



RIVEREAST

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Kaitlyn Watrous, left, and Stacey Lambert, with their dogs Kona, Sawyer and Casey, enjoyed the sixth annual Bark in the Park on the Colchester Town Green last weekend.

Every Dog Has Its Day

by Julianna Roche

It could only be described as a dog lover's dream on the Colchester Town Green Sunday – the parcel was filled with an endless assortment of labs, huskies, retrievers, poodles, and countless other canine breeds of varying sizes, each with its owner in tow, to celebrate the town's sixth annual Bark in the Park.

A warm day with mostly sunny skies beckoned pups and their parents outside, with the celebration kicking off at 10 a.m. – and by 10:15, it was difficult to tell if there were more dogs than humans in attendance.

According to Debi Marvin, chairwoman of both the Bark in the Park event and the Colchester Dog Park Committee, the annual event originally started out as an Easter egg hunt for pooches. But, with Easter falling on a different weekend every year, the weather could be less-than-ideal for frolicking in the park with Fido – there was sometimes even a heavy blanket of snow covering the green.

"There were some issues with having the Easter egg hunt still in the snow so it got bumped to the Sunday after Mother's Day," she explained, adding gleefully that next year's event is already set for May 20, 2018.

"It's a good opportunity to get everybody out of the house," she furthered, explaining that she and the planning committee always "hope for good weather like this year."

The chairwoman, who took over the dog park committee in 2015, said it was her then newly-adopted Australian Shepherd named Tag who originally inspired her to become involved with the group.

"Within half an hour of having this dog, I

realized he's smarter than me," she laughed, explaining that by 10 months of age, Tag was already trained as a pet therapy dog.

"I had to start doing something with him," Marvin furthered, adding that she is also the proud owner of three beloved Yorkshire Terriers.

In addition to bringing him to training classes, she explained that she started taking Tag to the Colchester Dog Park to run around, play with other dogs, and work off his excess energy. (Australian Shepherds are breeds well-known for their high level of intelligence and vigor.)

Marvin quickly fell in love with the dog park – "it's a great thing," she said – and soon joined the three-person Colchester Dog Park Committee. Before she knew it, she was heading the committee, which she emphasized is funded entirely by fundraisers and donations.

"I think our local businesses are perhaps cognizant of that," Marvin explained, adding that the dog park, as well as events such as Bark in the Park, are "not funded at all by taxpayer money."

"I think it's important, especially at this time of year [during budget season], to say that," she furthered.

Marvin also explained that Bark in the Park has grown immensely since its origination in 2012, not just by the number of owners and dogs attending, but also with the amount of volunteering vendors.

"This year we had 30 vendors, which is up 25 percent from last year," she explained, adding that all vendors must be either pet or food-

See Every Dog page 2

Proposed Animal Adoption Surcharge Causes Controversy

by Elizabeth Regan

The state lawmakers behind a bill to send a cut of animal adoption fees to the state call it a "surcharge."

Animal rescue advocates call it a "tax."

Any way you slice it, the legislation would require rescue organizations, shelters and municipal pounds to give five percent of every adoption fee to the state Department of Agriculture in support of the department's "Second Chance" large animal rehabilitation facility in Niantic for animals seized in animal cruelty cases.

The money would be deposited into the animal abuse cost recovery account, which state statute describes as a "separate, nonlapsing account within the General Fund."

The bill, which is awaiting a vote in the state Senate, was introduced by state Sen. Craig Miner, R-Litchfield. Other bills he introduced this year would authorize bear and dove hunting in the state and would designate May 1 as Purebred Dog Day.

The bill is co-sponsored by state Rep. Melissa Ziobron, R-East Haddam – though she said Wednesday she's no longer actively pushing the legislation, due to opposition from animal advocates.

A previous version of the bill allocated half the proceeds to the Department of Revenue Services, which would be responsible for allo-

cating the other half to the agriculture department. The current substitute bill emerged from the Appropriations Committee on May 16 to direct all funds to the agriculture department.

Opponents of the legislation, including the Connecticut Humane Society and the local rescue group Protectors of Animals, decried the proposal as a tax on saving the lives of homeless animals.

They also expressed skepticism the fee would ultimately be used for its stated purpose.

"Special funds have been raided in the past, and now the plan is to do it again to pay for 2017's deficit," the Connecticut Humane Society said in an action alert disseminated last week.

Jody Macrina, board president of the local rescue group Protectors of Animals, said the proposal would cost her nonprofit organization roughly \$5,000-\$6,000 based on last year's adoption figures. Volunteers found homes for 630 cats and 82 dogs in 2016, she said.

Adoption donations ranging from \$125-\$375 already fail to cover the cost of food, veterinary care, and rehabilitation at the group's East Hartford and East Hampton facilities, according to Macrina.

Macrina, of Hebron, said the organization will not be able to rescue as many animals if it has to pay thousands of dollars to the state.

"I'd like to know who's going to step up and take up those animals that I can't now," she said. "I'd like to know who's going to fill that void."

Ziobron used a similar argument, but from a different perspective, when reached over the phone Wednesday. She described the Second Chance facility as an underfunded but important resource.

"Next time we have a large neglect case in the state, who's going to pay for that?" Ziobron asked.

Ziobron said she co-sponsored the bill after becoming intimately involved with the Second Chance facility following a high-profile animal cruelty case in East Hampton last year.

A Department of Agriculture investigation into Thomas and Melanie Olajos' Daniel Street farm led to the state seizure of 32 horses, two dogs, 78 chickens and 19 rabbits. The horses were treated at the state's Second Chance facility and sold at auction, according to Ziobron.

The Office of Legislative Research describes the Second Chance large animal rehabilitation program, housed at the York Correctional Institution, as a collaboration between the agriculture department and the Department of Correction. Inmates work with agency staff members to care for animals seized by the state as a result of animal abuse and neglect investigations. The animals are then put up for adop-

tion.

Ziobron helped raise almost \$20,000 in donations for the large animal rehabilitation program when she saw how expensive it was going to be for the agriculture department to nurse all those horses back to health.

While the state was able to recoup most of the rehabilitation costs by selling the pedigreed horses, Ziobron said most animals don't bring in enough money to cover costs.

"If not for that auction, that account would have no money in it," she said. "The idea is to be able to supplement that fund so we could take care of future abused or neglected animals and not have to scramble as was the case in the horses from East Hampton."

Department of Agriculture Spokesman George Krivda said the department supports the bill – but he acknowledged there may be other priorities that come first.

If the bill were to pass, he said it was above his pay grade to comment on the likelihood that the adoption surcharge fees would remain in the animal abuse cost recovery account or be used for something else altogether.

"I'm reasonably certain it wouldn't be taken for a frivolous reason," he said.

Department of Agriculture Commissioner

See Surcharge page 2



Dogs and their owners partake in Bark in the Park's annual Easter egg hunt.

Every Dog cont. from Front Page

related, unless they are event sponsors.

For example, just a few of the vendors this year included Pet Wants, Poppyseed, Connecticut Humane Society, Duchess Treats, The Paw Print, Black Dog Company, Paugwonk's Obedience, and Pet Valu.

Marvin furthered that the event was also only made possible by sponsorships from local businesses, which included Dime Bank and Renewal by Anderson, among many others.

By 11 a.m. on Sunday, a fleet of dogs and owners had lined up for an egg hunt – with a sundry of pale pink, blue and yellow Easter eggs scattered about in a fenced-off patch of grass. And inside each egg was a dog treat, coupon for Mackey's in Colchester, or other "little tokens that could be redeemed for certain prizes,"

Marvin explained.

To acquire the eggs, the dogs "have to touch them with their nose first" – which was seemingly not a problem for the ground-sniffers.

A second hunt was planned for noon, but Marvin said the committee scrapped it, ultimately deciding to let owners with dogs "who may not do so well with others" go at their own pace by themselves, and not in a race with other pooches.

"We're still experimenting, but we want to get the most people involved [while] keeping it fair for everyone," she said. "This is exactly the kind of event to get people out, socializing, and it's not just about the dogs, but it's about the people too."

Surcharge cont. from Front Page

Steven K. Reviczky told the legislature's environment committee in February that the Second Chance barn opened in 2003 to care for large animals removed from their owners' custody in abuse cases. He cited the Niantic facility as a way to provide consistency, manpower and oversight for a program that had previously relied on a network of volunteers to house the animals throughout the state.

Krivda said the facility is funded by the agriculture department budget, sale of rehabilitated animals, donations from the public and fines imposed by the court system in animal cruelty cases.

While Macrina and others said they support the large animal rehabilitation program, they said it should not be carried on the backs of smaller, nonprofit rescue organizations.

The Connecticut Humane Society alert urged residents to contact their legislators to oppose the bill.

"The state wants to tax nonprofits and, in turn, you, the rescuer, for opening your heart and home to sick, abandoned and homeless animals," the group said in its legislative alert. "There should be no obstacles put in the way of someone who wants to adopt/rescue an animal."

Annie Hornish, Connecticut Senior State Director of The Humane Society of the United States, posted on her Facebook page that the surcharge should be directed toward the dozen pet shops still selling commercially-bred dogs and cats in the state as a "sin tax for their part in enabling the cruel puppy mill industry to exist."

She noted a majority of pet shops in Connecticut, including big box retailers, now partner with rescue groups when offering animals for sale in their stores.

Ziobron said the bill doesn't address commercial breeders because they already pay sales tax.

Instead, she said she thought animal advocates would be a good match when it comes to supporting the large animal rehabilitation facility.

Now that she has begun hearing from opponents to the legislation, Ziobron said she is not planning "to push that bill this year." But she said she tells them the Second Chance program needs support from somewhere.

"Have a fundraiser. Make a donation. Do something," she said. "I don't think you can have it both ways."

However, those like Macrina argue small rescue operations work hard to manage their own budgets – and the state should, too.

"Since I have to make my budget every year based on donations only, I certainly think something of that size that is supported by the state should be able to find a way to make their program work," she said.

She suggested expanding efforts within the court system to impose a \$250 fine in animal abuse cases that could be put toward the Second Chance facility.

Judges already have the ability to impose such fines, but agriculture department spokesman Steven Jensen estimated they only go toward the large animal rehabilitation program about once or twice a year.

Macrina called the bill "unconscionable" as she lamented its potential effect on organizations that are cleaning up the streets of stray animals at no cost to taxpayers.

"To me, you're getting all of our efforts and all of our work for nothing, and now you're going to charge us for that," she said.

Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

It'll be interesting to see how next week's RHAM budget vote goes.

The budget, you may recall, struck out at referendum earlier this month. The typical response by a town or school board, when something like that happens, is to lower the budget, if only by a little bit, in the hopes it will pass at the next referendum. That didn't happen this time. Rather, the RHAM board actually adopted a slightly *higher* budget than the one that failed and sent it back to referendum. Voters in the three towns will get to weigh on it at the ballot box next Wednesday.

I'm sure board members have their reasons for not cutting the spending proposal any further. And I'm not here to pass judgment on whether they did the right thing. I'm just here to say – they're playing a dangerous game.

Years ago, during my reporter life, I was covering RHAM when the school board tried to pass a 2003-04 budget. The proposal failed at referendum. The board kept trying, and the budget kept failing. After one of the failed votes – it was fairly early on in the process, if I recall – the board decided to send to the next referendum the exact same budget. The reasoning of the board members was that people were on vacation.

Wrong answer.

That seemed to incense the voters, and in fact the budget failed by an even greater margin than it had before. Several months would pass before voters finally approved a RHAM budget – on the 13th referendum.

Now, I know that budget and this budget are apples and oranges. There were different issues to contend with – and a big change is that the budget back in the halcyon days of the mid-2000s didn't face nearly the hurdles from the state that this year's does.

That being said, though, a look at the letters to the editor in this week's *Rivereast* shows that, while there are some in favor of the spending proposal, there are others very much opposed to it – and seem annoyed, to put it mildly, that the school board didn't reduce the budget any after it failed. It's an awfully similar reaction to what I saw some 14 years ago.

So, like I said, it'll be interesting to see how next week's vote goes. I can't begin to predict how it will go – but if it fails, I have to say I won't be surprised. It could be a long summer for the RHAM board. Hopefully not 13 referendums long.

Those who read the *Rivereast* cover to cover each week know that just about every weekend one or more of the towns in the area is home to a delightful-sounding meal, be it a church supper or a pancake breakfast or what have you. And last week, a notice floated across my desk for a terrific-sounding Ukrainian eats coming up in Colchester next month.

The Colchester Ukrainian Festival will take place Sunday, June 11, from noon-7 p.m. on the grounds of St. Mary Ukrainian Catholic Church, 178 Linwood Ave. All are invited.

There will be free face-painting for kids, as well as dancing to music by the Ukrainian band Bratya z Prykarpatya. And – if you're like me and decisions to go to such events are largely governed by your stomach – there will be plenty of Ukrainian food specialties: pierogis, stuffed cabbage, kielbasa, sauerkraut, borscht and more.

It sounds like a delightful afternoon. For more information, call St. Mary Church at

860-537-0011.

Speaking of area food events, each week our sister paper, *The Glastonbury Citizen*, includes in its community calendar section a sampling of special events taking place in the *Rivereast* area, for the "regional" section of the calendar. It very much is just a sampling; the paper simply doesn't have space for all the event listings we include – after all, Glastonbury listings obviously take precedence – so some editorial discretion has to be used.

Some of the things that get in most often are the meals – the church potlucks or Boy Scout spaghetti suppers and the like. And apparently, it's a big hit.

The Glastonbury-based mother of one of the *Citizen* employees went to the lasagna supper at St. Peter's Church in Hebron last weekend. And she told him there were actually more Glastonbury people there than Hebron folk!

It's easy to see why so many Glastonburians would head over to the *Rivereast* towns. These church and Scout dinners and such are often tremendous deals. You can get a lot of food for really not a lot of money. On top of that, you can enjoy good company and know the money is going to a good cause – not simply to the profit margin of some chain eatery.

Also, there isn't the same volume of community meals in Glastonbury as there is in the *Rivereast* towns. So people tend to come on over to Portland, or to Hebron, and grab some homemade community eats.

Speaking of the *Citizen*, its editor, Jim Hallas – who's also the *Rivereast* publisher – has an "Observations & Ruminations"-type column of his own. One of the items he recently offered was an exchange taken from the old *Hollywood Squares* game show. As that's the kind of '70s pop culture that's right up my alley, I couldn't resist sharing some other *Hollywood Squares* moments I found online (be warned, one of the things that made *Hollywood Squares* great is many of the responses weren't exactly G-rated):

Q: If you're going to make a parachute jump, you should be at least how high?

A: Charley Weaver: Three days of steady drinking should do it.

Q: If you were pregnant for two years, what would you give birth to?

A: Paul Lynde: Whatever it is, it would never be afraid of the dark.

Q: According to *Cosmo*, if you meet a stranger at a party and you think he's really attractive, is it OK to come out directly and ask him if he's married?

A: Rose Marie: No, wait until morning.

Q: When you pat a dog on its head he will usually wag his tail. What will a goose do?

A: Paul Lynde: Make him bark.

Q: When a couple have a baby, who is responsible for its sex?

A: Charley Weaver: I'll lend him the car. The rest is up to him.

Q: Do female frogs croak?

A: Paul Lynde: If you hold their little heads under water long enough.

See you next week.

RHAM Music Department Receives National Recognition

by Geeta S. Sandberg

The sound of music at RHAM has recently led to national recognition by the NAMM Foundation for its “outstanding commitment to music education.”

RHAM joins 4 percent of districts across the nation who received the Best Communities for Music Education designation this year from the foundation, which is a nonprofit supported in part by the National Association of Music Merchants, whose mission is to advance “active participation in music making across the lifespan by supporting scientific research, philanthropic giving and public service programs,” according to the website nammfoundation.org.

The website furthers the award recognizes “outstanding efforts by teachers, administrators, parents, students and community leaders who have made music education part of the curriculum. Designations are made to districts and schools that demonstrate an exceptionally high

commitment and access to music education. These districts and schools set the bar in offering students access to comprehensive music education.”

RHAM was one of 527 districts to be honored with the award and in order to qualify, the release explains the district had to answer detailed questions about funding, graduation requirements, music class participation, instruction time, facilities, support for the music program, and community music-making programs – all of which was verified by school officials and reviewed by the The Music Institute at the University of Kansas.

High School Principal Scott Leslie said of the district’s program that it “excels at creating a vibrant community of student musicians and artists. Creating a home for creative student musicians has had a positive impact on the entire RHAM community. For many community

members, their positive impression of RHAM is based upon their attendance at one of our amazing RHAM musical performances or shows.”

He furthered, “Receiving this recognition provides us with an additional opportunity to share our success with the entire RHAM community.”

The release adds the award acknowledges RHAM “is leading the way with music learning opportunities as outlined in the new federal education legislation, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).”

That act, which was signed into law in December 2015 and is awaiting state implementation, in part designates “music and the arts as important elements of well-rounded education for all students.”

The release concludes the passing of ESSA and the district’s recognition “bring attention

to the importance of keeping music education part of curriculum offerings and available to all students. It also highlights music’s vital role in students’ overall success in school and the personal benefits of making music.”

Some of those benefits were shared by RHAM senior and musician Paul Tamburro, who wrote, “Music teaches you to find enjoyment in your own personal creativity, which you might not otherwise explore. It really teaches you a lot of life skills outside of music such as the ability to interact with others, living and adapting to the moment, being flexible, patience, and the value of hard work.”

Tamburro concluded, “Music is a language that allows you to interact with other cultures, which brings people together. Humans are creative in nature and music is essential in developing that creativity.”

New Hebron Public Works Building Could Be Municipal Hub

by Geeta S. Sandberg

The Board of Selectmen last week was provided with an update on the ongoing planning process for a new public works facility, and learned about the most viable site for a new building.

The new facility, the selectmen learned, could eventually turn into a larger-scale municipal hub as well.

The town has been working for several years now to try to decide what to do with the existing public works facility and how to replace it. Public Works Director Kevin Kelly explained during the May 18 meeting the Public Building Committee had been working “back and forth over the years” with ideas, and had initially looked at property at Burnt Hill Park as a possible location but received “a lot of negative feedback.”

As a result, a couple of other properties were examined that ended up having wetlands issues, he shared.

Money was then received in 2015 to explore the department’s existing location, but it was determined there was not enough space; to make it work, bordering property would need to be purchased from Eversource “and the price to do it all on that property was too expensive,” Kelly said. “So that’s when we decided to look at the idea of a municipal campus in the center of town.”

Town Engineer Tom Fenton added at the meeting, “All those factors made us aware we needed to look at other options and discussion of the Horton parcel in the center of town came up.”

The “Horton parcel” Fenton is referring to is a 130-acre mixed-use economic development area in the town center formally known as the

Village Green District.

Fenton furthered, “We’re thinking about this first for a public works site but in the bigger plan, a long-term municipal complex.”

That complex could eventually incorporate a park area for outdoor events, connections to existing trails and bikeways, linking up with nearby open space parcels, and facilities such as a new town hall and firehouse; Town Planner Mike O’Leary shared the 2013 Market Study on the center of town suggested moving Fire Company No. 1 off Main Street, and in the town’s Plan of Conservation and Development, discussion is included on the eventual replacement of the town hall.

O’Leary added “on the very first go-around” the Public Building Committee mentioned the Horton property as a potential because it was centrally located, and going in from Kinney Road – which is what the plan would be – would provide a buffer from surrounding properties.

So “it checked off an awful lot of problems” but O’Leary said he didn’t initially think the property was a good fit since the town was trying to promote the Village Green District to private developers.

“The Horton property made some sense, but not as a Public Works site – but the idea of a municipal mix site, that started to make sense,” he stated. “This solves the land issue for public facilities for the next couple of generations.”

But the first phase of that, if the plan were to proceed, centers around Public Works and would include extending the available utilities and bringing access in from Kinney Road, and constructing a main building with an office and a garage, an outside shed and a separate cold storage building as well as parking and room

to maneuver the trucks.

Preliminary cost estimates put the project around \$7.5 million, compared to around \$9 million if the plan were to try to rework the existing Public Works’ site instead.

“So there’s a little bit of an advantage there,” Fenton stated. “The other thing to consider is some of the improvements are not unique to Public Works; the access drive and extending utilities would be to the benefit of the long term plan.”

And now that a preferred location has been honed in on, the committee is looking to move to the next step which requires approximately \$30,000 to create a conceptual site plan with enough detail to generate development costs as well as “renderings of buildings and various elevations so the public can see what the project looks like,” O’Leary explained.

“So this is what we need to take the project and go forward,” he added. “I think it all makes sense when you look at the big picture.”

Town Manager Andrew Tierney explained the debt from several projects is due to “come off the books” soon, and as that happens “we would bond a project of this size and pay it back over time.”

The selectmen took no action on appropriating funds to move forward with the project, but the topic is on the agenda for next month’s meeting.

* * *

Also related to the Village Green District, an update was provided last week on Colebrook Village, the senior living community currently under construction on John E. Horton Boulevard.

The update was given by Executive Director Pamela Atwood who shared, “We’re very excited to be at this next phase” which includes having a sales office located at 105 Main St. that provides “great visibility for the community since the property is set back.”

Regarding the facility’s construction she said “they dropped the first slab on the foundation that will be where the independent living side of the property is” May 12, and one of two elevator shafts is up.

She added the construction company that’s being used has “a very, very good track record of being close to their target date for completion” and that date is April 1, 2018.

The facility will offer a mix of independent living, assisted living, and memory support units and will be “a part of the community but also a community in and of itself” that offers amenities such as a beauty salon, fitness center, chapel, pub, and movie theater.

Colebrook is also expected to bring “a significant number of jobs” Atwood shared. “That’s one of the things I’m most excited about.”

Those jobs will range and include both full-time and part-time positions for service staff, personal care staff and maintenance staff.

“We won’t need them all fully staffed when we first start so at the ramp up of that I’m not really sure what we’ll need to fill,” she explained, “but it will probably be several hundred jobs.”

* * *

The next regular Board of Selectmen meeting is scheduled for Thursday, June 1, at 7:30 p.m., in the Town Office Building, 15 Gilead St.

PHS Students Plant Flags for Memorial Day

by Elizabeth Regan

“Line them up straight.”

The directive came from a member of the Portland High School Student Senate as the group made sure 65 American flags were placed carefully on the grass circle in front of the secondary school complex to represent each service member from Connecticut lost since 2001.

It’s the fourth year students have put the flags in the ground to commemorate Memorial Day.

Haley Turecek, a senior and vice president of the Student Senate, said the tradition is a meaningful one for the students and the wider community.

“I think it’s important because it’s right in front of the school so everyone that pulls up here, they’re able to see the flags and it draws attention to the service,” Turecek said.

It didn’t take long, either: A passerby making her way around the circle in an SUV slowed down to dole out the first compliment as the long row of starched flags waved in the same direction under skies that had recently turned from dark to bright.

“This looks so pretty! Oh my god, great job,” she said.

Student Senate member Colton Balskus, a senior, told the *Rivereast* the symbolism is important and multi-layered.

“We’re not just putting up flags; we’re putting up flags that resemble the number we lost,” he said.

Student Senate advisor Michelle Stotler said the tradition began with then-senior Andrew Donahue in 2014.

Donahue currently attends the United States

Military Academy at West Point, N.Y.

The torch was carried by Andrew’s sister, Sarah Donahue, who also served as Student Senate president before she graduated. Their youngest sister, Katherine, is now a freshman and a member of the group.

“It shows respect for the people who fight for our country and give us freedom,” Katherine said.

Stotler explained that students’ understanding of military service and sacrifice is enhanced throughout the school year, from 9/11 lessons to Veterans Day presentations to service projects involving care packages for service members and veterans.

“What they are learning is the difference between Memorial Day and Veterans Day, and honoring in different ways,” she said.

She described Wednesday’s event not just as a history lesson, but as a community event.

Stotler credited Student Senate leadership, including president Joy Vincenzo, with keeping the Memorial Day flag tradition aloft.

Ret. U.S. Army Lt. Col. Reg Farrington, the former chairman of the Portland Veterans Affairs Committee, was on hand Wednesday to watch students place the flags in front of their school.

A veteran of the Vietnam War and Korean War, Farrington said the students understand the significance of the Memorial Day holiday.

It’s a day that means a lot to him personally, he said.

“I had friends,” Farrington explained simply.

Farrington said he and his wife, Andrea, were joined by several students as they placed flags



Portland High School Student Senate members on Wednesday placed 65 flags in front of the school to commemorate military service members from Connecticut who lost their lives in Iraq and Afghanistan since 2001.

at Center Cemetery, the Swedish Cemetery, St. Mary’s Cemetery and the Trinity Church Cemetery over the past two weeks.

Both Farrington and Stotler noted many Portland High School students have gone on to serve in the military.

There is also a member of the high school staff who will be deployed this summer, according to Stotler. She acknowledged the teacher is her husband, Navy Reservist James Stotler.

“That hits home for many of the students,” she said.

East Hampton Council Sends \$44.26M Budget to Voters

by Elizabeth Regan

The Town Council Tuesday forwarded a \$44.26 million 2017-18 budget to voters – even as it distanced itself from the potential loss of millions of dollars in funding from the state.

The council set a town budget meeting for June 5; if approved at that meeting, a referendum would be held June 13.

The local budget proposal approved by the Board of Finance in April assumes the loss of \$1.6 million in state revenue as shown in Gov. Dannel P. Malloy’s budget plan released in February. Leading state lawmakers are currently in negotiations with Malloy to determine what the final budget will look like.

Councilors last month put on hold their budget vote until they had a better idea how much municipal aid the town could expect from the state. The move violated town ordinance requiring a budget referendum to be held by the second Monday in May.

When members of the council finally approved the finance board’s budget, they agreed to recommend that the finance board ignore the potential revenue loss when setting the mill rate – if the local budget passes before the state one does.

East Hampton’s proposed budget is an increase of 3.05 percent – or \$1.3 million – over the current budget. Voters will be asked to approve or reject two separate questions at referendum: one for a \$30.05 million education budget proposal and one for a \$14.21 million general government budget proposal, including debt and capital projects.

Based on expenses alone, the current 29.44 mill rate would increase by 1.29 mills.

That would mean sending out tax bills based on a 30.73 mill rate for now and then sending out a supplemental tax bill when the state budget is approved, according to the council’s recommendation.

But wait, there’s more.

A revised state budget proposal from Malloy

released this month was even more catastrophic to the town’s bottom line than his original proposal: It included a \$2.85 million decrease in funding to East Hampton, including to budget analysis from the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities.

The governor is also asking the town to take on a \$1.50 million share of the state’s contribution to teachers’ pension payments.

Though it is unknown if the cuts to state funding will ultimately be as grave as those in Malloy’s proposed budget, it’s widely expected that East Hampton will receive less than it receives currently.

If the revenue loss estimated by the finance board were passed onto the taxpayer, the mill rate would have to rise by 1.49 mills to make up the difference. The bill would be even more if the governor’s revised budget proposal were approved.

Councilor Kevin Reich cautioned his fellow members and about 75 people in the audience that the ultimate supplemental tax bill could be “staggering.”

Councilor Melissa Engel said including an estimated reduction in state funding in budget calculations only confuses the situation.

“I think it makes it look like we are responsible for outrageous spending, when we are not. We have worked really hard on this budget. Harder than any other year I can recall,” she said.

If and when a state budget is approved with reductions to local aid, Engel said it will be clear the supplemental bill to East Hampton taxpayers is the state’s fault.

“That next [tax] bill you’re getting, that didn’t come from us. It came from the state,” she said.

Only councilor Mark Philhower voted against sending the proposed local budget to voters with no further reductions. He said it is irresponsible to ignore a state budget deficit projected to come in at more than \$2 billion in

2018.

“We need to stop spending,” he said. “We need to look at other ways to cut this budget, to maintain the programs we have. We need to be proactive. There are things we can do if we work together. Just spending and increasing taxes is not the answer.”

The council’s decision to send the budget to voters “as is” came on the heels of staunch support from education supporters at numerous meetings.

They cited the newly bifurcated budget, approved as part of the recent charter revision, that gives taxpayers the chance to vote separately on the general government and education budgets.

Many people speaking during public comment periods at recent council meetings said they voted for bifurcation based on the belief that the education budget would not be cut by the Town Council before going to voters at the budget referendum.

On Monday, a joint meeting of the council, finance board and Board of Education ended with consensus that the council should not make any changes to the proposed budget before sending it to town meeting and then to referendum.

The idea of setting a mill rate without acknowledging the potential loss of state revenue was not broached during the tri-board conversation. Councilors Ted Hintz Jr., Josh Piteo, Philhower and Engel were absent from the joint meeting. It was later explained Engel was absent due to a family emergency.

During Tuesday’s council meeting, Engel acknowledged it is not the councilors’ role to set the mill rate. She suggested residents lobby the board of finance to carry out the council’s recommendation.

Board of Finance Chairman Marc Lambert, who was not at the council meeting, said Wednesday the finance board’s next meeting

will be held June 19.

“If the budgets pass, we’ll be setting the mill rate,” he said.

He emphasized that how they choose to do that is the “Board of Finance’s call.”

Lambert said he expects the final state budget to include reductions in education aid and that the state will probably assign municipalities responsibility for some portion of the Teachers’ Retirement System.

“I think you make your best estimate of what is going to happen and you set the mill rate based on that,” he said.

When the finance board approved its budget in April, it did not include any portion of Malloy’s request for East Hampton to put up \$1.6 million for teachers’ pensions. Members at the time thought it was likely the payment would end up being much lower, if the governor’s proposal to shift some of the responsibility for teachers’ pensions to towns was implemented at all.

Those who spoke at public comment period before this week’s council meeting unanimously endorsed sending the budget to voters as soon as possible.

If there’s no budget in place by July 1, Superintendent of Schools Paul K. Smith has said he would have to proceed “cautiously” in planning for the upcoming school year. That would mean laying off four teachers and one custodian and reducing supplies by \$50,000 to \$100,000.

Resident Steven Jones acknowledged the uncertainty in the state budget situation but said the town and schools still need to operate.

“The people of this town will understand what we’re voting for and that it may mean supplemental tax bills are coming. We will have to understand that. It is too important now to wait any longer for the vote. Too much is at stake,” Jones said.

Marlborough Zoning Commission to Vote on Big Y Site Plan

by Julianna Roche

The Planning Commission this week voted 2-2 against endorsing plans for the proposed Big Y Supermarket site – with board member Eric Kelly and alternate Larry Pryor as the two opposing votes.

Still, the proposal – which would locate the grocer in the center of town, near the former Marlborough Tavern – is headed to the Zoning Commission next week.

Chairwoman Wendy Nichols and member Brendon Monstream – neither of whom could be reached for comment – voted in support of the site plan, which proposes building the 55,000-square foot supermarket into the 3-5 East Hampton Rd. plaza owned by developer Allan Schwartz of Schwartz Realty.

First Selectwoman Amy Traversa said this week she “can’t believe” some Planning Commission members did not back the site plan. She emphasized however, it does not mean moving forward with the development is off the table – it “just makes it a little more difficult” to do so, as the opinions of Planning Commission members may influence those of Zoning Commission members.

On June 1, she explained, the Zoning Commission will hold a public hearing regarding the property, followed by a special meeting on June 8, when the commission will then vote on whether to approve Schwartz’s application.

The Planning Commission serves solely as an advisory board, recommending approval of proposed plans, the first selectwoman explained. Therefore, a vote by the Zoning Commission would render the Planning Commission’s vote moot.

“If people want this development in the center of town, they need to get off their chairs and show up at the public hearing,” she furthered, adding, “if this goes away, I cannot see any further development for a long, long time.”

Traversa also explained that roughly 32 percent of the vacant land in Marlborough is “open space,” while just 3 percent is available for commercial development.

“If we don’t maximize on that commercial space, then we’re doomed [as a town],” she

continued. “We need a grocery store. People have been whining for years [that] they want a grocery store and pharmacy.”

Traversa noted that the town has already spent roughly \$20 million developing a sewer system with running water in the center of town “to prepare us for exactly this kind of development.”

However, Pryor explained this week that a main reason he voted against supporting the plan was because he was told by Town Planner Peter Hughes – who also could not be reached for comment – that members of the Planning Commission would be charged with “taking on” duties previously covered by the Architectural Review Board. That board, which oversaw the aesthetics and design of development in town, was dissolved at the May 16 Board of Selectmen meeting.

“All of a sudden I was told I had new obligations which I can’t fulfill [because] I haven’t even looked at the stylebook [for the town center] so I don’t have the right questions to ask,” he said. He added he also felt like the commission was “not presented with a complete plan” as the project “as given to us is going to be changed down the road [anyway].”

When it was first announced that the town may be acquiring its own Big Y last June, its location was originally slated to be in the vacant property at 1 Independence Drive and Route 66. However, earlier this month, Schwartz – who said this week he wouldn’t comment on the project “until everything gets resolved” – presented a proposal and site plan to the Zoning Commission for Big Y to be built instead at the 3-5 East Hampton Rd. plaza, which he acquired in December 2015.

Big Y officials could not be reached to explain why the proposed location had been changed.

Schwartz Realty is well-known for its Glastonbury developments, such as Eric Town Square, a large Hebron Avenue plaza that has, among other tenants, Plan B Burger Bar; a plaza at 2450 Main St. that includes a Moe’s and Panera Bread; and a newer plaza at 41 Hebron Ave. that includes businesses such as Ben &



On June 1, the Zoning Commission will hold a public hearing to discuss site plans for a Big Y supermarket, which is proposed to be built at this plaza at 3-5 East Hampton Rd.

Jerry’s and Noodles and Co.

Last February, the Zoning Commission had approved a zone change for the 3-5 East Hampton Rd. property, upping the ground floor square footage from 40,000 square feet to 55,000 after Schwartz asked for an increase, stating at the time that most grocery store management will not work with anything below that size.

In his current proposal, which he presented to the Zoning Commission earlier this month, Schwartz said the Big Y will be built where the “red roof” building currently stands – a structure that has often drawn complaints from residents for being any eyesore. The current tenant of that building, U.S. Cleaners, would be relocated.

According to minutes from the May 4 meeting, Schwartz stated that the Taylor’d Touch building next to it will remain untouched, while part of the building that abuts Marlborough Tavern will need to be removed.

Also according to the site plan, access to the supermarket will be on Route 66 and there will

be an inlet and outlet location on South Main Street to allow for a safer entranceway. Furthermore, a decorative retaining wall would also be placed along South Main Street.

According to meeting minutes, Matt D’Amour, Big Y’s vice president of real estate and development, also explained that while all of the Big Y supermarket stores are “quite similar” with “shingled roofs [and] brick veneer,” landscaping would be used to “esthetically enhance” the building to make it more attractive. * * *

The zoning commission will hold a public hearing regarding the site plan for Big Y Thursday, June 1, at 7 p.m., at Town Hall.

“I’m grateful this entire project hasn’t been pulled,” Traversa said this week, adding she encourages residents to attend the public hearing to voice their opinions and concerns about the project. “Towns beg for this. Towns have tax incentive plans for this. ... [They] would give their right arms to have this opportunity.”

Marlborough Budget Voted Down on Round Two

by Julianna Roche

After the first proposed town budget failed to pass earlier this month, the Board of Finance decided to send a slightly lower proposal amounting to \$24.54 million – for a 6.66 percent tax increase – to a vote this week.

But the \$24,535,827 spending package still wasn’t satisfactory to the majority of residents who attended Wednesday night’s town meeting to vote, and the proposal failed for the second time by a 118-69 margin.

The town’s original proposal of \$24,584,816 – which amounted to a 6.96 percent tax increase was voted down by residents 139-45 on May 8.

The \$48,686 reduction to the second proposal stems from an updated assessment to the cost of sewer upgrades for Blish Park by engineers, which was initially estimated to cost \$64,475 and now stands at \$15,789.

In her presentation during the meeting Wednesday, First Selectwoman Amy Traversa explained that she “cannot even call it a budget” but rather “an expenditure plan” as the town still does not have complete information from the state regarding just how drastic cuts will be to municipal funding for the 2017-18 budget cycle.

“Best case scenario is we’re going to assume everything from the state stays just as it is right now,” she said. “It assumes that the budget is as presented, not taking into account any changes, any cuts, or future referendums” for RHAM’s budget.

Residents of Marlborough, Hebron and Andover will vote on the RHAM budget for the second time next Wednesday, May 31; Marlborough is responsible for 31.16 percent of whatever amount passes, based on the number of students from town who attend the two schools.

Included in the amount residents voted down Wednesday was \$8,993,811 for the RHAM levy – however that amount was actually based on the initial RHAM budget which failed at referendum May 2. Based on the current RHAM proposal the town is slated to be responsible for \$8,996,386.

Traversa added this week in the “worst case scenario” – which considers Gov. Dannel Malloy’s most recent proposed budget where Marlborough would see a \$2.22 million cut to town funding – residents would face a whopping 17.13 percent tax increase.

“I assure you these numbers are not made up,” she furthered.

To “fix that gap,” Traversa said the town has three options: to cut expenses, to increase taxes (though she noted many people “have commented they’re already at their limits”), or to raise revenues.

“We’re working on that as hard as possible,” the first selectwoman continued of finding ways to raise revenue. “That happens through making sure we’re as efficient as possible with [how we operate] across the board, but also bringing growth to the town of Marlborough.”

The original spending package proposed earlier this month had called for a 3.57 percent budget increase or \$847,748 over the current year’s budget. Included in that amount was \$4,940,050 for the town operations budget – an increase of 3.69 percent – and \$7,326,938 for the local board of education budget – an increase of 1.44 percent.

With the reduced cost for the Blish Park sewer upgrades, the new town operations budget stood at \$4,891,564, with a 3.37 percent increase to total expenditures.

As that budget failed to pass a second time however, residents will have the opportunity to vote for a third time on Wednesday, June 14. If the budget fails then, town meetings will continue to be called every three weeks until a budget is set and if no budget has passed by July 1, the Board of Selectmen will then be charged with setting the mill rate based on the most recent budget proposal.

In the meantime, Traversa said “depending on the size of cuts we get, we’re going to have to continue with a fiscally restrained approach toward funding [and] shared sacrifices to all population groups.”

She added, “We need to accept that everything has changed. There is no more ‘kick the can.’ We’re not going to come in at best case scenario and I’m praying we don’t come in at worst case scenario.” * * *

On Tuesday, May 30 at 7 p.m., the Board of Finance will hold a special meeting to discuss the budget. The next town meeting will take place Wednesday, June 14 at 7 p.m. in the Marlborough Elementary School cafeteria.

RHAM Budget Vote Next Week

by Geeta S. Sandberg

The \$28.87 million proposed RHAM Board of Education budget for 2017-18 heads back before voters for the second time next week, after failing at the initial referendum May 2 by a vote of 1,156-951.

The budget totals \$28,871,587 for an increase of \$838,228 or 2.99 percent. Coupled with the \$289,960 capital budget – which was approved May 2 – the total increase amounts to 4.02 percent over current year spending.

The operating budget heading before the voters is actually \$8,266 higher than the amount shot down at referendum, and schools superintendent Bob Siminski explained last week that increase stemmed from filling vacancies for a science teacher and a language arts teacher with candidates who were more advanced, or higher on the salary schedule, than their predecessors.

The school board decided at their meeting last week not to make any additional cuts to the spending package.

The RHAM budget is paid for with funds from the three sending towns – Hebron, Andover and Marlborough – and the amount each is responsible for is determined by the number of students from each that attend the two schools.

Hebron's levy is 54.33 percent and if the operating budget is approved next week, residents will be responsible for paying \$15,685,933; this is a \$4,491 increase over what the town would have been responsible for had the initial RHAM budget passed.

Marlborough, meanwhile, will be responsible for 31.16 percent or \$8,996,386 – an increase of \$2,576 over what they would have paid under the prior number – and Andover's share of 14.51 percent will amount to \$1,199 more for a \$4,189,267 total.

The largest portion of the budget – 53.6 percent – is made up of salaries, along with 12.3 percent for benefits. Included in that amount for next year is a 2.2 percent salary increase for administrators as per their contract, and 1 percent increase plus step for certified staff (“step” is a way of determining a teacher's salary based on factors such as years of experience and education level). Negotiations for non-certified staff are also underway.

Also related to staff and in response to declining enrollment, the proposal also includes

a reduction of five teachers, which will reduce the number of middle school teams from six to five. Middle school enrollment is expected to drop by 48 students next year to 466, while the number at the high school is expected to decrease by 15 to 1,008.

Next year's proposal also includes an anticipated increase in the cost of special education, from \$907,916 to \$1,814,231, while the cost for special education transportation is budgeted at \$647,212 – up from \$422,437 in the current year.

The school district also has to foot the tuition bill for students from the sending towns who choose to attend magnet or vocational agricultural schools instead of RHAM; 74 students are anticipated to attend those schools during the 2017-18 school year for a projected cost of \$380,173.

Garnering much attention this season is athletics, which is budgeted at \$684,604 and includes an increase of \$29,735 to fund additional coaches in the district; Siminski shared those funds would be used for a middle school cross country coach, two high school football coaches, and a full time strength and conditioning coach for all four playing seasons.

To help offset that amount, the RHAM Board of Education voted to increase the cost of Pay-to-Play for athletics by \$15 for both middle and high school students. The cost is now \$165 for the middle school and \$200 for the high school which, based on 537 anticipated athletes, is expected to result in an additional \$8,055 in revenue.

In total, around \$300,000 in local revenue is anticipated and based on last year's numbers, around \$356,000 in federal grants is also expected.

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The referendum will take place in each of the sending towns Wednesday, May 31. Voting occurs from 6 a.m.-8 p.m. in Hebron at Hebron Elementary School, 92 Church St.; in Marlborough at Elmer Thienes/Mary Hall Elementary School, 25 School Dr.; and at the Andover Town Hall, 17 School Rd.

Further information on the proposed RHAM budget is available online at reg8.k12.ct.us/under/BudgetInfo.

Portland Police News

5/15: Shaun Hill, 18, of 7 West Rd., East Hampton, was charged with possession of less than four ounces of marijuana, Portland Police said.

5/15: Daniel Doherty, 18, of 82 Comstock Trail, East Hampton, was charged with speeding, police said.

5/17: Lewis Nicholas, 23, of 36 Chatham Court, was charged with third-degree assault, second-degree breach of peace, and possession of less than four ounces of marijuana, police said.

5/17: Lukas Jope, 20, of 136 Bartlett Hill Rd., was charged with less than half an ounce of marijuana, and possession of drug paraphernalia, police said.

5/21: William Nunez, 23, of 12 Pine Terr., East Hampton, was charged with failure to respond to infraction and two counts of second-degree failure to appear, police said.

5/21: Emily Martone, 31, of 696 Main St., Middletown, was charged with sixth-degree larceny, police said.

Colchester Police News

5/10: Colchester Police said at approximately 3:08 p.m. they received a report of a burglary from a residence on Williams Road, where the alleged victim reported the suspects entered through a rear door and removed the televisions from the house. The suspects also stole miscellaneous collector coins and watches, police said, adding that the items were all loaded into a vehicle and driven from the scene. The case remains under investigation.

5/17: State Police said at approximately 1 a.m., the Dunkin Donuts located at 164 Linwood Ave. was broken into through a backdoor entrance and an unknown amount of money was taken from the building. Anyone with information regarding this event is asked to contact Troop K at 860-465-5400.

5/19: Colchester Police said Charles B. Scott, 34, of 147 Chestnut Hill Rd., was arrested and charged with disorderly conduct, third-degree assault, threatening, second-degree strangulation, and first-degree unlawful restraint.

Andover Police News

5/18: State Police said Michael A. Jaworski, 41, of 37 Lake Rd., was arrested and charged with third-degree criminal mischief, breach of peace: threatening and threatening.

Hebron Police News

5/18: State Police said at approximately 8:34 p.m., an untimely death occurred at a residence on Wall Street due to suspected natural causes.

5/20: State Police said Kimberly A. Loftus, 59, of 7 Ruby Rd., Marlborough, was arrested and charged with operating a motor vehicle under the influence of drugs/alcohol and failure to drive right.

East Hampton Police News

5/6: Lisa K. Magee-Corvo, 52, of 21 Oak St., Middletown, was arrested and charged with failure to drive right and driving under the influence, East Hampton Police said.

5/7: Kevin M. Lapoint, 46, of 287 House St., Glastonbury, was arrested and charged with failure to drive right, operating under suspension and driving under the influence, police said.

5/10: After an investigation into a car-vs.-pole crash on Hurd Park Road – in which Officer Ringer was deployed for evidence recovery – Taylor Magri, 18, of 12 Stagecoach Run, was arrested and charged with driving under the influence, failure to drive right, traveling too fast for conditions and possession of alcohol by a minor, police said.

5/15: Gabriel Lake, 39, of 513A Litchfield Ave., Rogers, was arrested and charged with risk of injury to a minor, police said.

Also, from May 8-14, officers responded to 12 medical calls, four motor vehicle crashes, seven alarms and made 19 traffic stops.

Marlborough Police News

5/18: State Police said at approximately 10:35 a.m. they received a report of a burglary at a resident on Wilhenger Drive. Police said entry was gained through an unlocked rear garage door and the suspect reportedly took a Mac laptop computer, a men's wallet containing IDs, numerous credit cards, \$500 in cash, a Verizon cell phone and charger, a Yamaha digital keyboard, a Dennon stereo receiver, a security camera, and a Comcast X1 cable box. The case remains under investigation and anyone with information is asked to contact Officer Julius Ransom at Troop K at 860-465-5400, extension 4095.

Obituaries

Portland

James Douglas Pease

James "Jim" Douglas Pease passed away unexpectedly Feb. 7, in the Kendall Regional Hospital in Miami, Fla. Jim was born June 1, 1948, in Middletown, the middle child of seven to Milton and Louise Pease.

He was raised in Portland and attended area schools. He maintained a close connection to the town and its people, despite escaping the cold of New England for the warmth of Key West in recent years. Her was inducted into the U.S. Army in 1969 and served two years as a field wireman and lineman, stationed in Colorado.

Jim was an avid bird watcher and could identify a lot of them by its song. It was his friend Larry who introduced him to the subject while they were still in high school and Jim passed it on to anyone that would listen including friends and family. Reassuring and enabling, whenever a call for help went out to him, Jim was there to assist. He was considered by some as a woodsman and carpenter, spending most of his life working in construction and helping with anyone's project while singing and humming as he worked.

Jim had won the battle with melanoma cancer just this past summer. His lifelong friend John Murphy, who shared a birthday with Him and they always celebrated it together, allowed him to stay at his home while traveling back and forth to the Miami hospital for his treatments.

Jim will be remembered as a loving brother, brother-in-law, uncle and friend.

Jim was predeceased by his parents, Milton E. Pease and Blanche Louise (Peterson) Pease, and two of his brothers, Stephen C. Pease and Milton E. Pease Jr.

He is survived by one brother, Wayne A. Pease of Portland, and three sisters, Judith P. McGinley and her husband Gerald J. McGinley Sr. of Portland, Sandra J. Pease of rocky Hill and Debra L. Pease of Middletown; two sisters-in-law, Rhonda Pease of Portland and Ann Pease of East Haddam; and 16 nieces and nephews.

Jim will be remembered in the 5 p.m. Mass at St. Mary Church, Portland, on Saturday, June 3, and an all-day celebration of Jim's life in the Pease residence at 43 Farrell Rd. in Portland.

East Hampton

Dorothy R. Galica

Dorothy "Dolly" R. Galica, 86, of East Hampton, died Saturday, May 20, at home, with her family by her side. Dolly was born Aug. 30, 1930, in Middletown, daughter of the late Reynold and Ethel Mae Coy. Dolly grew up in East Hampton. She graduated in the Class of 1948 along with the late Governor William (Bill) O'Neill.

Dolly is survived by her daughters, Cheryl (John) Zabiski of Portland, Elaine Smith of Meriden, Judy (Thomas Sr.) Flemke of East Hampton; her grandchildren, Robert Shackett, Tammy Perry, Tina (Matthew) Lanzi, Thomas (Marcy) Flemke Jr., Melissa (Orlando) Poventud, Kimberly (Michael) Caccamo, John (Amanda) Zabiski III; great-grandchildren, Patrick, Joshua, Kimberly, Katrina, Ashley, Talia, Madeline, Alexis, Ayana, Katelyn, Emma, Salem, Dale, Ethan, Natalie, Giovanni; Donovan, and one great-great grandchild Logan. She is also survived by her niece Kathleen Labbadia and nephews Dr. Lewis (Maureen) Labbadia and Carl Labbadia.

In addition to her parents, Dolly was predeceased by her sister Mildred Labbadia, and her two very special 4-legged "babies," Mischa and Buffy. Dolly also leaves several beloved Galica family members throughout the country.

Funeral services were held Thursday, May 25, at Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton. Calling hours were Wednesday, May 24. Spencer Funeral Home has care of the arrangements.

Special thanks to the staff of Middlesex Hospice, and Dr. Good, Dr. Kvam, Dr. Pace, and Dr. Tally. Also, ProHealth nurse Peggy.

Those who wish may send memorial contributions in Dolly's name to the Office of Development Shriners Hospitals for Children, 2900 Rocky Point Dr., Tampa FL 33607 or to Middlesex Hospital Hospice Unit, c/o Middlesex Hospital Dept. of Philanthropy, 55 Crescent St. Middletown, CT 06457.

On behalf of Dolly, her grandchildren would also like to offer a final "Tack så Mycket" to their mothers, Cherie and Judy, for the extra love and care they gave to Grammy in her final weeks at home.

To leave online condolences, visit spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.



Colchester

Troy David Wolf

Troy David Wolf, 54, of Farmington, formerly of Colchester, passed away at St. Francis Hospital and Medical Center in Hartford Thursday, May 18. Born in Hartford Nov. 12, 1962, he was a son of Naomi (Johnson) Wolf Otulak of Farmington and the late William J. Wolf, Jr.

Troy grew up in Colchester and graduated from Bacon Academy. He loved fishing, hunting and was an avid golf and Red Sox fan.

He leaves to mourn his loss his mother, Naomi, and stepfather, Joseph Otulak of Farmington; three children, Nathan, Joshua and Stephanie Wolf, all of Lebanon; a brother, William J. Wolf III of Colchester; three sisters, Alene LeVasseur of Franklin, Lynn Truta of Ft. Myers, Fla., and Cheryl White of Ledyard; two stepsisters, Laura and Janice Otulak; his former wife, Bertha Indelicati of Lebanon; and numerous extended family and friends.

Friends called Tuesday, May 23, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. The funeral liturgy was celebrated Wednesday, May 24, directly at St. Andrew Church, 128 Norwich Ave., Colchester. Burial was private.

Donations in his memory may be made to the University of Maryland Medical System Foundation, 110 S. Paca St., 9th Fl., Baltimore, MD 21201 (ummsfoundation.org) to help fund seizure research.

For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.



Colchester

Frank Cugno Jr.

Frank Cugno Jr., 82, of Colchester, formerly of New Britain, passed away at home Saturday, May 20. Born in New Britain Dec. 8, 1934, he was the son of the late Frank and Margaret Cugno.

Frank grew up in Wethersfield and served with the Army National Guard. He married his beloved wife Rosemarie Ferraro May 5, 1956. The couple raised their family in New Britain and moved to Colchester after they retired. Rosemarie predeceased Frank Oct. 6, 2015, after 59 years of marriage.

Frank retired several years ago, having a 34-year career with the State of Connecticut, retiring as a building superintendent. Frank loved fishing, league duck pin bowling and playing cards with friends at the Colchester Commons. He truly enjoyed making people laugh and smile, but most importantly, he will be remembered as a devoted and loving husband, father and grandfather.

He will be sadly missed but always remembered by his son and daughter-in-law, Darren and Dana Cugno of Colchester; two grandchildren, Nicholas and Mary; and numerous extended family and friends.

In addition to his wife, Rosemarie, he was predeceased by a son, David Cugno, and a sister, Carol Woodbury.

Calling hours were held Wednesday, May 24, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. The funeral followed immediately, at the funeral home. Burial was private in St. Mary Cemetery in New Britain.

For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.



Colchester

Vilma Rosemary Cardoza

Vilma Rosemary Cardoza, 90, of Brooklyn, formerly of Colchester and Rhode Island, passed away Sunday, May 21.

Ever-devoted to her family, she leaves her four children, Vincent Cardoza and his wife, Lori, Vicki Miller and her husband, Jim, Steven Cardoza and Susan Cardoza; five grandchildren, Nina, Justin, Ryan, Neil and Nicole; one great-grandson, Isaiah; several beloved nieces and nephews and many extended family members and friends.

She was born May 15, 1927, in New York City to the late Angelina (DeLuca) Oliver. In addition to her mother, she was predeceased by her two sisters, Sarina Ushkowitz and Lorraine Pearson Metz, with whom she was reunited in Heaven in her passing.

Vilma had raised her children in Hope Valley, R.I., and retired to Warwick, R.I., before moving to Connecticut in later years to be closer to family once again. A devout Catholic, she had been an active communicant of the local parish where she lived over the years. Vilma loved music and enjoyed singing as well as free-hand drawing.

The family will receive guests starting at 9:30 a.m. today, May 26, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester, before the celebration of the funeral liturgy at 11 a.m. at St. Andrew Church, 128 Norwich Ave., Colchester. Burial will be private in St. Mary Cemetery, New London.

For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.



East Hampton

Glenda Montgomery Peterson

Glenda Montgomery Peterson, 70, of East Hampton, passed away peacefully Monday, May 22. Glenda was born in Fort Fairfield, Maine, May 12, 1947, daughter of the late Herbert and Laura (Violet) Montgomery.

On Nov. 20, 1965, she married her sweetheart Earl Frederick Peterson; they were married 51 years.

One of Glenda's greatest pleasures was spending time with family and friends. She enjoyed vacations in Maine and trips to the casino. Glenda was a leader for many years with the Connecticut Girl Scouts. She was a member of the East Hampton Congregational Church for many years and taught Sunday school there as well.

Glenda is survived by her husband, Earl F. Peterson; her children, Jennifer Shumbo and husband Ted, Pamela Luchka and husband Mark, Eric Peterson and wife Laura; seven grandchildren, Lesley, Sarah, Austin, Addison, Natalie, Taylor and Gavin; and several nieces and nephews.

Friends called at the Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton, Thursday, May 25. A memorial service will be held today, May 26, at 11 a.m., in the funeral home, with the Rev. Beth Anderson officiating. Burial is private.

The family extends grateful thanks to the East Hampton Ambulance Association for their heartfelt support on many occasions.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to the East Hampton Ambulance Association, P.O. Box 144, East Hampton, CT 06424.

To leave online condolences, visit spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

Colchester

Martha J. Rhodes

Martha J. Rhodes, 69, of Colchester, beloved wife of James, passed away peacefully Saturday, May 20, surrounded by her loving family. Born July 7, 1947, in Hartford, she was the daughter of the late Norman Raymond and Kathryn (Danyaw) Raymond Bloedel.

Martha married the love of her life, James Rhodes on September, 28, 1968.

Mrs. Rhodes had worked as a payroll and accounts payable coordinator for the Town of Colchester for over 30 years, before her retirement. She was also an active member of the community and of the Colchester Arts Commission where she would organize the Summer Concerts on the Green.

Her most enjoyable times were when she was with her family and friends, who she so dearly loved. She was a devoted grandmother who never missed school concerts, graduations and sporting events. She cherished her time spent with her sister, Anne, shopping and getting their nails done. She loved to host the family Christmas party and spoil her grandchildren with gifts. She especially loved motorcycle rides, traveling and winters in Florida with her husband. She also enjoyed baking, playing cards, wine-tastings, walks with her friends, volunteering at the soup kitchen and Meals-on-Wheels, and had a special talent for baking and decorating wedding and birthday cakes.

Martha is survived by loving husband of 48 years, James; their four children, Deborah of Florence, S.C., David and his wife Julie of Andover, MaryAnne of Glastonbury and Michael and his wife Deanna of Marlborough; seven grandchildren, Bradleigh, Olivia, Patrick, Mia, Braeden, Cameron and Emma; six "grandpups"; two siblings and their spouses, Anne and Sherwood Kelly of Rocky Hill and John and Judy Raymond of Granby; and several nephews, nieces, extended family members and friends.

The family received guests Thursday, May 25, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. The memorial liturgy will be celebrated at 10:30 a.m. today, May 26, directly at St. Bridget of Kildare Church, 75 Moodus-Leesville Road, Moodus. Burial will follow in the State Veterans Cemetery, Middletown.

In lieu of flowers, donation in her memory may be made to the TVCCA (to benefit Meals-on-Wheels), 1 Sylvandale Rd., Jewett City, CT 06351 (tvcca.org/donate) or to the ASPCA, P.O. Box 96929, Washington, DC 20090-6929 (aspca.org).

The family wishes to extend their gratitude to the staff at Middlesex Hospital Critical Care Unit and Hospice Staff for their support in her final days.

For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.



East Hampton

Mary A. Galanto-Walsh

Mary A. Galanto-Walsh, 75, of East Hampton, wife of the late John Walsh, passed away Friday, May 5, at her home, surrounded by her family. She was born in Middletown, the daughter of the late Anthony J. Galanto Sr. and Sophie (Szweczyk) Galanto. Prior to her retirement, Mary was a psychiatric aide at Connecticut Valley Hospital.

She is survived by her daughter, Christine Slossberg and her husband Ari of East Hampton; her sisters, Janice Cotter of Cromwell, Suzanne Hamel of Portland, Linda Galanto of Cromwell and Cheryl Wright of Middletown; three grandchildren, Stefan, Shane and Morgan Slossberg; niece, Jennifer Hurta and her husband Robert; and grandniece, Katelyn Cotter. She was predeceased by two brothers, Anthony Galanto, Jr. and Joseph Galanto.

Funeral services were held Wednesday, May 10, at Biega Funeral Home, 3 Silver St., Middletown. Burial was in St. John's Cemetery, Middletown. Friends called at Biega Funeral Home Tuesday, May 9.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to CATALES, Inc., P.O. Box 901, Middletown, CT 06457.

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

Obituaries continued

Hebron

Paul Edward Jones

Paul Edward "Bud" Jones, 80, of Hebron, passed away early Wednesday morning, May 24, at home, with his beloved family by his side. Born in Scranton, Pa., on Sept. 24, 1936, he was a son of the late Paul and Emma (Washburn) Jones.



Bud married his teenage sweetheart and the love of his life, Connie Quinn, on Oct. 5, 1957. The couple shared nearly 60 years together, raising their loving family in the home they made together in Hebron. He was a proud veteran, having served in the U.S. Air Force as an airplane mechanic during the Vietnam War.

Bud retired several years ago after a career with Pratt & Whitney Aircraft as an inspector. He was an active member of his community, having volunteered for 45 years with the Hebron Fire Department and also serving for a time as a town constable. He was a member of the Gilead Congregational Church.

Bud enjoyed woodcarving and he was a motorcycle enthusiast. He loved going for "drives," all over New England with Connie. It was a pastime they truly enjoyed together. Most importantly, Bud will be remembered by his family as a devoted and loving husband, father and grandfather, and great-grandfather, with a wonderfully unique sense of humor.

He will be sadly missed but always remembered by his beloved wife Connie; three daughters, Lin and husband Greg Belliveau of Amston, Teri Jones-Lemery of Coventry, R.I., Cathy and husband Chris Huestis of Andover; a brother, Bill Jones of Colorado; a sister, Elizabeth Buccino of Danbury; six grandchildren, Lindsey and Trevor Belliveau, Jake and Zach Lemery, Kyla and Kiera Huestis; a great-grandson, Bradley Lemery; and numerous extended family and friends.

In addition to his parents, he was predeceased by two daughters, Nancy and Sandy Jones.

Calling hours will be held Saturday, May 27, from 3-5 p.m., at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. A memorial service and celebration of life will follow immediately at 5 p.m. at the funeral home. Burial will be private.

Donations in his memory may be made to the Hebron Volunteer Fire Department, P.O. Box 911, Hebron, CT 06248.

For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.