

RIVEREAST

# News Bulletin

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**Camping Cubs...** East Hampton Cub Scout Pack 8 recently camped out for the weekend at Plimoth Plantation in Plymouth, Mass. For more information about Pack 8, email [pack8.easthampton@gmail.com](mailto:pack8.easthampton@gmail.com). Pictured from left are Alex Zgorski, Aidan Maiorino, Logan Burnham, Zachary Zgorski, Zachary Selger, Lucas Gagne and Domenic Mangino; kneeling is Aiden Gora.

## Original Brochure Coming to Cragin

by Julianna Roche

Imagine walking into an alternate version of Cragin Memorial Library in Colchester, where classics like Charles Dickens' *Oliver Twist* or Herman Melville's *Moby-Dick*, or even the *Harry Potter* series, were banned from shelves.

While it's unimaginable today, in 1859 that may have been the case, said Cragin's Director Kate Byroade, noting that at the time it was controversial for libraries to even carry works of fiction. Instead, she said, in the 19th century, public libraries would typically only carry non-fiction.

Though Cragin has changed quite a bit since then, Byroade said, it's still fun to look back in time and catch a glimpse of what it was like in the past.

Now, that will be possible – thanks to the Colchester Historical Society's (CHS) recent discovery of an original 1859 brochure titled "Constitution, By-Laws, & Catalogue of the Colchester Library Association". The society plans to donate the brochure to the library.

According to Gary Walter, chairman of the Collections Committee of the Colchester Historical Society (CHS) and Board of Governors member, the brochure describes how Cragin originally functioned and lists the works in its 1859 collection.

"Feeling that if any organization in town should have a copy of this historical document, I put a motion before the CHS board to donate

the brochure to the library and it passed unanimously," he said.

According to Walter, library services were originally provided to Colchester through the Colchester Library Association (CLA), which was formed in January 1859 by merging the Library Association of Colchester (which was comprised of only men) and the Ladies Library Association.

The CLA moved to several locations throughout town, but in 1886 finally settled into the second floor of the Worthington Block building on Merchants' Row. However, a fire in 1890 wiped out CLA's entire collection. Another fire eight years later, in 1898, wiped the collection out again.

That 1898 fire not only destroyed Merchants' Row, but, according to Walter, it also destroyed the Cragin Summer House on Linwood Avenue. The owner of the house, Dr. Edwin B. Cragin, was a successful New York City doctor who was born in Colchester and graduated from Bacon Academy. When Cragin heard of the fire, Walter said he donated the land where his house had been, along with \$30,000 (worth over three million dollars today) to the town to build a new library – which opened to the public in 1905. In 1923, the CLA was dissolved and their remaining assets were donated to Cragin.

"It was specified this had to be a free public See Original Brochure page 2

## 'One Suicide is Too Many'

by Elizabeth Regan

The entire East Hampton High School student body crowded into the auditorium last week for an assembly on mental illness, settling into plush new seats arranged in three sections across the renovated space.

Holly Neiweem, a 1998 graduate of the high school, stood up at the podium to introduce herself as someone whose life has been forever changed by her brother's suicide and her own depression.

Then she asked all the students in the narrow section of seats along the right wall to stand up.

The students who rose to their feet represented roughly 20 percent of the U.S. population that experiences a mental health condition in a given year, she said, citing statistics from the National Alliance on Mental Illness. Conditions include depression, anxiety, eating disorders and many others.

As the students looked around and saw what the statistic "one out of five" means when applied to their own classmates, Neiweem emphasized how important it is to talk about mental health.

"It impacts all your lives," she said.

Neiweem's brother, Ben, died by suicide Aug. 12, 2013. He was 24 years old.

According to 2014 statistics from the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, 42,773 Americans die by suicide each year. That's 117

suicides per day; it's one suicide every 12 minutes.

"When I learn that 10-15 percent of high school kids seriously consider suicide in a given year, it not only breaks my heart, it makes me incredibly angry. Angry in the sense that we're not doing something more about it, that we're not talking about it," she told students. "We need to educate and we need to act, because one suicide is too many."

That's the rallying cry behind the Benny Fund, a non-profit started by Holly Neiweem to improve mental health and prevent suicide through advocacy and education. Tomorrow, the organization is holding the fourth annual Benny's Run, a 5K race and kids' fun run.

"Benny's ultimate action will never define him, but I wholeheartedly believe that it should be discussed and not hidden," Neiweem wrote on the organization's website.

It's that kind of communication Neiweem came back to East Hampton High School to promote.

"It's not something that should only be discussed when something's wrong or you have a problem," she said, emphasizing that mental health is no different than the health of the rest of the body.

What's different is the stigma attached to mental illness. Neiweem described stigma as the collection of inaccurate beliefs that "leads

See 'One Two Many' page 2



The fourth annual Benny's Run will be held Saturday to benefit mental health awareness and suicide prevention. The event is held in honor of Benjamin Neiweem, a 2006 graduate of East Hampton High School who took his life in 2013 – and everyone who has been touched by mental illness and suicide.

**‘One Two Many’ cont. from Front Page**

people to feel shameful, makes them isolate themselves and makes them afraid to seek help.”

She asked students to choose their words carefully, since terms like “psycho,” “freak,” “lunatic,” and “schizo” serve to devalue people with mental illnesses.

Well-intentioned sentiments can be dangerous too, Neiveem explained. She used examples like “snap out of it,” “others have it worse than you do,” and “what do you have to be depressed about?”

She illustrated what’s wrong with those statements by applying them to other health conditions. It would be like telling someone who is experiencing a severe allergic reaction that she doesn’t need an EpiPen because it’s all in her head, or telling someone who’s been fighting cancer that he should “suck it up and shake it off.”

“You would never say these kinds of things to someone who’s experiencing some sort of physical issue, so the fact we do it around mental health issues is really a problem,” Neiveem said. “Every time people belittle these things that are happening in our brain, we continue perpetuating stigma.”

Neiveem described her own experience with depression as something that built up for two years before she finally sought treatment.

Waiting that long to get help was “one of the stupidest things I’ve done in my life,” she said.

“At work I couldn’t concentrate, I couldn’t remember things,” she said. “My mind was racing. It was always somewhere else. All day all I wanted to do was sleep; at night I couldn’t shut my brain off so I couldn’t sleep. In the morning, if I did sleep, I’d wake up with a lump in my throat. It felt like I had a cinderblock on my chest and a vice on my head.”

The symptoms persisted until, she said, she “didn’t want to be around anymore.” She realized the condition would kill her if she didn’t do something about it.

With medication and therapy, her own depression began to lift. That’s when she started to notice changes in her brother, Ben.

He started to exhibit mood swings, she said, with high highs and low lows. She described him as slightly paranoid, experiencing breaks from reality during which he thought things happened to him that didn’t actually happen. He started to drink more – “probably to cope, probably to help him sleep” – and became more agitated and aggressive at times.

“On May 24, my daughter’s birthday, he packed up and he drove out to Alaska. He flew

through all the tolls on his way out there. He found a cabin but was super super isolated out in the middle of the woods,” she recounted. “Two and a half months later, I was on a plane out to Alaska to pack up his stuff and bring his remains home because he had died by suicide.”

Neiveem said she stops herself every time she starts to think about all the things she could have or should have done to try to prevent her brother’s death.

“There’s literally nothing that can change that,” she said. “But what I can do is stand here with you guys and share this story. Because I think it opens up the door for a lot of you to share yours. I do think that you are the generation that will start to change the narrative when it comes to mental health.”

She directed students to the [bennyfund.org](http://bennyfund.org) website resources page, filled with dozens of links for information on symptoms, science, where to go for help and personal stories.

She also told students to learn the five signs of mental health risk and to apply them not only to their own lives, but to those around them.

“When you start to see that your friends are not feeling like themselves, are agitated, withdrawn, have stopped caring for themselves or feel hopeless, those are all things you need to take a look at. You need to monitor. You need to check in on people,” she said.

Senior Riley Close said after the assembly that she continues to be moved by Neiveem’s experiences and her efforts to increase awareness. It’s a story Close first heard a couple years ago when she sought out a mental health charity to support for her birthday.

“I found the Benny Fund and I raised about \$800 or \$900,” she said.

Close, who said she’s struggled with depression and suicide before, is committed to stopping the stigma surrounding mental illness. She serves as co-president of the Mental Health Awareness Club with fellow senior Molly Bentley.

“We’re trying to really get people to understand that mental health affects everyone. Our main mission is to stop the stigma and start talking about it,” Close said.

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*Benny’s Run will be held rain or shine Saturday, October 1 at 10 a.m. at Sears Park, 68 North Main St, East Hampton There will be a 5K road race, 5K walk and a Kids Fun Run. Visit [bennyfund.org](http://bennyfund.org) for sign-up information or register the same day at Sears Park from 8-9:30 a.m.*

**Original Brochure cont. from Front Page**

library so that anybody could come and make use of its resources,” Byroade said, adding that was another huge change historically.

“With library associations like [CLA], you had to pay to borrow books. Typically, the cost was a dollar or two, which was enough money [back then] that people had to think about it,” she said, adding that members were also only allowed to take out one or two books at a time.

Today, however, library members can check out as many items as they’d like for three weeks at a time, with the ability to renew them twice, she added.

“Now, we don’t impose limits, and that’s partly because there are so many more things available,” Byroade said, including books, audio books, e-books, and DVDs.

“Another major difference was that in 1859, libraries did not have children’s collections,” she said, adding that “a separate collection for

children in the library really only got going in the 1890s” when the ideas of free public education and free public libraries started to develop.

When Cragin opened in 1905, for example, one of its specifications was that there would be a separate children’s room and children’s collection, Byroade said.

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While the CHS Board has agreed to donate the 1859 brochure to Cragin, they are still working on setting an official date to do so. Regardless, Byroade said, she’s “so excited!”

“[The brochure] is just a snap shot in time of what the expectations of the community were,” she said. “Its importance to the library is that it’s another small piece of history, but it goes back to one of the earliest documented parts of our history... so it will be interesting to see what it looks like!”

# Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

In the days leading up to Monday’s presidential debate, a friend of mine quipped there’s no way either candidate changes voters’ minds at the debate, unless he or she pledges allegiance to ISIS.

But I dunno. While I do think most people who watched Monday had already made up their minds whether they were Team Trump or Team Clinton, I have to believe there were some undecideds, some people on the fence and open to be swayed by what they saw in the debate.

I hope that was the case anyway. Because I just don’t see how you can come away from that debate thinking Trump won.

He was vague, repetitive, rude, confrontational and insulting. He didn’t look presidential; he looked like a bully. He may have started with a script, but seemed to veer from it quickly, and before long was hitting the same beats he seems to hit during his campaign speeches. Only this time he had an opponent who was allowed to get some words in.

And boy did he hate it when Clinton was allowed to get some words in.

In a post-debate wrap-up, *The New York Times* reported that, during the 90-minute debate, Trump interrupted Clinton 29 times, compared to the nine times she interrupted him.

More interesting stats from the *Times*: Clinton was asked 17 questions, and dodged none of them. Trump was asked 15, and dodged four.

Clinton asserted her opponent was being untruthful 10 times, whereas Trump said his opponent was being untruthful 26 times.

This stat was interesting: Not once was Clinton fact-checked by moderator Lester Holt. Trump, meanwhile, was fact-checked four times.

The *Times* did give Trump the edge when it came to loquaciousness. He spoke for 44 minutes and 23 seconds, compared to

Clinton’s 41 minutes and 21 seconds. (He also delivered 7,870 words to her 6,181.)

Ah, but as the old saying goes, less is more. Clinton may have been a little less wordy than Trump, but she got in some good attacks, including a nice reminder of how sexist Trump can be when she recalled he once called a Miss Universe winner “Miss Piggy.”

(The Donald, in true Trumpian fashion, refused to apologize for this comment and even doubled down on it, telling *Fox & Friends* Tuesday morning that the pageant winner was “the worst we ever had,” adding, “she gained a massive amount of weight, and it was a real problem.”)

I’ve been watching presidential debates for years, and I’ve never seen a candidate act the way Donald Trump acted Monday night. It was fascinating to watch, really. Right up until the end, Trump was being weird, saying he “was going to say something extremely rough to Hillary, to her family. And I said to myself I can’t do it. I just can’t do it. It’s inappropriate, it’s not nice.”

As if being inappropriate or not nice had ever stopped Trump before.

What was he going to say? He admitted after the debate he was going to go after Bill Clinton’s indiscretions. And he hinted he may still go there at the next one.

It’ll be interesting to see if he follows through with that at the next debate. It’ll also be interesting to see if his behavior will be a little more calm and professional – something I’m sure his advisors will be pressing.

Because, as I said earlier, I just don’t see how anyone but fervent Trump supporters could walk away from Monday’s debate thinking he won that thing. And maybe, just maybe, some on-the-fence folks are now in the Clinton camp.

One can only hope.  
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See you next week.

## \$1.3 Million Grant Expected for RHAM Traffic Improvements

by Geeta S. Sandberg

The State Bond Commission is expected to meet today to approve a \$1.3 million grant-in-aid to Hebron for traffic improvements around RHAM Middle and High School.

In March 2014, RHAM teacher Dawn Mallory died after she was struck by a vehicle in the RHAM parking lot. Following her death, the RHAM Board of Education hired an engineering firm to study traffic at the two schools and make suggestions for improvements. Temporary changes were made following the study, including a change in traffic patterns and the installation of temporary speed bumps, but several permanent recommendations were also made.

According to a press release from state Rep. Gayle Mulligan (R-55th District), short-term recommendations include “improving intersection controls by installing new signage, pavement markings, and hiring traffic officers. In addition, the report also suggests improving pedestrian crosswalks.”

The release added the state grant “will now give the school district and the town the ability to complete all recommended traffic improvements.”

Superintendent of Schools Bob Siminski stated in the release in light of Mallory’s death, securing the grant “will continue to help maintain high staff morale.”

He added, “I appreciated the work of the legislative delegation for helping us get this grant.”

Mulligan worked with Siminski, Town Manager Andrew Tierney and local officials to help secure the funding. In the press release, Tierney said Mulligan “has met with numerous local and state officials to ensure that our concerns were heard and that we secured the funding. This funding is a direct result of her hard work for Hebron.”

Mulligan, meanwhile, said of the expected grant award, “This grant is a smart investment that will help improve the safety of our students, teachers, and residents.”

She added, “The money that the town and school district received today will give them the necessary funding to complete additional traffic improvements at the RHAM campus. We understand the importance of having a safe campus; safety is our number one priority.”

# ‘Life Is a Gift to Cherish’ in Portland

by Elizabeth Regan

The foundation for Philip Bjornberg’s ministry can be found in the church basement.

That’s where the newest member of the clergy at Trinity Episcopal Church in Portland first learned, through meetings of Alcoholics Anonymous, about the importance of being fully present in the moment and building a network of support.

Sober since 2003 and ordained as a transitional Episcopal deacon in June, Bjornberg spent the intervening years coming to the realization that his role is to bring those basement lessons into the full light of day.

“Life is a gift to cherish; it’s not a problem to solve,” he said in an interview this week at Portland Library. “All life is lived in the present moment.”

Bjornberg, who turns 60 next week, has signed on at Trinity Church as part of a relatively-recent reimagining of the Episcopal mission. The church has positioned itself to engage people as they go about their daily lives, instead of focusing on getting them into church on Sundays.

Bjornberg said societal shifts resulting in decreased church attendance and revenue forced the Episcopal Church to alter its structure, governance, and administration.

“The church is hitting rock bottom, like an alcoholic,” he said.

Slated to be ordained as a priest at the end of the year, Bjornberg will be known officially as a “missional priest” charged with motivating and guiding the congregation as it looks beyond its own brownstone walls to see God at work throughout the wider community.

Missional priests are supposed to work only eight to 12 hours per week so that members of the congregation can become less reliant on the clergy and more invested in shaping and carrying out their own direction for their church, according to Bjornberg.

He earned his Master of Arts degree in theology and recovery ministry from Fuller Theological Seminary in 2014.

Describing himself and his religious mission as “confrontational,” he said it’s his responsibility to help dismantle the division between the sacred and the secular by emphasizing organic, everyday spiritual practices – like being mindful and connected – that allow people to live healthier and more fulfilling lives.

An example can be found in his service as a chaplain at Stonington Institute, where he counsels those addicted to drugs and alcohol. He said he tries to show people the healing that can come from sharing stories and support.

According to Bjornberg, his decision to become a priest came about as part of an evolving conversation with God.

Before he got sober, he struggled with a demanding managerial position at Pratt and Whitney – where he’d started as a factory worker decades before – that required him to lay off 40 of his employees despite his best effort to save their jobs.

“I remember praying and wanting to leave that job; drinking myself to sleep at night because I was so stressed out about it,” he said.

But he heard God’s voice: “If not you, then who?”

So he stuck it out.

“It was a revelation: Nobody else was going to care for these people like I did,” he said.

That internal dialogue became fully realized after the layoffs were announced, when one of his employees came over to thank him for standing up for them and then standing by them when nobody else would.

Now, Bjornberg said he understands the foundation of his ministry was already in place – even though he wasn’t hearing it at the time.

“I really was a minister to them,” he said. “I shepherded them through that process.”

It was only after he joined Alcoholics Anonymous and began to recover from his addiction that he was able to take in the rest of God’s message for him, he said.

He attributed much of his decision to embrace the religious life to two transformative events: a near-death experience and then a healing service at the church he attended in Old Saybrook.

Bjornberg said he faced his mortality in 2006 when he had a heart attack, referred to as a “widowmaker,” resulting from the almost total blockage of one of the major arteries. He described it as a mystical experience.

“I bumped up against the real awareness that there is more. Not white light, Hollywood, *New York Times* bestseller kind of stuff, but just this overwhelming joy – like a little kid,” he said.

Three years later, he was at a weekly healing service at Grace Episcopal Church in Old Saybrook next to a woman who was worshipping freely – “twitching and clapping and saying ‘Thank you, Jesus’” – in an unbridled, Pentacostal way to which he wasn’t accustomed.

Bjornberg said he was inspired by what he saw as her full acceptance and embrace of God’s presence. The experience was heightened for him when that voice within him – the same one that had asked, years before, “If not you, then who?” – urged further reflection on how to apply that kind of total abandon to his own life.

The question was this: “Why don’t you choose to believe?”

In that moment, he chose to believe. He spoke in tongues, he said, as part of an intense and all-consuming experience that swept up the



The Rev. Phil Bjornberg, Deacon, has signed on as the sole resident clergy at Trinity Episcopal Church. A renewed commitment to community outreach shared by Bjornberg and the Episcopal Church as a whole was reflected at the town’s recent 175th Anniversary Parade.

minister and even the staid “little old ladies” who attended the healing service each week.

“Whatever limited resistance I had in me was just released in that moment,” he said. “My whole life changed.”

That’s when the “cradle Episcopalian,” who’d grown up in the church, let go of any doubt he’d been hanging on to and committed to bring back to his church what had been revealed to him in recovery.

Bjornberg envisions a priesthood that goes beyond the trappings of organized religion by incorporating text and traditions into the daily life of the community.

“Even the Bible itself is a collection of stories, like the stories in AA that I hear,” he said. “People [are] trying to articulate and share something they’ve experienced that is the essence of the meaning of their lives.”

A large table in his new office at Trinity Church can fit 12 people, he said, which he sees as a place to sit down with a cross-section of the Portland community in a way that evokes the fellowship of Jesus’ last supper and the change it heralded.

“Let’s have a conversation around a meal and talk about where is the life in this community,” he said. “What is most significant to you? Where do you find meaning in what you get up and do every day? What are you missing? What does your heart long for?”

Bjornberg, who was diagnosed with prostate

cancer in 2009, said his form of the disease is incurable but can be treated to extend his life as long as possible. His doctor told him chances are good that something else will kill him before the cancer does.

But Bjornberg is no longer afraid of dying – and he’s not afraid of living.

“I have more life in me today than I’ve ever had,” he said. “Live one day at a time, in the present. All life is lived in the moment.”

Leaving the library after his interview in a black jacket and a clerical collar, the new face on the Portland religious scene was approached by a resident who wanted to know which religious denomination he belonged to.

“I’m an alcoholic,” Bjornberg replied with a friendly smile. Only then did he specify he was Episcopalian.

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*Bjornberg will facilitate a workshop from 9 a.m.-noon Saturday, Nov. 12, titled “An Introduction to Addiction for Families and Loved Ones.” There will be video, instruction and discussion as well as a question and answer session with a panel of people in long-term, sustained recovery from addiction and their family members. A bag lunch will follow. For more information, contact the church secretary at [trinitychurch.sec@snet.net](mailto:trinitychurch.sec@snet.net), 860-342-0458, or Bjornberg at 860-662-1182, [pbjornberg@snet.net](mailto:pbjornberg@snet.net).*

## LifeStar Called for Two Route 6 Crashes in Andover

by Geeta S. Sandberg

LifeStar was called to Route 6 in Andover for two crashes last week – both three-car collisions that occurred on Route 6.

According to State Police, shortly after noon Wednesday, Sept. 21, Gregg Carrara, 20, of Andover, was traveling westbound on Route 6 when he struck the back of a vehicle driven by James Williamson, 25, of Derby. Williamson was slowing to turn left into 664 Route 6. Police said the impact pushed Williamson’s vehicle into the eastbound lane, where it struck the car driven by Latoya Woods, 28, of New Haven, head-on.

As a result of the incident, Woods’ passenger, Michael Kulmatiski, 93, of Windham, sustained serious injuries and was flown to Hartford Hospital via LifeStar. Williamson was also taken to Hartford Hospital for minor injuries. The remaining individuals were transported to Windham Hospital; Woods and Carrara with no apparent injuries, and Carrara’s passenger, Gordon Macdonald, 82,

of Willimantic with minor injuries.

Two days later, on Friday, Sept. 23, police said Crystal McLaughlin, 28, of Andover, was traveling westbound on Route 6 shortly before 6:30 a.m. when she failed to slow for an oncoming school bus with its lights flashing and struck the back of a vehicle driven by Gavin Dixon, 20, of Newfield, ME. Dixon’s vehicle was then pushed into the back of a truck driven by David Lund, 19, of Lebanon.

Lund and his passenger, Christian Lund, 19, of Lebanon, reported no injuries; Dixon was taken to Windham Hospital with possible injuries. McLaughlin, meanwhile, was transported via LifeStar to Hartford Hospital with serious injuries.

Following Friday’s collision, Route 6 reopened just before 8 a.m., according to police.

As of Wednesday, Kulmatiski had been released from the hospital, but McLaughlin remained in the ICU.

## Hebron Resident Filming Bus Was Concerned with Safety

by Geeta S. Sandberg

An individual was noticed Monday filming one of the district’s buses as it brought students to school, but further investigation found the individual was simply a Hebron resident who was concerned over the safety of the bus.

Schools Superintendent Tim Van Tassel reached out to parents the same day as the incident, explaining what occurred after the bus driver, as well as multiple students, reported they’d seen the individual filming the bus.

“As could be expected, this was immediately reported to our resident trooper and was then researched and confirmed,” he wrote in the Sept. 26 letter to parents.

After looking into the matter, Van Tassel furthered the individual was found to be a concerned resident worried about the brakes on the bus after noticing it was making “a loud squealing noise.”

“In following up with First Student, they were able to confirm that the Bus 3 brakes have been making more noise than usual,” Van

Tassel wrote. “They further stated that over the past two weeks they have been taking measures to correct the issue. Although the brake pads are new and have passed inspection, they are requiring further sanding to prevent the loud noise they are currently making.”

Van Tassel added there was no safety issue related to the brakes on the bus, explaining they’re required to go through periodic testing throughout the year.

“Our buses are required by law to comply with these periodic maintenance checks, and our bus fleet continues to meet all state regulations,” he stated.

Van Tassel apologized for Monday’s incident, but concluded, “We are hopeful that the expedited response helps to alleviate any further concern. We are very pleased that this matter was reported to the district by our bus driver and students in a very timely fashion, and as a result we were able to quickly respond. As we have all been encouraged to do, ‘If you see something, say something.’”

# Andover Town Meeting Next Week on Fracking Ordinance

by Geeta S. Sandberg

At a special town meeting next week, residents will decide whether Andover could one day become home to waste produced by hydraulic fracturing, the process of extracting natural gas from underground rock formations.

Commonly referred to as fracking, the method involves drilling through the rock and injecting a mixture of water, sand and chemicals into wells at high pressure to crack the formations and release the gas.

No company has come to Andover – or any town in Connecticut – and proposed storage of fracking waste, but there are still those in town who are concerned about it, and want to issue a preemptive strike against it – hence next week’s town meeting on whether to ban it. Those concerned about fracking and the resulting waste mention the different chemicals used, many of which are toxic or known carcinogens.

Through the process, fracking waste is created after the well pressure is released, and

about 10-40 percent of the injected water (water use varies by region but the public interest organization Food & Water Watch said companies typically require about five gallons of water to drill and frack a single shale gas or tight oil well) returns to the surface, now mixed with natural gas, naturally-occurring ground contaminants including volatile organic compounds, radioactive elements, heavy metals such as arsenic, lead and mercury; and brine that’s eight times saltier than seawater.

A semi-solid waste is also produced from the process in the form of sludge, drilling mud, and stone cuttings.

And of course, all that waste has to be disposed of somewhere. One method used to do that is road spreading, where the fracking wastewater is used for dust control and road de-icing. But opponents say this exposes people to radiation in the air and poses the threat of runoff contaminating nearby water supplies and

agricultural lands.

According to Maria Tulman of the local group No Fracking Waste Andover, “The radioactive and toxic chemicals in fracking waste affect the endocrine system, brain and nervous system, cardiovascular system, immune system, liver and [gastrointestinal] system, and the respiratory system. They can cause cancer and other serious health problems.”

She explained Connecticut currently has a moratorium on receiving fracking waste, but that moratorium ends in 2018. At that point, the commissioner of the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection may have developed regulations that would call for a continued ban on fracking waste coming into the state.

Alternately, the commissioner could also decide to *allow* fracking waste to enter Connecticut, which is a risk Tulman and the rest of those concerned with fracking waste don’t want to take.

“This is the reason for creating an ordinance – to protect the Town of Andover from fracking waste disposal if the state ban is lifted,” she stated.

According to a postcard sent to residents regarding the ordinance, the ordinance was proposed by citizens “to ban the storage, disposal, processing, and road spreading of toxic fracking waste and other drilling waters.”

The notice furthers, “We don’t want toxic, radioactive fracking waste contaminating our town, lake, farm land and produce, water, properties or roads.”

The Connecticut towns of Mansfield, Coventry, Portland and Washington already have their own bans, as well as the state of Vermont and New York City, among other places.

The town meeting takes place next Thursday, Oct. 6, at 7 p.m., in the Andover Town Office Building, 17 School Rd.

## Innovation, Experience Come to Marlborough EDC

by Julianna Roche

The Economic Development Commission (EDC) has welcomed three new faces, after the Board of Selectmen appointed Jim Shea as a full member and Jill Silliman and Michele Anne Kacy as alternates at its Sept. 20 meeting.

“I have actively been pursuing new members for the EDC that possess strong skill sets that will be helpful to the commission in reenergizing the town,” said First Selectwoman Amy Traversa about the new appointees.

Shea, who has a background in information technology, has also worked in various major real estate development and asset management companies, as well as one of the top 50 biggest firms in the U.S., Loeb & Loeb, LLP in Los Angeles, Calif.

He currently works as team lead and senior architect for The Hartford Fire & Insurance Group, a specialized software development and architecture company which is focused on innovation and collaboration software.

“I think my biggest asset is my problem-solving and my logic-based view of the world,” Shea said, adding he hopes to provide the EDC with “ideas, strategy, and energy” to help add value to the town.

According to Traversa, Shea’s technology

experience is also a major bonus. For example, she said, he will be able to help the EDC “create a digital footprint that can extend far beyond traditional print media like brochures or magazine ads, [and] for little to cost.”

Silliman, meanwhile, who Traversa described as having “an engaging and outgoing personality,” has a background in business management and currently works as director of human resources with Prudential Retirement in Hartford.

“I have had the opportunity to act as a project manager overseeing multi-million dollar projects, manage employees.... and solve [problems] for the interpersonal and organizational needs of large Fortune 500 companies,” Silliman wrote in her letter of intent, “including The Hartford Insurance Group, Comcast Corporation and Prudential.”

Silliman said she found herself frequently traveling outside of Marlborough to shop, meet friends or “satisfy [her] own health fitness goals,” which influenced her to express interest in joining the EDC to represent “the voice of a younger demographic in town.”

“I would love the opportunity to influence the development of our community to offer resi-

dents options closer to home as well as bring recognition to what features Marlborough already provides,” she said.

Shea agreed.

“I hope I can create more opportunities for our current and future residents to have that chance to prove their preparation and determination can turn into something great,” he said.

According to Traversa, “As Millennials, Jill and Jim represent a growing demographic in Marlborough that has been difficult to engage in public service,” and she is “thrilled they have accepted” the positions.

“I believe it’s very important to be a voice for the younger generation in our town government, as we’re likely a critical piece of the overall puzzle of our future,” Shea added.

Kacy, who like Silliman was appointed as an alternate, came highly recommended by the Republican Town Committee, bringing with her a strong set of business skills and a wealth of experience to the table, according to Traversa.

Kacy, who has had over 20 years of experience in event planning, sales, and accounting and marketing, has also been an active volunteer at organizations such as The Tomorrow

Fund for Children with Cancer, The Music Boosters, the PTA, and a few political campaigns.

From 2011 to 2014, Kacy worked as director of marketing and operations at The Oneida Holistic Health Center in town, and provided marketing and business consulting services to small business owners both in Marlborough and throughout the state.

“I’ll look forward to getting to know her better,” Traversa added with enthusiasm.

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During their Sept. 20 meeting, the Board of Selectmen also appointed Sarah Stock to the Parks and Recreation Commission as a full member, who Traversa said will be a “huge asset.”

“Besides her professional and academic success, Sarah has an incredible fun-loving nature that she shares in common with her husband and children,” the selectwoman added. “I can’t wait to see what new ideas she will bring to our recreational offerings.”

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The next Board of Selectmen meeting is Tuesday, Oct. 4, at 7 p.m. in Town Hall.

## McNair Resigns from Colchester Board of Finance

by Julianna Roche

After serving an active and often vocal role on Colchester town boards for nearly 15 years, James McNair has announced his resignation from the Board of Finance – a position he was elected to in 2013.

In a heartfelt letter of resignation (which was presented by Chairman



James McNair

Rob Tarlov at the finance board’s Sept. 21 meeting) McNair cited “recent changes in family obligations” as his reason for leaving. He expanded on that this week, stressing a desire to spend more time with his family.

“I have now served on the Planning and Zoning Commission, Board of Education and Board of Finance since 2001,” he wrote in his resignation letter. “I learned our citizens expect full dedication of time and passion. Unfortunately, I can no longer do that. I hope this gives all

enough time to find a replacement for the upcoming budget season.”

“I certainly will miss your counsel and our debating,” Tarlov said during the meeting, to which McNair replied he’d “be around.”

“That’s what I’m afraid of,” Tarlov warmly joked, resulting in everyone on the board bursting into laughter.

McNair, whose resignation takes effect Nov. 1, currently holds a Democratic seat on the board. At the meeting, First Selectman Art Shilosky thanked McNair for his service, and added that, per the town charter, his position will have to be filled by an elector of the same party.

McNair this week said the board has made a number of positive changes since joining it in 2013, including an improved yearly public budget survey, which provides a channel for residents to share their opinions on town and school priorities and the importance of a variety of municipal issues.

The previous budget surveys, he said, “asked what the public wants, but if you don’t attach a price tag to it, the results you get in my opinion, have no real value.” He added that the current surveys ask more relevant questions, which

has also increased participation from residents.

Additionally, McNair said while the board used to compare Colchester to towns like Waterford, it has since adopted an “independent analysis” policy, comparing it to “peer towns” instead, which are more similar to Colchester in terms of population and their “ability to pay.”

Lastly, McNair said the finance board has put more emphasis on strategic planning – across all of the boards.

“Due to the credit of Rob Tarlov, the Board of Finance has been gently nudging other boards to come out with five-year strategic plans, so we have a better idea of where we go in the future,” he said, adding the board put more emphasis on “long term thinking” in respect to finances throughout the community. For example, the Board of Education and the fire department have both already presented their plans.

In his letter of resignation, McNair also expressed his hope that the board has enough time to find a suitable replacement before budget season.

“In my opinion, it was better leaving now at the beginning of November so someone can

come on board and get their feet wet with the budget process up front and early enough,” he said.

McNair added that his replacement will need to have a solid understanding of “the numbers” and should also be able to take a balanced approach when making decisions.

“They’re going to have to have a tough skin,” he said. “Being on the Board of Finance is more stressful than it was in the past, because to come to a compromise, sometimes you have to keep everybody equally unhappy.”

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With McNair’s resignation, there is currently a Democrat vacancy on the Colchester Board of Finance. The term runs through November 2017, at which point the seat will be up for election. Colchester residents interested in interviewing for the vacancy should fill out a board/commission application and submit it to: Tricia Dean, Executive Assistant to the First Selectman, Town Hall, 127 Norwich Ave., Colchester, CT 06415.

The Board of Finance currently meets the first and third Wednesdays of each month at 7 p.m. at Town Hall. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, Oct. 5.

# Vandalized Hebron Skate Park to Be Repaired

by Geeta S. Sandberg

The Hebron Parks and Recreation Commission voted this week to repair the town's skate park after it was vandalized over the summer.

According to Town Manager Andrew Tierney, "Some kids were goofing around and it ended up catching fire." He added, "Unfortunately it had been going for a while and did quite a bit of damage."

The park has been closed since June 21, when the incident occurred.

At the commission's meeting Monday, resident Mike Guerriero shared his support for the park, as well as a petition urging the commission to rebuild the area that garnered 173 signatures.

Guerriero explained this week that, after learning the park had been closed, he tried to get a sense for what was happening by going through the commission's meeting minutes. He noticed that at the June 27 meeting, one of the commission members had suggested exploring other options in lieu of fixing the skate park.

Guerriero, who has two sons who enjoy using the facility, said he didn't want that to happen so he created an online petition for people to show their support.

"I set an original target of 100 signatures and within three weeks there were over 170 signatures and, in addition, over 60 comments that people wrote in support of rebuilding the skate park," he said.

Those comments included resident Mike Nicolo, who wrote, "I was in 7th grade when this park was built. Spent many summer days hanging out here. Both my kids learned to skate here. Now that they are in middle and high school it would be nice for them to see it freshened up or rebuilt. So maybe their kids will get to enjoy it."

Rene Lambert of Andover added, "My son grew up in that skate park. He wasn't a team sport kinda kid. That place was his outlet. We need to ensure that all of our town's youth have outlets to let loose and enjoy themselves. Not just group sports."

Several individuals also said they'd be willing to help with the repairs, including Seth Arzt of Windham (previously Hebron), who stated, "I would be willing to help with fixing the park. I had a lot to do with the initial construction and would like to see it have more use."

Parks and Recreation Director Rich Calarco shared this week the damage would cost over \$20,000 to fix, not including labor costs; \$25,500 in insurance money was expected.

Calarco added commission members had never said the park wasn't going to be repaired, but rather, they were doing their due diligence by ensuring there was still support for the skate park before moving forward.

Calarco said the members asked, "Do we really need it? Does the community really want it? Should we look to do something different?" So they had a whole bunch of stuff they discussed in previous meetings, then they said the best thing is, step one, to see if there really is interest to keep it, and if there is, then we'll move forward. And that's what happened Monday night."

He added, "It was just exactly what the commission wanted: good community support presenting that there was a big need for [the park]."

Tierney reiterated that point, saying, "I think the town would be on board [with rebuilding] since there was so much support and we're expected to get insurance monies. Since this happened I think the commission was saying, 'How much is it used? Is there a lot of support?' and apparently there is so we're going to work to



The Parks and Recreation Commission voted Monday to repair the town's skate park at Veterans Memorial Park, which has been closed since it was vandalized in June and set on fire.

replace it."

Guerriero added this week he was "ecstatic" with the outcome.

"It's just an outstanding result. We're very excited," he said, and called the skate park "a really unique feature for a town to have."

Guerriero added it was "another avenue for kids to be outdoors and get exercise and challenge themselves."

"Not every kid is going to play sports," he stated. "Not every kid is going to play an in-

strument. Not every kid is going to be into other types of activities. This is just another offering."

Guerriero concluded he was grateful to the Parks and Rec. Commission, Calarco, Tierney "and especially all of the people who signed the petition."

"I think it's just a great example of how a community can really come together," he said. "People really stepped up."

# EASTCONN Starting Adult Education Program in Hebron

by Geeta S. Sandberg

Beginning next week, the regional educational service center EASTCONN will offer an adult education program at RHAM that provides the opportunity for Hebron residents who didn't graduate high school to receive their diploma.

"We know there are lots of people out there who really could benefit and use the services that we have towards a high school diploma," Kristin Hempel, EASTCONN's associate director of adult programming shared this week.

Joining in the endeavor to bring those services to the area as a school counselor is Jessica Dapsis, the owner of Something Simple Café, who worked with EASTCONN prior to the café's opening.

Dapsis shared of her new role this week, "I'll be school counselor for that program, acting as a liaison between the RHAM site and the Willimantic [EASTCONN main site] and working with the students through there and working with the school counselors at RHAM."

Dapsis added EASTCONN already offers a program in conjunction with RHAM that allows students to take courses outside school hours in order to earn their diploma, "But what we found was it was mostly students that had attended RHAM that would then learn about the program through guidance counselors."

She added, "The program was more for RHAM students that were doing credit recovery, so they were trying to earn credits but were still earning a diploma from RHAM."

The new program, which gets underway next

Tuesday, Oct. 4, offers several options for earning credit to put towards a degree depending on an individual's learning style. Students will work mostly individually through online courses, with much of the work being done at home. They'll then come back for support during classroom time twice a week, at which point there may also be small group work "based again on individual needs," shared Dapsis. "I think that's one of the best things about the program: some people are great online, some in class."

Hempel emphasized one of the "wonderful" benefits of the program was that it serves different groups of people."

"Let's say you have high test anxiety; well, then maybe the [General Education Diploma] is not the right approach for you," Hempel shared. "But maybe you worked well in smaller class settings or doing projects or mini-lessons, and maybe you had gotten closer to the end of your high school career so you have a certain level of credits built up," which could be transferred and put towards an EASTCONN diploma.

In addition, while not fully rolled out in Hebron yet, Hempel said it's also possible to earn a National External Diploma, which is a portfolio-based approach.

This approach, Hempel said, "is based on competency for the adults with more life experience."

"It's probably not right for someone who recently dropped out of high school, but some-

one who's had experience managing a budget, holding down a job, taking care of a family or what have you," she explained. "You work through a series of real life type tasks and once you've shown mastery of those areas you get an EASTCONN diploma."

The new program in Hebron, although it gets underway next week, has open enrollment. It's open to anyone in town, no matter their age, level of education, or the length of time they've been out of school.

"We've had so many students who've come back later in age because they've gotten to a point in their career where they're not going to be able to get to that next level," Hempel stated. "So it opens up possibilities."

Since the program takes place during the evening, she added "it kind of blows the doors open in terms of what we can provide the community here, and part of it is because of the timeframe – people are often working during the day."

Hempel added offering the program in Hebron, with the connections Dapsis provides, means there's also the potential for childcare should someone need it.

"One of the things Jess brought to the table was a connection with AHM [Youth and Family Services] and looking at the potential of providing childcare through that partnership as well should the need arise," Hempel said. "So at this point we're not promising childcare, but we're inviting people to let us know if that's something that could make a difference for them and

if it is then we're going to go and pursue that."

Reaching out and letting EASTCONN know what your needs might be is something Hempel urged.

"I just really would like to encourage people to call us and ask about anything because we really can be flexible," she explained. "We're really about figuring out and designing a program that works for them, so the more that we know about what people are looking for and what their needs are, A. we can refer them if we can't do it, but B. we can really look at how we can be there with them in that journey."

Hempel concluded, "We've all had hard knocks, and people don't finish their high school degree for any number of reasons. So pick up the phone. Call us."

As for Dapsis, she shared she was looking forward to having the program get off to a good start and then grow.

"I really am a very firm believer in adult education," she said. "I worked in public schools before and there's a different group that you're working for here. So that's really what I hope; for the word to get out, for people to understand what it is. I've worked with some students who come back and they're embarrassed they haven't got their diploma but there's nothing to be embarrassed about. And just for people to know that there are options out there to take that next step."

To take that initial step and garner more information about the program, call Dapsis at 860-423-2591.

# East Hampton Finance Board Rankled Over New Police Dog

by Elizabeth Regan

East Hampton's new police dog has been caught in the crossfire in a turf war between the Board of Finance and the Town Council.

The 1-year-old German Shepherd, who was named Ardo back in his Czechoslovakian birthplace but ceremonially appointed "Ringer" when he arrived in East Hampton, was purchased with money from a town-wide fundraiser that brought in \$33,000 earlier this year.

Several members of the finance board said at their meeting last week that they were concerned the Town Council overstepped the town's budgeting boundaries by using donations to pay for a program that hadn't been officially voted on by the finance board or the Town Council.

Canine Officer Ardo is partnered with Officer John Wilson. The duo commenced training at the Connecticut State Police Training Academy on Sept. 8, according to East Hampton Police Chief Sean Cox. Ardo happens to be attending school alongside his brother, Blitz, who is a member of the Waterbury Police Department.

Part of the \$33,000 raised will help pay for expenses related to backfilling Wilson's position while he's away at the academy.

Cox said the department has been without a canine program for two decades.

At Tuesday's meeting of the Town Council, Board of Finance Republican Alannah Coshow spoke from the audience of citizens to say she and other finance board members were "flabbergasted" when they found out a dog had been purchased.

However, the topic has been brought up among councilors since at least the beginning of the last budget planning process. One of the listed program objectives in the 2016-17 budget proposed by Maniscalco in March was to "work with our community partners to establish a police canine program."

Councilor Melissa Engel said back in January that she supports efforts to secure a police canine to supplement the department's enforcement efforts, especially those involving drugs, because hiring staff of the two-legged variety is not something the town can afford.

Engel was instrumental in subsequent fundraising efforts as part of the volunteer "Belltown's K-9 Challenge" group. According to Town Council meeting minutes from the Feb. 23, Engel discussed the group's formation and outlined its goal of resurrecting the police canine program.

"By consensus of the council, it was agreed to proceed with the canine police program," meeting minutes stated. "The initial funding would be through the fundraiser but there would be yearly fees with funding needed through the budget process."

In April, the group hosted the high-profile fundraising auction that exceeded its \$30,000 goal.

Coshow was joined at their meeting last week by finance board Chairwoman Alison Tokarz and member Steve Ritchie, both Republicans, and Alan Hurst, a Democrat, in questioning whether the correct procedure was followed in bringing the canine program to town – and be-

moaning that there didn't seem like there was much they could do about it at his point.

"To me, it's almost as if they hired a new police officer, because a dog is a living thing. It's not like it's a car that you can say, 'okay, we can't afford to keep it anymore,'" Tokarz said.

So Hurst asked what happens if the finance board doesn't support the program, prompting Finance Director Jeff Jylkka to suggest that the town could try to sell the dog.

But the finance board would have to get past the town council first.

Town charter gives the Town Council ultimate authority in approving the annual budget before it goes to voters.

And while the finance board is charged with making recommendations to the council concerning all requests for additional appropriations, the council doesn't have to heed them.

In December, the council failed to take the finance board's advice to lease a ladder truck for the fire department.

In August, councilors voted to spend \$250,000 to determine the ultimate scope and cost of making Center School into a municipal hub before seeking a recommendation from the finance board. When the issue finally came before the finance board and received its endorsement, the council turned around and scrapped the project.

While Coshow acknowledged it's too late to prevent the canine program from happening, the group talked about how to ensure the finance board – and the taxpayers it represents – are included in decision-making going forward.

According to Ritchie, failure to act could set a bad precedent.

"Somebody decides a new program needs to be implemented, [and] it's like 'hey, we can do it without approval as long as we get the seed money donated,'" he said.

Jylkka suggested the finance board put together a policy to guide town officials in that kind of situation.

Several members asked that Cox be invited to a meeting to give a presentation on the program before the 2017-18 budget planning process begins in earnest.

At Tuesday's Town Council meeting, councilors were mostly silent on the issue despite public comment from people who heard about the finance board's misgivings in an article in the *Middletown Press*.

Former Finance Board Chairman Ted Turner was wearing a K9 Belltown Challenge T-shirt when he stood up to say he couldn't understand why anyone would question the police dog's presence in town at this point.

"I'm wondering what the problem is with the police dog," he said. "I think it's time to look at that dog and ask yourself, are we supporting the police department? Are we looking at TV and listening to radio about the [drug] problems in every town? Will this police dog help us? I think so. I think it's time we supported that police dog and that program and I do not understand why it even came up."

He said the resistance is an example of the kind of "stone wall that's built overnight" in East Hampton when some officials suddenly



The town's newest four-legged officer, Ardo, is attending the Connecticut State Police Training Academy with his partner, Officer John Wilson.

decide they're against something that other officials support.

Resident Richard Grady addressed councilors to talk about how dogs are uniquely qualified to perform search and rescue operations and to detect drugs, which he described as critically important amid the growing opioid crisis. He said the canine sense of smell and hearing, as well as their ability to see at dawn and dusk, far surpasses that of humans.

"Their senses are a great attribute [in support of] our police department. And not only just supporting the police department, but supporting our town. This is an epidemic. There's more and more problems all the time," he said.

Cox said Wednesday he has not been asked to address the finance board, despite a statement by Coshow at the council meeting that the chief had received and accepted such an invitation.

Now that fundraising efforts have secured start-up costs for the program, Cox estimated annual costs could amount to as much as \$14,000 annually based on worst-case scenario accounting.

The rough figure includes about \$1,000 for routine veterinary care through Portland Veterinary Hospital, \$1,000 for food, and a state-mandated stipend of \$2,200 to the handler for off-duty care of the dog, according to Cox.

Cox said the department is grateful to Pawsitive Solutions of East Hampton for donating all Ardo's grooming services.

The remaining costs are related to equipment

and training. Ardo and Wilson will spend a maximum of one shift per month, plus one week per year, at training once they graduate from the academy, Cox said. The majority of the expense comes from backfilling Wilson's position.

Ardo and Wilson are also slated to attend a cross-training in narcotics detection once they've mastered the basic skills, likely at the end of the year. Cox said it's too soon to tell how much that will cost.

"First, we need to see how much is left over after basic training. Then I think it would be a good idea to look to see what is available via grant funding. The next issue would be staffing levels at the time the training is offered. I think we will have a much better idea in December," he said.

Cox emphasized the canine program was a response to the town's inability to fund a human officer.

"We still do not staff a detective, a [school resource officer] or a second layer of administration to aid the chief: either a captain, a deputy chief or an administrative sergeant," Cox said with audible frustration. "What else are we to do to try to take a proactive step?"

He expressed dismay that the finance board would add a discussion about the canine program to the agenda at the beginning of the meeting without giving him a chance to attend and contribute.

"I think it's dangerous to run on assumptions," he said.

# RFPs Sought for Updating East Hampton Town Hall, Police Dept.

by Elizabeth Regan

Following the rise and fall of a plan to turn the century-old Center School into a municipal hub, the Town Council will seek new ideas for how to bring its outdated and undersized town hall and police department into the 21st century.

A rough outline of a Request for Proposals presented by Town Manager Michael Maniscalco at Tuesday's council meeting asked for submissions from "developers, firms and/or collaborative efforts" to design and build a town hall and police department. The two facilities can be built together or in different locations, according to the draft.

By consensus, the council agreed to move forward with the preparation of a full RFP. Maniscalco said the completed document would ultimately be "a heck of a lot thicker" than the double-sided page handed out to councilors.

"I didn't want to get too much further down the road until we went over this and got some general direction," he told councilors.

Maniscalco said he would have the full document ready as soon as possible, but could not commit to a date at the time.

There was no objection to the idea of moving forward with an RFP from those present. Councilor Ted Hintz Jr. was absent.

Councilor Melissa Engel said asking for bids is "the way to go" in figuring out the best loca-

tion and layout for a new town hall and police department.

"I'd like it to be our job to pick the physical location, and then the next committee that is formed that has anything to do with this project should be a building committee. I agree with that. The building committee needs to be happening right away. But I would like this council to select the site," she said.

Councilor Pete Brown agreed that putting out the RFP now is the only way he sees "of going forward with this project."

Councilor Kevin Reich said he doesn't have a problem with proceeding, but he wondered if it might be helpful to have a building committee take charge of the RFP process.

"There are many communities where the building committee comes up with the sites but it's the ultimate decision of the council to make the decision," Reich said.

Board of Finance member Dean Markham had spoken from the audience of citizens during the public comment period at the beginning of the meeting with a different idea.

Markham suggested the council select a site and establish a budget before inviting developers or engineering firms to bid on the project. Then, the council should "appoint an independent building committee who would have the authority and auspices to issue an RFP for a

project once all those parameters are set in place."

According to Markham, proceeding with an RFP before a site is selected is "putting the cart before the horse."

Maniscalco's draft RFP specifies a 27,797-square foot town hall and a 12,018-square foot police department. The figures are based on space needs outlined in the 2015 Friar Report.

The Farmington-based architectural, engineering and design firm of Friar Associates was hired in April of last year to assess the practicality and cost of using Center School as a municipal hub, among other options. The report was an update of the firm's comprehensive 2008 facilities evaluation.

Multiple committees have been formed and disbanded over the past two decades in the town's continuing effort to look at options for the town hall and police department.

The draft RFP specifies a minimum lot size of three acres and 60-100 parking spaces for the new town hall. The building would need to include offices for the town manager, town clerk, tax collector, assessor, finance, parks and recreation, youth and family services, and the departments of building and zoning.

Councilors said they would also like to know how much it would cost to add the Board of

Education to the town hall as well as the regional judge of probate and the Chatham Health Department.

Reich said the Board of Education would be better placed in the town hall instead of in its current 19th century structure at 94 Main St.

"I'd rather put that back on the tax rolls and have the Board of Education be incorporated in the town hall," he said.

The police department would require at least two acres with 27-45 parking spaces, according to the draft RFP.

Councilors said it would be ideal for proposed locations to have access to water, sewer and natural gas. They did not, however, want to limit their options by making it a requirement.

Among other requirements, bidders would have to provide project schematics, total price for land acquisition and construction, and a timeline. It also asks for a payment proposal specifying whether the project should be an outright purchase or a lease-to-buy arrangement.

Once an RFP is approved and issued, it would be open for 30 days. The town council would then award the project and, ultimately, send more detailed schematics to voters at referendum.



The grand opening of the new China Sea on 15 N. Main St. drew several area officials, including Hebron Town Manager Andy Tierney, First Selectwoman Amy Traversa, state Rep. Gayle Mulligan, state Sen. Cathy Osten and selectman Dick Shea. They're shown with, in front from left, China Sea owners Lin Fong Mong and Chen Bi Fang, their son Darren, and Economic Development Commission Chairman Joe Asklar.

## Officials Flock to Marlborough Restaurant Opening

by Julianna Roche

Earlier this week, about 35 Marlborough residents and area officials gathered for the long-awaited grand opening of the new China Sea on 15 N. Main St.

State Rep. Gayle Mulligan and state Sen. Cathy Osten also attended the ribbon-cutting ceremony, in addition to Hebron's Town Manager Andy Tierney.

The restaurant, which was originally at 1 S. Main St., moved to its current location and renovated the larger space, with the hope of drawing in more business – from Marlborough as well as nearby towns.

Economic Development Commission Chairman Joe Asklar kicked off the ceremony by introducing the family owners, Lin Fong Mong, Chen Bi Fang and their son, Darren.

"If you saw the development or even saw exactly what went on here – I mean, what a

great project," Asklar said. "It was done right, the shrubs look perfect, and the restaurant looks great."

The restaurant interior is decked out with grey brick walls and light brown wood-paneled floors, featuring both a dining area with tables, as well as a sushi bar with bar-top seating. According to the owners, patrons will see sushi offerings in addition to the Chinese dishes offered, come mid-October.

"The amount of work that these people put into here, they should be honored," Asklar concluded. "I drove by here I think at 10:30 or 11 o'clock at night, and they were in here with gloves washing the place down, at that time of night!"

He added to the family, "On behalf of the town of Marlborough and the EDC, welcome to your new building."

## Man Hits Pole, Flees Scene in Colchester

by Julianna Roche

State Police last week arrested a Moodus man after he allegedly crashed into a utility pole and fled the scene.

Shortly after 8 a.m. Sept. 23, police said, Zachary J. Davidson, 20, of 48 Great Hillwood Rd., Moodus, was traveling north on Route 149 in a BMW 335xi. As he approached the intersection of Starr Road, he made a slight right-hand turn, causing his car to drive up on the shoulder of the road and strike a mailbox and road sign. Davidson subsequently crossed over Starr Road and hit an Eversource utility pole before proceeding to drive the three miles back to his residence, police said.

Police said that, when they arrived on scene, they found a telephone cable box dislodged from the utility pole, but were unable to locate the vehicle that hit it, nor its operator.

Police said a witness to the accident stated that at approximately 8:15 a.m., he heard a crash and saw a dust cloud. After driving his own vehicle about one quarter mile north to-

wards the noise, he said he saw the BMW on the shoulder of the road.

According to police, the witness was able to describe the vehicle and Davidson, as well as provide them with a vehicle plate number. He also told police he noticed the vehicle had front end damage and there was a large bottle of prescription medicine sitting on the passenger seat.

Police eventually located Davidson at his residence, where they said he was unable to describe what happened due to what they described as his "intoxicated and inebriated" state. Police said they found front-end damage to the BMW, which was also covered in grass.

Davidson was subsequently arrested and charged with driving a motor vehicle under the influence of drugs/alcohol, evading responsibility, and making an improper right turn.

# Obituaries

## Colchester

### Richard Ballestrini Jr.

Richard "Dick" Ballestrini Jr., 86, of Colchester, formerly of Salem, passed away Wednesday, Sept. 21, at the Wm. W. Backus Hospital in Norwich. Born Dec. 28, 1929, in New London, he was the son of the late Richard and Lillian (Martini) Ballestrini.

Dick was a graduate of Buckley High School in New London, where he was an outstanding athlete. He went on to play baseball for the Brooklyn Dodgers minor league affiliate. Following a career-ending arm injury, he began his career at Electric Boat in Groton. Mr. Ballestrini joined the Korean War effort in 1951, serving in Germany with the Army.

Upon his honorable discharge in 1953, he returned to Electric Boat until his retirement in 1988 after 41 years of service. During his tenure, Dick's work on the *USS Nautilus*, the first nuclear submarine, was the highlight of his career. In his retirement, he enjoyed a quiet life at his home of 55 years in Salem and his greatest joy was found in spending time with his children and grandson before moving to Colchester.

He leaves three children, Debra, Rick and Glen; his grandson, Ehryn; four nieces, Lisa, Donna, Lori and Susan; a nephew, Brian; and numerous extended family and friends.

In addition to his parents, he was predeceased by his siblings, Geraldine, Frederick "Mick" and Tracy.

The family received guests Thursday, Sept. 29, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester, before chapel service with military honors that same day. Burial was private.

In lieu of flowers, donations in his memory may be made to the Wounded Warriors Project, P.O. Box 758517, Topeka, KS 66675 ([woundedwarriorproject.org](http://woundedwarriorproject.org)).

## Hebron

### Keith Brooks Rochette

Keith Brooks Rochette, 44, of Hebron, formerly of Coventry, passed away suddenly on the first day of fall, Thursday, Sept. 22, at home. Born in Windham, he was the son of Chet and Diane (Cienewicz) Rochette of Hebron.

Keith was a self-employed carpenter. He was also a talented wood carver and cabinet maker. He took great pride in his work, paying attention to every detail. Keith had strong ties to Redeemer Lutheran Church in Lebanon. He enjoyed fishing, dirt bike riding, four-wheeling, and playing his guitar. He had a great imagination and a contagious laugh.

He will be sadly missed, but always remembered by his loving parents; two daughters, Shanda Murphy and Kaitlyn Caplette; a son, James B. Rochette and James' mother, Sherry; two sisters, Lisa Rochette and Christine Cautivar; and numerous extended family and friends.

A memorial service will be held today, Sept. 30, at 5 p.m., with reception immediately following, at the Redeemer Lutheran Church, 321 Village Hill Rd., Lebanon.

In lieu of flowers, donations in his memory may be made to D.A.R.E., teaching children to stay off drugs ([dare.org](http://dare.org)).

The Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home of Colchester has been entrusted with care of these arrangements.

## East Hampton

### Gary Edwin Gustafson

Gary Edwin Gustafson, 62, of East Hampton, beloved husband of Christine (Smith) Gustafson, died Sunday, Sept. 15, at Hartford Hospital. Born Dec. 14, 1953, in New Britain, he was the son of Anastasia (Derkach) Taracani and the late Kenneth Gustafson. Gary had worked as a self-employed carpenter for most of his life.

Besides his mother and wife Christine, he is survived by his son, Erik Gustafson of Middletown; his daughter, Britta Gustafson of East Hampton; stepson, Mack Varnum of Vermont; stepdaughter, Elaine Vollmer of California; and a brother, Kenneth Gustafson of Kensington.

He was predeceased by a stepdaughter, Sarah Varnum.

Funeral services will be private at the convenience of the family.

To leave online condolences, visit [spencerfuneralhomeinc.com](http://spencerfuneralhomeinc.com).

## Amston

### Linda Forgue

Linda (Sieklucki) Forgue, formerly of Amston, passed away unexpectedly but peacefully in her sleep Sunday, Sept. 11, with her beloved dog, Popeye by her side.

Born Oct. 23, 1950, to Richard and Priscilla (McConville) Sieklucki, Linda grew up in Wethersfield, graduating from Wethersfield High School in 1968. She married in 1971 and moved to Amston Lake in 1974 where she raised her two children.

She worked as a secretary throughout her career at various businesses including the State of Connecticut Department of Transportation and McCullagh Leasing/GE Capital. After raising her children, she attended Manchester Community College where she earned Dean's List honors while pursuing her dream of being a court stenographer. Linda moved to Florida in 1991.

Family meant everything to Linda and she did everything she could to ensure her children had every advantage she could provide. Linda was most proud of her children's accomplishments. She was instrumental in the advice and guidance she provided her son while he established his business and she was incredibly proud of her daughter becoming an RN and earning her BSN while raising three wonderful children. She often said that her children were her best friends.

Linda loved nature, especially birds, flowers and trees. She could identify every bird that visited her bird feeder and especially loved hummingbirds. She had a green thumb and could get just about anything to grow and thrive. She spent many hours planting gardens and nurturing sticks into trees. There was no limit to her spirit of generosity and her kind and loving heart.

Predeceased by her parents, Linda leaves her beloved dog, Popeye; a son, Scott Forgue of Amston; a daughter, Christy Pollman and her husband Adam and three grandchildren, Brett, Riley and Kallie, all of Virginia Beach, Va. She also leaves four sisters, Brenda Sieklucki of Amston, Cindy O'Neill of Glastonbury, Billieann Covey of Waterford and Debbie Balsalmo of Torrington. In addition, she leaves her best friend, Portia Hopper of Orlando, Fla.

Private services will be at the convenience of the family with a celebration of her life at a future date.

Keeping with her love of dogs and honoring the various dogs she had rescued over the years, memorial donations made to Peace and Paws dog rescue, P.O. Box 1155, Hillsborough, NH 03244 or online at [peaceandpaws.com](http://peaceandpaws.com), or to a shelter of the donor's choice, would be much appreciated.

## Moodus

### Theodore Edward Shumbo Sr.

Theodore E. Shumbo Sr., 83, of Moodus, died Tuesday, Sept. 27, at Middlesex Hospital. He was born in Moodus, son of the late Stanley and Mary (Kurek) Shumbo.

Ted was a veteran of the Korean War, proudly serving with the U.S. Army. Prior to his retirement, he was the dairy manager at Finast Grocery in Deep River. He was an East Haddam Constable as well as an active member of the American Legion 156. Ted always enjoyed spending time with his fellow veterans at the American Legion and taking part in the activities there.

Ted is survived by his sons, Theodore Jr., and his wife Jennifer of East Hampton, Tom and his wife Dawn of Colchester, Joe and his partner Kim Pruitt of New Hartford, Walter of Colchester, Steven and his wife Kim of Plainville, Alan of Farmington; daughter, Lisa Shumbo Elliot of East Hampton, brother, Stephen and his wife Kay of Moodus, sister, Theresa Pulcini and her husband Paul of Deep River, several grandchildren and great-grandchildren, and nieces and nephews.

He was predeceased by his brothers, Frank, Roger, Edward, Paul, Stanley, Louis, John and Joseph as well as sisters, Agnes Spiwak, Catherine Koutkowski and Ann Miner.

Ted's family would like to thank the staff at Chestelm Health and Rehab for the wonderful care he received.

Funeral services will be held today, Sept. 30, at 11 a.m. at Biega Funeral Home, 3 Silver St. Middletown. Friends may gather prior to the service today from 10-11 a.m. at Biega Funeral Home. Burial with military honors will be held at the State Veterans Cemetery. Those who wish may send memorial contributions to Post 156 American Legion, 35 Neptune Ave, Moodus, CT 06469.

To share memories or express condolences online, visit [biegafuneralhome.com](http://biegafuneralhome.com).

## Andover

### Steven C. Freddo

Steven C. Freddo, 64, of Andover, beloved husband of Sharon Freddo, died peacefully Friday, Sept. 23, at St. Francis Hospital, surrounded by his family. Steve was born Sept. 13, 1952, in Manchester, the son of Eleanor (Morrison) Freddo and the late Joseph A. Freddo. He was a graduate of Bolton High School in 1970 and went on to graduate from Middlesex Community College.

Steve worked as an EMT for Manchester Ambulance, which sparked a career in emergency services. Steve went on to work as a constable with the Connecticut State Police, Troop K in Colchester and later served as a police officer in East Windsor and South Windsor. As an officer in South Windsor, Steve was the first coordinator of the Field Training Officer Program. He worked as an officer for several years before being promoted to agent and assigned to the investigations unit with the South Windsor Police Department.

Steve went on to work as an inspector at the Hartford Chief State's Attorney's office. He was awarded with the Hartford Police Department Unit Citation, as a result of initiating the "Shooting Team" to combat violent crimes in Hartford. He ultimately retired in December 2014. He was also a part of the Connecticut Fugitive Task Force, he taught the hunters safety course, and was a Connecticut State Police Firearms Instructor.

Steve enjoyed the outdoors, hunting, boating, and fishing with friends and family. He was a member of the Colchester Fish & Game Club, a member of the Hartford Elks Lodge B.P.O.E. 19, and the Port Charlotte Moose Lodge 2121. He also enjoyed music, playing the drums throughout his life. In the past, he found great enjoyment playing with the Connecticut State Police Pipes and Drums Band.

Steve was a loyal and proud family man who enjoyed spending time with his children and grandchildren. He was a second father to many. His legacy will live on as his family continues to keep up the tradition of family and food. In his retirement, he found solace in his Florida home; boating, fishing and relaxing by the pool. A kind, caring, loving and devoted husband, father, brother, grandfather and friend he will be greatly missed.

His family wishes to thank the nurses and staff at St. Francis Hospital for their kind and compassionate care, especially Jamie and Morgan.

Along with his wife Sharon of 43 years, and his mother Eleanor Freddo of Bolton, he leaves his daughters, Heather Modzelewski and her husband Thomas of Somers and Sgt. Christy Martinez and her husband SFC Ricky Martinez of Ft. Bragg, N.C.; his brother, Thomas Freddo and his wife Janice of Westport, Mass.; his beloved grandchildren whom he adored, Keegan, Izabella and Peyton; his sister-in-law, Linda Lagace and her husband Philip of Concord, Mass.; nieces and nephews, Catherine Freddo and her fiancé Joseph Skowronek of Baltimore, Md., Courtney Lagace of New York, N.Y., and Adam Lagace of South Hadley, Mass.; and his close friend, Howard Slater and his companion Mary Lou "Doc" Kenyon of South Windsor.

Along with his father, Joseph Freddo he was also predeceased by his nephew, Matthew Freddo.

His family will receive friends today, Sept. 30, from 3-7 p.m., at the Samsel & Carmon Funeral Home, 419 Buckland Rd., South Windsor. A Celebration of Life service will follow tonight at 7 p.m. at the funeral home. A picnic to commemorate Steve's life will take place Sunday, Oct. 2, at the Colchester Fish and Game Club, 16 Old Town Rd., Colchester, at noon. The family asks for all to come so we can share the memories we all built with Steve. Burial will be private at the request of his family.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund, 901 E. Street, NW, Suite 100, Washington, DC 20004-2025 and/or Green Beret Foundation, 14402 Blanco Rd., Suite 101, San Antonio, TX 78216.

Visit [carmonfuneralhome.com](http://carmonfuneralhome.com) for online condolences and guestbook.

## Colchester

### Donald H. Willey Sr.

Donald H. Willey Sr., 88, passed away Sunday, Sept. 25, at St. Francis Hospital in Hartford, surrounded by his family. Born Oct. 7, 1927 in Brooklyn, N.Y., Donald was the son of the late Albert and Anne (Mannix) Willey.

Don retired from the Connecticut Department of Transportation after 27 years. He was a lifelong Dodgers fan and worked at their Spring Training Camp in Vero Beach for 13 years after his retirement from the state. Don was exceptionally knowledgeable about early American coin silver, made donations to the Leffingwell (Inn) House Museum in Norwich and published articles on coin silver in well-known silver magazines. He also gave several presentations about coin silver at various historical societies throughout Connecticut and in Vero Beach.

Don is survived by his wife, Joyce Taylor Willey. Don and Joyce spent their winters in Vero Beach ballroom dancing, planning their yearly anniversary celebration and socializing with many close friends. They spent their summers in Coventry, enjoying the company of family members. Don and Joyce enjoyed much of the retirement traveling together by cruise ship to the Caribbean and throughout Europe, Asia and Africa.

Don led a very active life right up until his passing, enjoying life, family and friends. Whether going on his daily two mile walk each day, traveling throughout New England looking for coin silver; attending the Brimfield, Mass., Antique Flea Market twice each summer; browsing eBay daily to buy and sell coin silver; or visiting former neighbors near his property at Gardner Lake in Bozrah.... Don was always on the go.

In addition to his wife Joyce, he leaves three children, John Willey of Rutherford, N.J., Kathleen Willey of East Haddam and Donald Willey Jr. and his wife Helen of Uncasville; three grandchildren, Samantha Willey and William and Christy Henderson; Joyce's four children, four grandchildren and two great-grandchildren; and many extended family and friends.

He was predeceased by two brothers, Richard and Robert Willey.

The family will receive guests starting at 11 a.m. Saturday, Oct. 1, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester, before a chapel service at noon with Fr. Brian Romanowski officiating. Burial will be private in Maplewood Cemetery, Norwich, and a celebration of his life will also be observed in Vero Beach at a later date.

