the son of the late Chester W. Hinton, Sr. and Alwilda (Glover) Hinton and had resided in East Hampton for the last 35 years.

Mr. Hinton was employed by North & Judd, Wilcox & Crittenden in Middletown, retiring after 40 years. He loved to grow tomatoes and was an avid gun sportsman.

He is survived by three daughters, Lori Miller of East Hampton, Cynthia Harper of Meriden and Stacey Wilson of Wallingford; two sons, Jeffrey P. Hinton of East Hampton and Chester W. Hinton III of Vermont; several grandchildren and great-grandchildren; a sister, Edith Miller of New Britain; and a brother Paul S. Hinton of Vermont. He is also survived by many nieces and nephews.

He was predeceased by a daughter, Marjorie LaCombe; and two sisters, Mabel Ferarra and Maxine Steiner.

A funeral service was held Monday, Aug. 8, in the Walter Hubbard Chapel at Walnut Grove Cemetery, with the Rev. Leon Hebrink officiating. Burial was in Walnut Grove Cemetery. There were no calling hours.

Should friends desire, contributions in his memory may be made to the ASPCA, Attn: Gift Processing Center, P.O. Box 96929, Washington, DC 20077-7127, or to the Office of Donor Development, Shriners Hospitals for Children - Springfield, 516 Carew St. Springfield, MA 01104.

Arrangements are under the direction of the John J. Ferry & Sons Funeral Home. For online condolences, visit jferryfh.com.



Portland

Fred Lisitano

Fred (Smitty) Lisitano of Portland entered into eternal peace Monday, Aug. 8, at the age of 92. He was born Dec. 14, 1923, to the late Joseph Lisitano and Ann (Lombardo) Lisitano.

He is survived by his loving wife of 67 years, Elizabeth (Traskos) Lisitano; children Martin and Brenda; and son-in-law Wallace. He is also survived by grandchildren and great-grandchildren Erin, her husband Robby, and their children Briella and R.J.; Ryan and his daughter Kapri; and Lauren and her fiance Jason. Smitty also leaves behind one brother, Andy; his goddaughter, Nancy DiMauro; and many nieces and nephews.

He was predeceased by brothers Frank, Sebastian, John, Joseph, Salvatore and Geno; and sisters Connie, Lucy, Victoria and Ann.

As Radioman Second Class in World War II, Smitty served on the flag staff of Admiral Marc Mitscher, Commander, Carrier Division 3, first on the USS Lexington (CV-16) and later on other carriers accompanying the admiral in various combat missions as part of Fast Carrier Task Force 58. He proudly received many medals of honor and letters of commendation for his service during World War II, and also bravely served his country during the Korean conflict. He was a lifelong member of BPO Elks 771 and a volunteer firefighter in Portland for over 50 years.

Smitty cherished his family and dearly loved his grandchildren and great-grandchildren who called him "Papa." They will always remember how he loved to play with them, talk to them, and simply have them nearby. He will be sadly missed by all, and the way he vibrantly told stories during Sunday dinners will always be remembered. Smitty looked forward to, and always thoroughly enjoyed, visits and phone calls from Tim and Jane and John and Bonnie, and especially loved their scenic rides throughout Connecticut.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions in Smitty's memory may be made to Middlesex Hospital Hospice and Palliative Care, 28 Crescent St., Middletown, CT 06457. Our family would like to thank the entire staff for the compassion, support, and care they provided us as a family while he was under their care. Truly heartfelt thanks go out to Sue, Stephanie, Karen and all who cared for him during his difficult journey. A memorial contribution in his name would be both a tribute to Smitty's memory and a saving grace for other families to receive the care they deserve when they need it most.

Calling hours will be from 9-11 a.m. today, Aug. 12, at D'Angelo Funeral Home, 22 South Main St., Middletown, CT 06457, with the burial immediately following at St. Joseph's Cemetery, 48 Middlesex Ave., Chester, CT 06412.

Marlborough

Gerard DuBois

Gerard "Jerry" DuBois, 90, passed away peacefully Friday, Aug. 5, at Marlborough Health Care Center with his family by his side. Born in Putnam, he lived in Manchester and graduated Manchester High School in 1944.

He served in the Navy during World War II from 1943-46. He was an accountant in private practice for many years before retiring, and was more recently employed at Foxwoods Casino in Ledyard. He also formerly lived in Tolland, moving to Vernon in 1996.

He is survived by his six children, Paul DuBois, Diane DuBois Jameson and her husband, Bruce, Deborah DuBois Routhier and her husband, George, Gerard "Jay" DuBois, Jayne DuBois Villanova and her husband, Robert, and Michael DuBois and his wife, Lynn; 13 grandchildren; 15 great-grandchildren; and his former wife, Betty-Jane (Hasbrouck) DuBois. He was predeceased by a sister, Mildred DuBois Zetterstrom.

Relatives and friends joined the family for calling hours Tuesday, Aug. 9, at Leete-Stevens Enfield Chapels, 61 South Rd., Enfield. A Mass of Christian Burial was held Wednesday, Aug. 10, at Holy Family Church, 23 Simon Rd., Enfield. Burial with military honors followed in St. Mary's Cemetery, Windsor Locks.

Donations in Gerard's memory may be made to East Catholic High School, 115 New State Rd., Manchester, CT 06040, or the charity of the donor's choice.



Portland

Harold Edward Long

Harold Edward Long, 81, of Cromwell, passed away Friday, Aug. 5, peacefully at his home, surrounded by his loving family. Harold was born Oct. 6, 1934, in Portland, to his parents Harold Fredrick Long and Charlotte (Bayerowski) Long.



He was predeceased by his wife of 54 years, Patricia Lee Long, who passed April 15, 2015.

He graduated from Portland High School and immediately joined the Air Force, where he served in Germany in the Air Force Police. Upon returning home, he married "Pat," the love of his life and best friend. He spent most of his life working in construction, and retired from Hubert E. Butler Construction Company.

He loved to spend time tinkering in his garage, gardening, and spending time with family and friends. He will be remembered by those close to him as a kind, loving man with a great sense of humor!

Harold is survived by his sister, Patricia (Long) Aresco and her husband Sebastian Aresco; his three children, Edward Long and his wife Nancy, Cynthia (Long) Granata and her husband Robert, and James Long and his wife Kelly. He was blessed with seven grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

A special thank you to the Middlesex Hospital Homecare of Middletown (Hospice & Palliative Care) for their loving care and support.

Funeral services were held Thursday, Aug. 11, at Biega Funeral Home, 3 Silver St., Middletown. Burial followed at Rose Hill Memorial Park, Rocky Hill. Friends called at Biega's Wednesday, Aug. 10.

Those who wish to make a memorial contribution can make it to Middlesex Hospice and Palliative Care at Middlesex Hospital, 28 Crescent Street, Middletown, CT 06457.

To share memories or express condolences online, visit biegafuneralhome.com.

Colchester

Adeline Marie LaChance

Adeline Marie LaChance, 87, of Colchester, formerly of New Britain, was carried home to her Heavenly Father Tuesday, Aug. 9, at the home of her niece. She was born in St. Agatha, Maine on Jan. 14, 1929, to the late Vitale and Laura (Soucy) LaChance.

She was also predeceased by eight siblings, Lucienne Tardiff, Lillian Picard, Florence Sgroi, Marie Beaupre, George LaChance, Edgar LaChance, August (Joe) LaChance and Phillip LaChance.

Adeline is survived by one sister, Annette Dougherty of New Britain; a dear friend, Mary Ann Dayton-Fitzgerald; and many nieces and nephews, all of whom she helped bring up and all of whom love her dearly...we will miss you every day.

She had been employed for many years at New Britain General Hospital and prior to that worked at New Britain Machine. Adeline had been a life-long member of St. Jerome Church in New Britain and was very dedicated to her faith.

Funeral services will be held today, Aug. 12, with a Mass of Christian Burial at 10 a.m., at St. Jerome Church, 1010 Slater Rd., New Britain. Burial will follow in St. Mary Cemetery, New Britain. Visitation will be today from 8:30-9:30 a.m., at the Farrell Funeral Home, 110 Franklin Sq., New Britain.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Hartford HealthCare at Home 1290 Silas Deane Hwy. Wethersfield, CT 06109.

To send a condolence, visit FarrellFuneralHome.com.