

RIVEREAST

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Memorial Day... Al Letendre, first vice commander of American Legion Post 54, salutes during Sunday's Memorial Day ceremonies in Colchester. For additional photos from the Memorial Day ceremonies in Colchester and other area towns, see facebook.com/RivereastNewsBulletin. Photo by Robert Ives

Turkish Dinner Celebrates Ramadan

by Julianna Roche

At dusk Wednesday, a melting pot of Marlborough Congregational Church members and members from the Turkish Cultural Center of Hartford gathered for the church's first-ever interfaith event – to celebrate Ramadan by sharing an Iftar feast of delicious Turkish food at sunset.

After posing for a group photo outside the church's white-pillared façade and golden-yellow door, the 50 or so guests moved inside to sit at dinner tables draped in green and white checkered tablecloths for a presentation led by Mehmet Erdogan, executive director of the Turkish Cultural Center.

The Turkish Cultural Center, based in Hartford, is a nonprofit organization devoted to promoting Turkish culture and language throughout the state and nation by organizing educational and cultural activities such as exhibits, concerts, dinners, movie screenings, language courses, workshops and even cooking classes.

It was at a cooking class there where Marlborough Congregational Church member Nancy DeLong met center members and came up with the idea to host an Iftar dinner at the church.

"I got to know these lovely ladies [through a cooking class] and they make the most wonderful food," DeLong raved, pointing to a group of women who cooked the dinner. "They even made baklava! I get goose bumps because it's one of my favorites.

"It's just such a treat to have them here [and] sharing their yummy, yummy food with us," she continued. "All the other people [from the center] have really made this a special effort

on their part because they haven't eaten or had anything to drink or pass their lips today, so they're hungry and thirsty."

Erdogdu's presentation detailed Ramadan – the ninth month of the Islamic lunar calendar spent commemorating the first revelation of the Quran to Muhammad – during which time Muslims around the world spend daylight hours for 29 or 30 days in a complete fast.

"Ramadan is special in Muslim spiritual life as it is time to renew one's devotion to God almighty by performing obligatory fasting, giving compulsory charity and performing other forms of worship," Erdogan said. "We don't drink. We don't eat anything from dawn to sunset."

While fasting from dawn until sunset, Muslims must not consume any food, drink liquids, smoke or engage in sexual intercourse. They are also meant to refrain from any sinful behavior that may counteract the rewards of fasting including lying, insulting others, or fighting, except in self-defense.

Before dawn and after sunset, Muslims then partake in the Suhoor and Iftar respectively – meals in which they are allowed to "break their fast," the executive director explained.

"In Ramadan, Muslims are encouraged to invite their friends together and break bread with them," Erdogan furthered. "And tonight we are going to share an Iftar meal with you."

Erdogdu also noted that one of the most "unfortunate consequences of the 21st century lifestyle" has brought about "the weakening of relationships and interactions between neigh-

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Voters Say 'No' – Again – to RHAM Budget

by Geeta S. Sandberg

Following a second referendum Wednesday, the proposed 2017-18 RHAM schools budget was once again defeated in all three of the sending towns and this time, even more residents took to the polls to express their disapproval.

The \$28.87 million spending package was voted down 1,309-912; that's 153 more 'nay' votes, and 39 fewer 'yes' votes, than the May 2 referendum, when a slightly lower budget got shot down by a 1,156-951 tally.

The operating budget voted on Wednesday was \$8,266 higher than what was previously rejected, which 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.

Wednesday's budget totaled \$28,871,587 for an overall increase of \$838,228 or 2.99 percent over current year spending. Coupled with the \$289,960 capital budget, which was approved May 2, the total increase came to 4.02 percent – an amount that was too high for the majority of the residents in each of the three towns who came out to vote.

In Hebron the vote was 719-565 against the proposal; in Andover 203 said 'no' compared to 75 who said 'yes'; and in Marlborough 387 voters were against the proposal while 272 were in favor.

Schools Superintendent Bob Siminski said of the defeat this week, "I just think the turnout was high and it was a decisive statement."

In response he said the administration would be putting together some proposals to bring before the board for their consideration.

"I'm going to sit down with the subject area coordinators, the principals, the maintenance folks and special education – and everybody – to take a look" at the budget to come up with those proposed reductions, he stated. "There need to be reductions, but I need to preserve programming too because good things are happening for kids and that's going to be the fine line I'm going to need to walk; that's where I need to be and I'm just trying to be reasonable and not bombastic or anything."

He was frank, however, in stating "some programs people wanted are going to be impacted negatively; I think the people in the towns have

spoken."

Board of Education Chairman Danny Holtsclaw called this week's defeat "convincing," with an outcome that was "far worse than the first budget referendum – and deservedly so."

Holtsclaw continued, "It's clear the board needs to produce a budget in line with the recommendations of the administration and more reflective of the wants and needs of the community. This proposed budget, along with the first, included an increase in positions assigned to athletics. Regardless of whether these positions are part-time, full-time or minimal stipends, it is an expansion in staffing at a time when enrollment has been steadily decreasing."

Athletics was budgeted in the proposal at \$684,604, a number that includes an increase of \$29,735 to fund additional coaches in the district; Siminski shared previously that 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.

At several board meetings leading up to both referendums, members of the public expressed both their support of and opposition to the additional funding, with those in support repeatedly touting athletics as a major factor in academic success and college acceptance.

Holtsclaw, however, said this week while the board and community recognize athletics as "very important to many students" that enriches the RHAM experience along with many other extracurricular activities, "expanding funding for athletics will not have a material impact on the number of RHAM students accepted to colleges and universities each year."

He explained, "RHAM is a highly-performing school district with 95 percent of each senior class heading off to college after gradua-

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Marlborough Congregational Church members and guests from the Turkish Cultural Center broke bread Wednesday night, enjoying typical Turkish cuisine – including baklava for dessert.

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bors and neighboring communities,” which he said has led “people to care less about each other because they don’t share with, as well as they don’t know enough about each other.”

The executive director added that “by breaking bread together, we hope to have a stronger dialogue and better understanding of each other’s values, faith and ethnicity.”

While waiting for the sun to set at 8:22 p.m., State Chaplain Durmus Ali Avci then held a brief session giving congregation members a chance to ask questions about Ramadan – which ranged from specific details about how fasting works to broader questions.

Avci explained that Ramadan is mandatory for anybody who is eligible – healthy, sane adults beginning from puberty, which he said is approximately 12 to 13 years of age for girls and 13 or 14 years of age for boys. This means that anyone who has to take prescription pills technically cannot fast.

The penalty for not fasting, he continued, is to either pay fines, usually about \$10 to \$15 a day (or enough to feed 60 poor people) or if you “forget you’re fasting,” to fast for 61 days

consecutively rather than 30.

As to how much Muslims can eat between sunset and daybreak, Avci said there is no limit, adding that “even some Muslims, they gain weight!” during Ramadan – which drew laughter from the entire group.

Minutes before sunset arrived, Avci then led the group in a Muslim prayer typically said with Iftar and at 8:22 p.m. on the dot, he exclaimed “now it’s time to break the fast!”

As with tradition, the fast is initially broken with a small snack or appetizer such as olives or dates, which sat on a small, orange plate on each table. The dinner itself, which was served buffet-style, included Lenten soup, salad greens, cooked eggplant and other vegetables, among other traditional Turkish treats – including DeLong’s favorite, baklava.

Of the evening, DeLong said the following morning that “the mix of people, the food, [and] the dynamics with the group made it more than just a memorable experience, but a bright spot” among the congregation that will be talked about for years to come.

RHAM Budget cont. from Front Page

tion. It also needs to be said that 100 percent of all students applying to college actually receive acceptance.”

Each year, he continued, “Colleges and universities highly desire RHAM students and award hundreds of thousands of dollars, if not millions, in merit based scholarships due to our dedicated students and world class faculty. And it is within this spirit that the community wants to see a budget; one that places academic

achievement as the number one priority over everything else.”

The board is expected to meet next on Monday, June 12 at 6:30 p.m. to begin working on a third budget proposal and Holtsclaw concluded, “We will be listening closely to the recommendations of the superintendent. We need to have the full board in attendance. If we do, I am confident we can put forth a budget that is actually acceptable to the community at large.”

From the Editor’s Desk

Observations & Ruminations

by Geeta S. Sandberg

I remember getting the call like it was yesterday. It was a September day – sunny, and warm enough to have my bedroom windows open – and when my phone rang I looked at the number and knew right away what it was about.

I answered, hoping I’d hear what I wanted to hear, and when I did I couldn’t contain my excitement. I literally felt as giddy as I had when I’d received my acceptance to Endicott College four years before that; I was offered the job as a reporter for the *Rivereast News Bulletin!*

After constantly being told about the depressing state of the job market and how unlikely it was I’d find work in my chosen field after graduation, I felt extremely fortunate to put my degree to use so soon after earning it – and I still feel that way.

This is a wonderful place to work, with people who become friends as well as co-workers; it’s a place where, in a time when the catch phrase is “fake news,” I know every effort is made to get factual information out there on the towns we cover.

And speaking of those towns: although small, I’ve always been amazed by the number of stories to be told in each of them. Hebron and Andover have my heart of course, since they’re the two I’ve written about and gotten to know the most during my time here, but each is filled with its own interesting cast of characters and has its fair share of tales – some happy and some sad; some drama-filled and others more run-of-the-mill.

I recall attending my first Hebron Board of Selectmen’s meeting back in 2011, when doubts flooded my mind as the members discussed the town’s Capital Improvement Plan and policy. I remember thinking, “I have no idea what they’re talking about. How am I ever going to write about this?!” But I stuck with it, and now I’m quite familiar with the subject along with many others. I’ve attended more meetings than I can count, and have elicited my fair share of eye rolls by talking about town government at family dinners; apparently my siblings don’t find mill rates and education initiatives as interesting as I’ve come to view them.

Yes, writing for the *Rivereast* has definitely been a learning experience and an adventure. But now, fast forward five and a half years from when I received that call – literally *fast* forward – and here I am, writing my last bit for the paper and about to embark on an entirely new journey with the arrival of my daughter in just a few short weeks.

I’m going to miss the people I work with and came to know in each town, as well as writing about some of the annual events I’ve particularly enjoyed covering – the Memorial Day parade, graduation, AHM Summer Youth Theater, back to school, the Hebron Harvest Fair and the Maple Festival for example – but I’m happy with and excited about my decision to be at home with my child.

After all, you can’t start a new chapter without finishing the last, and I’m looking forward to focusing on all that’s yet to be which, along with caring for our baby, includes other writing ventures.

I’ve no doubt all that’s upcoming is going to be adventure-packed, especially considering prepping for her arrival has already been an experience. There’s been plenty to learn (and plenty of well-meaning advice to ignore) and I’ve discovered I find childbirth education fascinating.

Going into this, I didn’t start with a completely blank slate in the baby-knowledge department. As one of five children, I have a wealth of knowledge available to me through my mother, and I started babysitting when I was 9 (ah, the ‘90s) so I’ve been around my fair share of infants over the years. Even so, going through it all firsthand is a bit different, and I’ve reveled in the opportunity to learn all I can.

And, as a byproduct of that learning, I’m also all about sharing that information with others because truly, knowledge is power. Specifically, there are a few main points I’d shout from the rooftops if I could, the first of which is that you have options, plain and simple. Don’t assume a passive role in the process – you have choices.

The second is to research: learn about those options. Realize you have a say. Look up the difference between an OB/GYN and a midwife and how they view pregnancy. Find out what a doula is. Ask for hospital statistics on things such as cesarean rates and learn why

they can fluctuate so much between hospitals. When you’re told practice x, y or z is standard, ask “why?” Become obsessed with Evidence Based Birth. Make whatever choices you deem best for your family and your individual situation, but do so armed with information.

Next, don’t allow yourself to be consumed by fear! Pregnancy is a natural process, but it can be easy to get caught up in fear if you, for example, read too many of the wrong sorts of articles or watch dramatized birth stories on T.V. I was guilty of this at first. For me it started with anxiety inducing articles I’ve since stopped reading (which basically do the same thing too much WebMD can do, in making you think you’ve got every disease imaginable), and our first prenatal visit during which my OB/GYN proceeded to tell us about all the things that can go wrong in pregnancy.

My husband and I left that appointment wide-eyed and wondering how anyone ever survived giving birth – and changed care providers shortly after. Now, surrounded by an amazing support team including my husband, my mother, our midwives, a doula, and a hospital where a lot of the things we’re hoping for are standard practice, the fear has been replaced with a good kind of nervous and oh-so-much excitement!

Finally, don’t let marketers convince you that you need half of the things advertised as “must haves” for a new baby. My husband and I went into this knowing we wanted to try to keep our baby list as minimal as possible, and I think we’ve done a pretty good job. Admittedly, we still have a few items that we really don’t *need* but were convinced by friends as having been a big help, but I like to think we’ve said “no” to plenty. Because after all, when you really think about it, a lot of the items out there are created to try to mimic something – or rather, *someone* – else: the parents! They’re also pushed on the very emotion I just said to try and avoid: fear.

Think of some of the ads for baby items. In perhaps more carefully crafted statements they cry, “use this or your baby won’t be as smart as the neighbor’s baby,” “buy this or you’ll never sleep again,” “get this or your baby will face the threat of a, b and/or c and we don’t actually know what those are and we haven’t actually studied if this makes a difference but it probably does so get it or else,” or “purchase this or your baby will be unhappy and that feeling will stick with them from infancy through adulthood and they’ll never forgive you.” [Insert eye roll] So before running out to purchase all the items on the “Mom’s Top Picks” list, think about whether it’s actually necessary, or whether companies are just trying to make you *think* it’s necessary. Chances are, mom and/or dad can probably do the same thing but better – and for free.

Unrelated to babies and fantastic work environments, today is National Doughnut Day! So if you needed an excuse to consume one – or five – and the pregnancy card is off the table, you’re welcome! With the weather forecast (as of yesterday) to be mostly sunny and in the 70s, why not make an event of it and forego the doughnut shop you can find on every corner in favor of one of the quaint spots scattered around the state? After all, there are places out there like the Donut Crazy trucks in New Haven and Fairfield counties that offer doughnuts like Key Lime or Mud Pie; the former has a key lime filling, is dipped in key lime frosting and graham cracker crumbs and topped with a candied lime slice, while the latter is filled with chocolate pudding, dipped in chocolate, rolled in Oreo “dirt” and topped with a gummy worm. That’s worth a road trip if I do say so myself.

And with that sugary thought I bid you adieu, *Rivereast*-land. It’s truly been a pleasure.

Oh, one more thing: since I love the holiday so much, I’d be remiss if I didn’t remind everyone there are 205 days until Christmas, and share my favorite Christmas quote:

“So remember while December brings the only Christmas Day, in the year let there be Christmas in the things you do and say; wouldn’t life be worth the living, wouldn’t dreams be coming true, if we kept the Christmas spirit all the whole year through?” – Unknown

All the best.

RHAM Student Wins Art Competition

by Geeta S. Sandberg

For RHAM senior Ariel Miner, “Twain” did the trick. The Andover resident was recently chosen as district winner of a nationwide art competition, and it was a piece she submitted on the father of American literature – Mark Twain – that earned her first place.

Each spring the Congressional Institute, a not-for-profit that provides educational information about Congress to the public, sponsors a nationwide visual art competition “to recognize and encourage artistic talent in the nation and in each congressional district,” according to house.gov.

Known as the Artistic Discovery competition, it started in 1982 and since that time more than 650,000 high school students have participated. Miner explained last week her art teacher, Beverley Fisher, gives students the opportunity to enter each year and she chose to participate this go around in part because her friend, Alexandra Crampton, won the same competition last year.

Neither are strangers to art; in April, Miner and Crampton, as well as fellow RHAM artists Miranda and Samantha Olbrias, participated in their first self-organized art show together at Something Simple Cafe in Hebron. Miner called the show “such a great experience!”

“It was a great way to get our art exposed,” she said. “I was surprised at how many people showed up to support us and check out our work.”

Regarding her recent win – which Fisher told her about while she was eating lunch in one of her art classrooms – Miner said, “I honestly was not expecting to win at all, so I was super excited.”

To participate in the competition, students submitted entries to their representative’s office, and panels of district artists selected the winning entries.

Miner explained she chose the piece “Twain” for submission because she thought a Congressional competition would be interested in art

with a historical aspect to it.

The mixed media piece includes acrylic paint, collage and graphite, and depicts Twain in the bottom left corner with papers flying from him.

Miner added “images and characters from *Huckleberry Finn* are depicted on these pieces of paper, as if from Twain’s imagination.”

An exhibition for submissions in the 2nd Congressional District took place at the Slater Museum at Norwich Free Academy in Norwich May 4, during which the announcement of the first-, second- and third-place winners was made by Congressman Joe Courtney.

Winners of the Artistic Discovery competition are recognized in their district and at an annual awards ceremony in Washington D.C., and the winning works are also displayed for one year at the U.S. Capitol.

“I didn’t even know the award included a trip to Washington D.C.,” Miner added. “That’s a huge honor and I’m super thankful.”

Miner said she was excited to see the Smithsonian Institution during her trip, as well as “getting my art out there, outside of my community. You never know who might see it and be impacted by it!”

Miner explained she’s been drawing all her life. She recollected, “I remember in elementary school I was always writing little stories and illustrating them. I started countless comics that I never had the skill or brain power at that age to finish.”

She continued, “I really started getting serious about art in high school. My art teachers pushed me in this direction and I’m so thankful. They gave numerous opportunities to me and my classmates. I never would have gotten this far without them.”

Miner shared she works with a lot of different mediums including acrylic, watercolor, graphite, and collage. She said she also “dabbles” in bookmaking, but her favorite is oil paint.

“It’s so versatile!” she said. “There is so much



RHAM High School senior Ariel Miner, an Andover resident, was district winner in this year’s Artistic Discovery competition sponsored by the Congressional Institute. Miner will be flown to Washington D.C. at the end of the month and her winning piece, “Twain,” will be on display for a year at the U.S. Capitol.

you can do to change the effect you can get.”

As far as inspiration, Miner said as a student she often creates work in response to prompts from her teachers, but “no matter what art piece I am making, or what prompt I am responding to, I have to draw some inspiration from my life and personal experiences. Everything you create is in the context of your life.”

And undoubtedly, her upcoming trip to D.C. June 29 will provide more of those personal experiences to draw inspiration from, which

will prove helpful as she continues on with her art endeavors after high school.

Following graduation, Miner will be attending the Lyme Academy College of Fine Arts in Old Lyme.

“Moving forward, I hope to develop a more distinct style in my art, and I’m excited to further explore subjects I’m interested in,” she said. “Hopefully I can grow even more as an artist and as a person like I have at RHAM.”

Marlborough Finance Board Proposes 2.23 Percent Budget Increase

by Julianna Roche

Following two failed attempts at passing a budget, the Board of Finance reconvened this week to craft a spending package residents will be able to vote on at next week’s town meeting – totaling \$24,265,917 or a 2.23 percent increase in expenditures over current year spending.

The town’s last proposed budget of \$24,584,516 – which represented a 3.57 percent increase – was voted down by residents by a 118-69 margin on May 24.

On Wednesday, June 7, residents will have the opportunity to vote on the latest budget proposal – which amounts to a 3.99 percent tax increase and includes reductions to both the town and Board of Education’s capital expenditure fund, as well as \$40,000 to the total town operations budget.

Under the newest budget proposal, the current mill rate of 34.15 would also increase by 1.36 mills to 35.51. This would mean that the average homeowner with property valued at \$250,000 would pay \$8,878 in taxes on it – up from the current \$8,537.

“The last two budgets brought before the town were very clearly a delaying action hoping we’d get a little more feel for what the state is doing,” finance board chairman Doug Knowlton said.

Prior to discussing possible reductions, he furthered the board must remember “we can’t control the RHAM budget. [We] cannot control the state. All we can control is our own.”

A proposed RHAM spending package has been shot down by voters twice so far – including this past Wednesday – amid complaints that the budget is simply too high.

“I put a lot of this on the RHAM Board of Education because they have been irresponsible on their duties with serving all the people,” Board of Finance member Susan Leser said, adding, “We’re forced to make cuts into two budgets that have been extremely fiscally responsible. ... It makes me angry.”

While board members emphasized their displeasure at needing to make cuts, they decided to focus on cutting from both the town operations and local Board of Education’s capital expenditure list, rather than their budgets, which Leser said were “already pretty lean.”

“We’re trying to get the budget down and keep [the cuts] away from the classroom door,” added vice chairman Cliff Denniss of the education budget, stating he felt the board “has to put forth a budget that we feel the taxpayers will approve.”

From the Board of Education’s budget, the finance board voted unanimously to cut \$60,000 from its capital expenditures to total \$12,265 – including \$54,000 to repave and line the parking lot by the community room, \$10,000 for the boiler replacement plan, and \$6,000 for the air conditioner unit replacement plan.

The board also voted 5-0 in support of reductions to the town operations capital expen-

diture fund (with board member Dieter Zimmer abstaining) to total \$735,200 – including \$50,000 for the library parking lot restoration, \$15,000 for the food bank roof, \$64,475 for sewer upgrades for Blish Park, \$7,000 for the guard shack at the transfer station, reducing the reserve for a new police vehicle from \$25,000 to \$10,000, reducing the reserve for the public works equipment/vehicles from \$75,000 to \$40,000, and reducing the future capital expenditure reserve from \$75,000 to \$50,000.

In addition, the board voted unanimously to reduce the town operations budget by \$40,000 to total \$4,900,050 and to decrease the contingency fund from \$100,000 to \$47,000 in order to add a \$53,000 utility vehicle for the Marlborough Volunteer Fire Department (MVFD) into the list of town operations capital items.

The vehicle currently being used – which has been slated to be replaced since 2012 – broke down last month, leading many MVFD members to plead their case for adding a replacement vehicle into the budget at both Board of Finance and Board of Selectmen meetings over the last month.

“I think instead of spending a lot of money on paving, I don’t see why we can’t buy the Tahoe this year and move one of the paving projects to next year,” Leser said. “They’re volunteers. They serve the whole town. Let’s get them a new vehicle.”

During the public comments portion of the meeting, Fire Chief Kevin Asklar said he recognized while “the increase for the vehicle” came “at a very difficult time,” he thanked the board for “listening to the fire department’s needs.”

Resident Pam Farrington agreed, adding she was “so glad the fire department is going to have a truck.”

She furthered that she felt it was the board’s duty to present the budget to the public as “a good budget, a fair budget,” and a “budget that should pass.”

Resident Joe Concodello shared similar sentiments and questioned if the board members were in favor of this budget passing, to which Knowlton said “this is a budget I can support [as can] the rest of the members.”

With the next town meeting set to be held next week rather than its original planned date of June 14, Knowlton also noted that if it fails again, the board would actually have one more opportunity to revisit the budget. If no budget is passed before July 1, the Board of Selectmen will then be charged with setting the mill rate based on the most recent budget proposal.

The next town meeting regarding the budget will be held Wednesday, June 7, at 7 p.m. in Marlborough Elementary School’s cafeteria. Doors open at 6:30 p.m.



Residents lined the streets to cheer as Monday's Memorial Day parade --- which included current service members as well as veterans, and other groups and individuals including Town Manager Andrew Tierney and Selectman Brian O'Connell, shown at right -- marched past. Those in attendance then paused at the Veterans Memorial Green for an honors ceremony that included a firing squad to "salute the dead," as American Legion Commander Joe Fetta ordered before the 12-gun salute echoed through the air.

Hebron Solemn Ceremonies Commemorate Memorial Day

by Geeta S. Sandberg

Sunshine, blue skies and warm weather are always the preference for Memorial Day. After all, it's a day off from work that's usually filled with picnics, the opening of pools, and outdoor fun with the whole family.

But when a Memorial Day comes along that proves more gray than blue -- one that's more conducive to sweatshirts than summery outfits in patriotic hues -- it in some ways seems even more fitting for what the day is all about: remembering those who died in service to the United States of America.

"We gather today as a solemn duty to honor those of all wars who have made the ultimate sacrifice so that we may live in freedom," Hebron American Legion Commander Joe Fetta said as everyone gathered around the green Monday morning.

There were still plenty of smiles and pops of red, white and blue to be found during the town's annual parade, but an underlying tone of solemnity could also be felt as the procession marched along Main Street.

Residents stood at attention -- some of the youngest standing beside their parents waving tiny American flags at the approaching cavalcade -- as both current service members and area veterans walked or were driven past, including members of The Greatest Generation who served during World War II.

Town Manager Andrew Tierney, Board of Selectmen Chairman Dan Larson, and selectman Brian O'Connell could also be seen among the procession, along with police and fire personnel; bands from Hebron Elementary School and the RHAM middle and high schools; community groups such as baseball leagues, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Cub Scouts and Brown-

ies; The American Legion and Ladies Auxiliary; and the Hebron Lions Club.

The parade stepped off from RHAM at 11 a.m. then made its way up Wall Street to Main Street and along Church Street where grave honors were given at St. Peter's Cemetery.

The proceedings then halted during the return trip at Veterans Memorial Green for an honors ceremony, and residents stood and watched from across the street as Fetta continued, "Our mission today is simple and profound: we are here to remember and say 'thank you' with our deepest gratitude and respect."

But prior to continuing with the traditional Memorial Day ceremony, Fetta paused to mention the grave honors at St. Peter's Cemetery and that, due to last year's parade being cancelled because of lightning threats, they didn't take place as they normally would have. However, thanks to one young lady, honor was still bestowed.

"Later in the day the veterans did render honors at St. Peter's, but the Girl Scouts and Brownies putting flowers on the veterans' headstones didn't happen," he explained. "However, one Girl Scout took it upon herself to make sure the flowers were distributed; Macy Rapolli had her mom take her to the cemetery where she decorated the stones for our fallen heroes. The veterans of Hebron would like to thank Macy for her efforts."

After Macy came up to the podium to receive flowers and a certificate from Fetta he concluded, "For your respect and loving care to the memory of our veterans we thank you. You are a very special American."

The traditional ceremony then occurred with the Rev. Mark Santostefano -- an Air Force vet-

eran, and pastor of The Worship Center -- starting things off with a prayer.

"On this Memorial Day we remember all of the men and women who gave the last measure of their devotion in defending our country," he said. "We think of the parents and families that gave up so much for their service. We think of the men and women who are serving today in the far flung reaches of this country and of this world, we ask that you protect them, that you be with them; we pray that you pour out your Holy Spirit on this world and that you bring healing in all the fractured-ness, and in all the warfare that you bring your peace."

Along with paying respects and remembrance to those who lost their lives, and those who currently serve, a moment was taken Monday to also remember those who are Prisoners of War or Missing in Action.

United States Navy Veteran Forrest Kocher shared, "A public service announcement originating in 1960 once asked: 'It's 10 p.m.; do you know where your children are?' Generally speaking we always know the answer to that question, but to the parents of our POW and MIAs this question is particularly painful and the answer is never good -- if they know at all."

To them, Kocher continued, "Each time they hear this question it is a reminder that they have most likely lost their children, and that their families are fractured, most likely never to be restored and made whole. Please consider this when the cost of repatriation -- even if it is only for our service member's remains -- enters the public discourse. Never let it be said that any price, whether it be in time or treasure, is too great a price to pay to bring our service members home."

Monday's ceremony also included the laying of wreaths on the veterans' memorials by members of the Ladies Auxiliary, as well as a 12-gun salute and the playing of Taps -- which, coupled with the silence from the crowd and at least a couple of faces that could be seen as teary -- honed in on the solemnity of the occasion.

Then, as the RHAM High School marching band performed the National Anthem, the daughter of Honorary Grand Marshal John Malecky restored the colors. Malecky served in the U.S. Army Air Corps during World War II and was honored posthumously.

"America's servicemen and women have stood on the frontlines to freedom in both wartime and peace, often risking and sacrificing their lives so that we can continue to exist in a free society," Fetta concluded. "Without the courage and sacrifices of those who have served we would not be able to exist as the great nation that we are. We need to memorialize the deeds of these service members so that future generations of our citizens always understand the price paid for freedom."

And so, as the events that inevitably accompany Memorial Day take place and summer gets underway, he asked that those in attendance "please take a little time to visit the cemeteries to see firsthand the sacrifices that were made."

"We must never forget what these heroes have done and what their loved ones have lost. Remembering once a year is not enough," Fetta added. "The family survivors -- husbands, wives, moms, dads, brothers and sisters -- remember daily that freedom is not free; it was paid for in blood."

Hebron Director of Educational Services Appointed

by Geeta S. Sandberg

Following acceptance of the resignation of Patricia Buell at the Board of Education meeting earlier this month, the school board voted last week to appoint Dr. Donald Briere to fill the role beginning July 1.

There were 33 applicants for the position, which was created at the start of the 2015-16 school year, and a search committee made up of the Board of Education, administrators and teachers interviewed seven of them, according to a recent release on the selection.

Briere was appointed after three rounds of interviews and will earn an annual salary of \$139,917.

He received his bachelor and master's degree in special education from the University of Connecticut, and went on to complete his administrative coursework and earn his doctor of philosophy in special education through UConn's Department of Educational Psychology.

Briere comes to the district after serving as

an Educational Consultant with the Connecticut State Department of Education's Bureau of Special Education since 2012, prior to which he served as a consultant in several districts and as a special education teacher in East Hampton.

Through this work the release asserts "Dr. Briere brings a diverse set of experiences to his new role, a position which will provide leadership to the areas of Special Education, Curriculum, and Technology."

During his time working with the state, Briere was the primary contact for 15 of Connecticut's school districts and according to the release, "In this role, he provided guidance on procedural and implementation questions that districts were faced with."

In addition, Briere also has knowledge of personnel development; Scientifically Research Based Interventions, which the State Department of Education describes as a way to provide support and instruction to children strug-

gling to learn; school climate transformation; and Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports, which is a support system "designed to provide opportunities to all students, including students with disabilities and second language learners, to achieve social, behavioral, and learning success," according to pbis.serc.co.

Schools Superintendent Tim Van Tassel said of Briere in the release, "We are very fortunate to have Dr. Briere joining our team in the Hebron Public Schools. In his work at the Connecticut State Department of Education, Don has had the unique opportunity to traverse the State of Connecticut and work closely with school districts on both special and regular education programming initiatives."

Van Tassel continued, "His experiences and very approachable and collaborative style make him a well-suited candidate for our Director of Educational Services. I look forward to working closely with Dr. Briere as he transitions into his new role."

Speaking to his appointment this week Briere stated, "I could not be happier to be stepping into this wonderful opportunity in Hebron. I have always recognized Hebron as a high performing district -- a district who works with its community, supports its staff and strives to develop each student to their full potential."

He added, "My initial conversations with district staff and community members has reassured me that I am in the right place -- I have begun to truly recognize how well matched my principles align with the district's values. I am looking forward to beginning my work in Hebron, supporting the district's priorities and ensuring a high-quality education for our students. High expectations will lead to bright futures for all students -- this is a district mantra I have lived by and will strive to uphold in my new role."

Briere was appointed unanimously May 23 with board members Phil Booe and Geoffrey Davis absent from the meeting.

East Hampton Council Puts School Board Back in Hub

by Elizabeth Regan

The Town Council voted last week not to include the Board of Education offices in a proposed municipal complex on Route 66; this week, a majority of councilors changed their minds.

Preliminary estimates for the municipal hub project came in at \$17.56 million, according to a report by project architects from the Hartford-based firm Amenta Emma. Including the Board of Education would add \$1.19 million to the total project cost.

Per the council's request, the architects' estimates included the cost of including the regional probate court and health district. The added cost came in at \$1.16 million and \$652,575, respectively. The council was quick and decisive in rejecting the idea of including those two extras.

The architects evaluated similar municipal projects to come up with the cost-per-square-foot estimate based on an 18,643-square-foot town hall and 10,477-square-foot police department.

The projects used for comparison were the Newington Town Hall and community center, East Haddam Town Hall, Westborough Town Hall, Bethel police station, Norwich police station and Western Connecticut State University police station.

Town Hall/Police Department Building Committee Glenn Gollenberg said the estimates – which include “brick and mortar” construction costs, furniture and fixtures, escalation costs, associated fees and unexpected costs – were “conservative numbers” that are probably higher than the project will end up being.

The council in February selected a site for the proposed municipal complex, picked a project manager and appointed a building committee. The council has long held that all current town hall offices would move to the new complex. That includes the parks and recreation and youth and family services departments currently housed in an annex on Middletown Avenue.

Last week, members looked at the cost for each component and agreed to focus on including space for the undersized and outdated town hall and police department only.

A majority of the council indicated that accessibility and energy-efficiency limitations in the 1866 Board of Education facility, which served as the original Center School and a town hall, could be addressed in the future.

Council members Ted Hintz Jr. and Mark Philhower offered the dissenting perspective. They wanted information on how much it would cost to renovate the current Board of Educa-

tion building on Main Street before they made a decision about relocating the offices; they also wondered what the overall project's potential impact would be on the mill rate.

Finance Director Jeff Jylkka told councilors he could not immediately provide an accurate projection of the effect on taxpayers.

Councilor Kevin Reich suggested waiting for town hall staff to come through with answers to those questions before taking a vote, though he said the information would not change his support for the municipal complex.

Debate came to a halt when Councilor James “Pete” Brown invoked the parliamentary procedure known as “calling for the question,” which is a way of forcing a vote on the motion being discussed.

Guidelines for deliberative bodies like the council, as outlined in the authoritative text *Robert's Rules of Order*, require a councilor to make a formal motion in order to close debate prematurely. The motion must be seconded and two-thirds of the council must vote in favor.

No such motion was made; instead, councilors went straight to a vote to direct the building committee to include only the town hall and police department in its plans.

The vote passed by a vote of 5-2, with Philhower and Hintz against it.

At this week's special meeting of the council, Council member Melissa Engel made an unusual motion to “reconsider” last week's vote. During discussion, several members said they decided they wanted the Board of Education offices in the proposed hub after all.

Information provided by Superintendent of Schools Paul Smith showed renovation costs could include roughly \$230,000 for an elevator, \$26,000 for new windows and up to \$28,000 to replace portable air conditioners with ductless cooling units.

The two-page report noted the building currently has “accessible entry” on the first floor and that no changes for more handicapped accessibility are required or planned at this time.

Engel told her fellow councilors she didn't want to allow the building's problems to continue until the lack of accessibility prompts a lawsuit under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

“I think that being fiscally responsible, the right thing to do would be to look ahead and plan for what we might need in the future – and that would be the next thing we would need,” Engel said.

Brown, despite having ended discussion at the previous meeting, also wanted to revisit the

issue. He said he visited the Board of Education building and was shocked by the steep, narrow stairs between the two floors.

“We're living on the edge down there – on the very edge, in my opinion,” he said. “One complaint and we're in trouble. We're going to have to do something with that building.”

Based on the cost estimates from Smith, Philhower said it seems practical to include the school board offices in the municipal complex instead of deciding a few years from now that a new facility is necessary.

Gollenberg told members that some of the alterations to the current building could be eligible for state reimbursement if funding is available and the project is deemed a priority by the state.

Similarly, including the Board of Education offices in the municipal hub could open up the possibility of state reimbursement of roughly 20 percent of that portion of the project.

He said an application would have to be submitted by June 30; the approval process would take about a year, with construction to begin after that.

The delay would have an impact on the project's timeline. If the project is approved at referendum this September, project managers Steve and Lisa Motto have said the project – without state funding – would be complete within 24 to 30 months.

Gollenberg said the escalation in costs over an extended period would outweigh the reimbursement savings.

“Therefore, we did not suggest going for it as a reimbursable project as part of the current project,” Gollenberg added.

Council member Josh Piteo was consistent in his belief that the project should go forward with only the town hall offices and police department.

He said residents understand the need for upgrades to those two facilities, but that adding to the expense by including something that is not an absolute need would “muck up the situation” in the eyes of taxpayers who will approve or reject the project at referendum.

“It looks like it could be a good deal if you build now. But I'm thinking the public may not agree,” he said.

Philhower looked at it another way when he said consolidating the facilities now and selling off the current school board building could prevent a rushed, panicked reaction later.

“I think the townspeople will go the opposite way and say we're finally doing something good by consolidating and thinking ahead,” he

said.

Jylkka said Wednesday he still has not calculated how the project may affect the mill rate.
* * *

The failure of councilors to follow parliamentary procedure comes on the heels of a situation last August during which the council was chastised in a legal opinion by then-town attorneys Duncan J. Forsyth and Richard P. Roberts of Halloran and Sage. The memo was a response to concerns from Hintz questioning the legality of a vote on the town manager's contract.

The lawyers' upheld the vote on the contract, but said they “found nothing to indicate that the Town Council operates in accordance with *Robert's Rules*.”

They added they would be providing the council with a copy of the most recent revision of the text as “a convenient resource for everyone to review in an effort to gain more familiarity with recognized procedure.”

According to *Robert's Rules*, motions to stop debate require a two-thirds vote because “they suspend the fundamental right of every member” to have questions fully answered.

Philhower said this week he felt the council should have allowed a complete discussion about including the school board offices in the municipal complex prior to its first vote instead of rushing into a decision.

A former member and chairman of the Planning and Zoning Commission, Philhower said he never saw members move to end debate before the rest of the group was done with the discussion.

“Every commissioner was satisfied his question had been answered,” he said.

Philhower was not aware the council erred in failing to require a vote on Brown's request, but he added it “will never happen again” now that he knows about the proper procedure.

Brown explained Tuesday he felt the discussion was veering off course from where it had started and that councilors were just spinning their wheels.

“That's how I felt,” he said. “Now, [Philhower] can disagree with that.”

Council Chairwoman Patience Anderson and Town Manager Michael Maniscalco were unaware that moving the question came with a two-thirds vote requirement.

Anderson said Thursday a clarification of the procedure will be added to the agenda for the council's next meeting and a summary of the various motions in *Robert's Rules of Order* will be shared with all councilors.

Colchester Finance Board Puts Freeze on Capital Spending

by Julianna Roche

In efforts to prepare for Gov. Dannel Malloy's proposed budget cuts and slashes to municipal funding, the Board of Finance voted last week to recommend the Board of Selectmen and Board of Education instill a spending freeze on all new capital spending for the 2017-18 year.

The board also voted 4-2 – with Chairman Rob Tarlov and Vice Chair Thomas Kane against – to approve an ordered protocol addressing potential solutions to any shortfalls in revenue once the state budget passes.

The first motion was made by board member Andreas Bisbikos, who explained while the freeze was simply a “precautious” measure, it would protect the town from wasting money on any building projects that it may later have to abandon should Malloy's cuts be too damaging.

While it was met with some discord from First Selectman Art Shilosky – who addressed the finance board prior to the meeting being called to order about “getting united” as a team and moving forward – the motion passed unanimously.

“Tonight's meeting is [about] moving our budget – which you approved twice, cut twice and added on to – to the Board of Selectmen so they can move it to a town hall meeting,” the first selectman said.

“Do you not believe the first selectman – me – or whoever is after me or the superintendent of schools would go ahead and do that?” he added, referring to being fiscally responsible should there be major cuts to funding.

Bisbikos responded putting a freeze in place was more “about community reassurance,” which prompted Shilosky to question if the board member didn't trust him.

“I didn't say that... you're putting words in my mouth,” Bisbikos responded. “If you're not going to do anything, there's nothing to worry about this motion for.”

While he ultimately voted for the freeze, Board of Finance Chairman Rob Tarlov – who phoned in for the meeting – originally questioned whether the Board of Finance even had the authority to pass such a motion.

He furthered that he felt the board should instead “trust the judgment of the Board of Selectmen in terms of authorizing projects” and to “hold back on spending.”

Selectman Stan Soby, who also phoned in during the meeting, argued “whether the wording of [the] agenda item” – which was simply to discuss and make possible action on the proposed 2017-18 budget – “allows for this action to be taken.”

Later in the discussion, board member Andrea Migliaccio made a second motion asking

the board to discuss establishing a protocol to address revenue shortfalls should Gov. Malloy's budget pass.

Previously, there had been no official policy in place regarding what to do should the state budget drastically cut town funding.

“It's uncharted territory. We don't have any protocol in place” she said, furthering she recommended that the board look first at using monies from the general fund balance and secondly, make cuts to either the town or school budgets before issuing supplemental tax bills to residents.

Bisbikos stood in agreement, stating he felt the board needed a “step-by-step process” for how to handle cuts to revenue.

“I don't think there's anything wrong with a [specific] order,” he said.

Board of Selectman member Rosemary Coyle, who was also present during the meeting, argued the finance board was not following its meeting agenda.

“The agenda specifically says you're going to vote on the 2017-18 budget; it doesn't talk about establishing procedures,” Coyle said to the finance board. “You can do this at your next meeting.”

Kane, however, pushed back, responding “we hear you, but we're going to keep going.” The board voted 4-2, with Tarlov and Kane

against; both said they were uncomfortable voting for a specific order of protocol as there is still so much uncertainty surrounding how large the cuts from state funding could be.

“I'm not in favor of putting an order. I'm in favor of looking at all three [steps] jointly at the same time,” the chairman said, adding “to put things in order without knowing what we'll be facing” was not advisable.

The board also voted 4-1 – with Stefani Lowe as the sole “nay” vote and member Andreas Bisbikos abstaining – to rescind a motion originally passed two days prior at the May 23 meeting, which originally reduced estimated revenue by \$1 million.
* * *

The town budget, which totals \$14,708,083 and the Board of Education budget, which amounts to \$40,636,405, will be discussed at a town meeting on Tuesday, June 6 at 7 p.m. at Town Hall. The budget referendum will then be held the following week on Tuesday, June 13 between the hours of 6 a.m. and 8 p.m. at Town Hall.

Rain Moves East Hampton Memorial Day Ceremony Inside

by Elizabeth Regan

Residents converged in East Hampton High School on Memorial Day for a program of solemn remembrance, after rain led to the cancellation of the annual parade and the scheduled outdoor ceremony for the second year in a row.

Dark skies brought attention to the somber reason for the federal holiday that has come to be known as the unofficial start of summer.

Roger Anderson, Grand Marshal of the parade, spoke from the podium on the stage of the filled high school auditorium to recognize the 1.2 million service members who died in defense of the United States of America since the country began.

Anderson is the commander of Fowler-Dix-Park Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 5095 and a Purple Heart recipient who served in the Marines during the Vietnam War.

“As our nation remembers the service and sacrifice of previous generations, we as a people recognize the men and women serving in uniform today [are] as humble and patriotic as any of the generations that have come before,” Anderson said.

The sounds of fifes and drums could be heard throughout the hour-long ceremony. Marching bands from the high school and middle school stood up from their seats in the audience to play patriotic songs.

Louis Carillo, VFW state surgeon and the president of the East Hampton Veterans Association, presided over the event.

The remembrance ceremony included an honor guard of members of VFW Post 5095 and its Auxiliary, a contingent of local Boy Scouts and two fife and drum corps: Connecticut Valley Field Music and the 3rd Connecticut Regiment of Fifes and Drums.

Prayers from Post Chaplain Ron Christopher and Auxiliary Chaplain Kelly Ezold helped frame the town’s effort to remember fallen service members.

Others on the dais included Town Manager Michael Maniscalco and members of the Town

Council—including guest speaker Kevin Reich.

Carillo introduced Reich as “the pride of East Hampton.”

Reich, a longtime educator and school administrator, is the chairman of “Flags Over East Hampton.” The initiative started in 2007 to salute East Hampton’s veterans by placing American flags around the village center. He also serves as the president of the East Hampton Rotary Club.

After giving a brief history of Memorial Day, Reich said traditional ceremonies and parades like the ones held each year in East Hampton are part of remembrances across the country—even as Americans indulge in newer ways of celebrating, like backyard barbecues and watching the Indianapolis 500.

“Throughout these events, the sacrifices of all who have served and defended our great country should never, ever stray far from our thoughts,” Reich said.

Town Manager Michael Maniscalco recounted his own internal debate as he wrestled with the idea of celebrating with music and good food on the day meant to memorialize the nation’s war dead.

He noted 65 service members from Connecticut have died since the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001.

“Then all the sudden I said to myself, ‘Now wait a minute.’ All of them went overseas to protect our freedoms. And what better way to celebrate this holiday than to enjoy those freedoms with our family and friends, to have a good opportunity to remember those people and to really show everybody else how great our country and our community is,” he said.

The event also featured readings by high school students interspersed with tunes from the bands and fife and drum corps. Senior Ally Giza read “In Flanders Field” while senior Rebecca Doney read the Gettysburg Address.

The ceremony also included the recognition of VFW Post 5095 Poppy Queen, Sophia Coe, and Poppy King, Erick Leue. The Poppy Queen for American Legion Post 64 was Sophie Roy.



Ten-year-old Boy Scouts Kristoffer Lintz, left, and Nick Guarino, of Troop 57, were proud to participate in the town’s remembrance of those who have died in war.

Carillo took the opportunity to announce the annual Poppy Sale, carried out by members of VFW Post 5095 and its auxiliary, earned \$1,400 in donations for the post’s Veterans’ Relief Fund. The fund gives up to \$300 each to veterans who need help with expenses like utility bills, lodging and food, according to Carillo.

Before the dismissal of the Color Guard signified the end of the event, high school trumpeters Jenna Pethybridge and Kurt Sturmer

played Taps. The two students echoed each other from their positions in the front and back of the large auditorium.

Ten-year-old Kristoffer Lintz, a Boy Scout in Troop 57, said it felt good to participate in the town’s Memorial Day ceremony.

“Not many people get to participate in honoring service members who have died,” Lintz said.

East Hampton Seeks Restraining Order Against School Board

by Elizabeth Regan

The Town of East Hampton has filed for a temporary restraining order against the Board of Education.

Court documents filed Tuesday at Middlesex Superior Court by town attorney Robbie T. Gerrick of McGivney, Kluger and Cook asked a judge to rule immediately on a request to “restrain” the Board of Education from voting to fill a vacancy at its meeting scheduled for the same evening.

The latest flurry of activity is part of a year-and-a-half-long legal battle to find out who has the authority to appoint members to the school board.

The request for a restraining order asked the court “to preserve the status quo” until the case goes to trial on Aug. 3.

Kenneth Barber, a five-year member and former chairman, resigned in May.

The town attorneys argued “there are no pressing matters pending” before the trial date now that the school board budget is set to go to referendum this month.

In an objection to the town’s motion for a temporary restraining order, Board of Education attorneys Joshua A. Hawks-Ladds and Zachary D. Schurin of Pullman and Comley said the town is trying to prevent the school board from acting on a 25-year precedent of filling its own vacancies.

The attorneys for the school board argued the Town Council “tried to change the status quo” in 2015 when members attempted to make their own appointment to the school board.

They also said the town’s argument that the board has no pressing matters to consider before August is “simply illogical.”

Hawks-Ladds and Schurin wrote the school board must be able to fill the vacancy “to ensure it can perform its statutory duties in accordance with the law.”

Judge Julia L. Aurigemma immediately denied the request for a restraining order.

“This came to the court’s attention at 4:50 [p.m.],” Aurigemma wrote the same day. “The court will not consider this on such short notice and without a hearing.”

The Board of Education convened that evening to interview four candidates, according to school board Chairman Christopher Goff in a phone interview. He said members did not

vote on a selection at the time partly because there was no public notice about the meeting.

Goff said an agenda was not delivered to the East Hampton Town Clerk due to “computer problems” in the superintendent of schools’ office.

The state Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requires notice of any special meeting to be posted at least 24 hours in advance in the town clerk’s office and online.

Goff and Superintendent of Schools Paul K. Smith said they believed the interviews were a “non-meeting,” which would not be governed by the FOIA.

State statute exempts the gathering “of a personnel search committee for executive level employment candidates” from its definition of a meeting. That exemption does not extend to volunteer boards and commissions, according to Freedom of Information Commission Public Information Officer Tom Hennick.

Hennick said meeting agendas must be publicly noticed and that candidates for boards and commissions must have the option to request that their interviews be held in public if desired.

Complaints about an allegedly illegal meeting may be made to the Freedom of Information Commission. If the commission finds a violation occurred, it is entitled by state statute to declare null and void any action taken at a meeting the public was denied the right to attend.

Town Manager Michael Maniscalco said this week he only found out about the meeting after one of his employees heard about it from the wife of a staff member in the school system.

Based on the FOIA, Maniscalco said the school board may now be basing its appointment decision on “things that happened in an illegal meeting.” He said a subsequent vote to appoint any of those candidates is “questionable.”

Goff said he would be addressing questions about the legality of the meeting with the school board attorney. A response was not available by press time.

On Wednesday, Gerrick made a request for the judge to schedule a hearing for this Monday. That’s when the school board is set to vote on an appointment.

The judge had not ruled on the request as of press time.

According to Maniscalco and Goff, negotiations occurred over the past two weeks in an effort to reach a settlement. An offer from the town and a counter offer from the school board were both rejected.

Goff said the school board rejected the council’s offer because it “still gives the appointing authority” to councilors. The school board met in executive session, where they came up with what Goff described as a “kind of” best and final offer.

Council Chairwoman Patience Anderson said Wednesday the school board’s counter proposal was a “take it or leave it proposition” instead of part of a negotiation.

The council did not meet in person to discuss the school board’s offer.

“The communication from our attorney was shared with the entire council and the direction given to councilors was if they objected in any manner, they were to contact the town manager by a certain time,” Anderson said.

She said there was no objection from the council.

Goff said it was frustrating to him that councilors did not take the time to discuss the school board’s offer among themselves.

There have been at least seven school board vacancies since 1990, according to court documents. All those positions were appointed by the school board until the newly elected Town Council bucked tradition in November 2015 with the appointment of Republican Michael Rose to the Board of Education. The opening came when Republican Josh Piteo won election to the council, thereby relinquishing his seat on the school board.

Rose declined the position amid the controversy. The Board of Education promptly appointed Democrat Jeff Carlson, tipping the majority to the Democrats.

The next month, the East Hampton Board of Education sued the Town of East Hampton to get a judge to rule on which entity has the power to fill vacancies on the school board.

The town charter empowers the town council to fill any vacancy unless another “appointing authority” has been “designated by law.”

State law governing school boards specifies that vacancies shall be filled by the remaining members of the board “unless otherwise provided by charter or special act.”

Voters in last year’s charter revision referendum rejected language that might have taken the decision out of the judge’s hands by giving the town council the authority to fill vacancies on boards and commissions and to require them to appoint a member of the same party as the one who left the seat.

The referendum question on the November general election ballot failed by a margin of 559 votes. The other four proposed charter revisions passed.

Councilors had maintained throughout the lawsuit that the issue should be resolved through the charter revision process, not the court system.

The Town Council spent \$11,432 in legal fees related to the issue as of March, according to the town manager’s office. School business manager Karen Asetta said the Board of Education spent \$24,888.

Also in March, members of the Board of Finance made a public plea for the town and school board to resolve their fight.

Finance board chairman Marc Lambert called the lawsuit “ludicrous,” while member Alannah Coshow asked the two parties to “stop the silliness.”

Goff said Wednesday the school board is trying to preserve the process that’s been in place for 25 years. He also pointed to the charter revision vote as residents’ way of saying they didn’t want the Town Council to have appointing authority over the school board.

Anderson said the Board of Education filed the lawsuit and “it’s up to the Board of Education to stop the lawsuit.”

She acknowledged the charter revision vote “makes clear that the public did not feel the town council should have that authority,” but said it does not change the basis for the lawsuit.

“The question as to who has the authority still remains a concern. [The charter revision vote] doesn’t take away the interpretation the council has or the Board of Education has,” Anderson said.



Rain moved this year's Memorial Day celebration inside, to the elementary school's community room, but many still came out to remember those who had given their lives serving their country. At left, members of the Marlborough Volunteer Fire Department salute the fallen servicemen and women, and at right, the Marlborough Junior Ancient Fife & Drum Corps perform "America the Beautiful."

Rain Doesn't Stop Memorial Day in Marlborough

by Julianna Roche

Rain may have washed away Marlborough's annual Memorial Day Parade, but that didn't stop residents and community organizations from filling the elementary school's community room Monday to honor and remember American servicemen and women who gave their lives serving their country.

At a blue-clothed table in the center of the room sat members of the American Legion Post 197 and town officials, including First Selectwoman Amy Traversa, selectmen Evelyn Godbout and Dick Shea, as well as state Sen. Cathy Osten (D-19) and state Rep. Robin Green (R-55) – each dressed head to toe in patriotic colors of red, white and blue.

The Marlborough Volunteer Fire Department, as well as both the RHAM Middle School and RHAM High School bands, and the Marlborough Junior Ancient Fife & Drum Corps stood neatly in rows in each corner of the room, facing center stage.

The audience stood as members from Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 5095 marched through the side doors and around the community room,

before RHAM's High School band played a rendition of "Star-Spangled Banner."

Traversa then delivered a heartfelt speech thanking residents and community groups in attendance and honoring fallen American soldiers.

"Since the first shots at Lexington and Concord were fired, American men and women have been answering the nation's call of duty," she began. "Millions of Americans have fought and died on battlefields here and abroad to defend our freedoms and our way of life."

The first selectwoman furthered that today, troops "continue to make the ultimate sacrifice," and "even as we lose troops, more Americans step forward to say 'I'm ready to serve.'"

"Medals have been awarded to our soldiers, their names added to monuments, and buildings, and roads and bridges, to honor them for their bravery and service," Traversa continued. "But nothing will ever replace the hole left behind by a fallen service member, and no number of medals and ribbons can comfort the ones

left behind."

The first selectwoman closed her speech thanking service members and veterans for making "our armed forces the most respected in the world – from the soldiers of Valley Forge, to the doughboys in the trenches of France to the platoons that patrolled the jungles of Vietnam, and the young men and women patrolling Afghanistan and the deserts of the Middle East."

The RHAM High School band then broke into a cadence call and armed forces on parade, before the Marlborough fife and drum corps performed "America the Beautiful."

Following that, Osten – a Vietnam-era veteran herself – spoke on her experience serving the country.

"It's certainly wonderful to see all of you here because today just shows exactly where your hearts are and that is in remembrance of those who have given the ultimate sacrifice," she began. "And that's what Memorial Day is truly about. It's not an unofficial start to summer and not about having a hamburger or hot dog."

Osten furthered that she "learned great pride for this country" while she served overseas, explaining she recognized in America, "[we have] something so special and the very fabric of what we are is our military, and what they do for us each and every day."

"For those that have not returned home – they are our heart. They are the very fabric of our being," she continued.

The state senator also emphasized how "pleased" she was there were so many residents and community organizations in attendance, and that she "would expect nothing less from a town as community-oriented as Marlborough."

In closing, Osten read the famous war poem "In Flanders Fields" written by John McCrae in 1915 – a poem she explained was read by former state representative Pam Sawyer every year for the last 20 years during each of Marlborough's Memorial Day celebrations.

"Please remember those who have given us the ultimate sacrifice," she said. "They have given us all and we deserve them that respect."

Motorcyclist Seriously Injured in Colchester Collision with FedEx Truck

by Julianna Roche

A FedEx truck and motorcyclist were involved in a serious crash early Friday evening in Colchester, police said.

According to police, the crash occurred on Windham Avenue near the intersection with Jurach Road at approximately 5:21 p.m.

Police said Vincent P. Cormier, 64, of 1847 Exeter Rd., Lebanon, was driving a Harley FLHTCU when he and a FedEx truck, driven by Kendrick K. Marshall, 26, of 125 Putnam Ave., Apt. A72, Hamden, collided. Both ve-

hicles were towed, according to police.

Cormier was transported by Colchester Hayward Fire Department to Hartford Hospital for serious injuries, and next of kin were notified, while Marshall was taken to Marlborough Clinic, police said.

The crash remains under investigation and anyone who may have witnessed the accident is asked to contact Trooper Tawny Lanati at 860-465-5400 ext. 4014.

Colchester Police News

5/18: Colchester Police said that David Friedman, 49, of 64 Cirillo Dr., was arrested and charged with operating a motor vehicle under the influence of drugs/alcohol.

5/19: State Police said Vincent Martino, 42, 64 Daniel Dr., was arrested and charged with operating a motor vehicle under the influence of drugs/alcohol, failure to drive in the proper lane of a multiple-lane highway, and operating with unsafe tires.

5/28: State Police said Niall M. Geoghegan, 24, of 60 Rte. 87, Andover, was arrested and charged with operating a motor vehicle under the influence of drugs/alcohol and failure to drive in the proper lane of a multiple-lane highway.

Marlborough Police News

5/29: State Police said Caleb Rodriguez, 30, 195 Old Farm Rd., Springfield, Mass., was arrested and charged with operating a motor vehicle under the influence of drugs/alcohol and reckless driving.

East Hampton Police News

5/21: Amanda Espinosa, 31, of 237 Colburn Rd., Canterbury, was arrested and charged with failure to drive right and driving under the influence, East Hampton Police said.

5/24: Ellen C. Brunsgaard, 26, of 24 Tarragon Dr., was issued a summons for disorderly conduct and possession of drug paraphernalia, police said.

Also, from May 15-21, officers responded to 21 medical calls, two motor vehicle accidents and nine alarms, and made 16 traffic stops, police said.

Obituaries

Portland

Herbert Morrill Packard

Herbert Morrill Packard, formerly of Portland, son of the late Ansel Alva Packard and Lytle C. Morrill Packard, both born in Maine, passed away peacefully at Coastal Hospice by the Lake in Salisbury, Md., while holding his daughter Cairry's hand Wednesday, May 24.



He went to be with his Lord at the age of 85 years and is predeceased by his loving wife of 59 years, Claire McGetrick Packard, as well as his sister Margaret Williams, brothers Robert and Charles Packard, and parents Ansel Alva and Lytle Morrill Packard. He is survived by his daughter Cairry Packard Desmarais M.D., her husband Rene L. Desmarais M.D., and their 3 children Charlotte Desmarais Bartrug with her husband JonRyan Bartrug, Elizabeth C. Desmarais, and Aline V. Desmarais, as well as several nieces, nephews, sisters-in-law and brothers-in-law.

Herbert lived in Portland for most of his life and enjoyed his close friends and family. He graduated from Portland High School in 1949 as valedictorian, president of the student council, vice president of the class, literary co-editor of the yearbook, National Honor Society member, and lettered in baseball, soccer and basketball. He attended the University of Maine for one year before attending West Point Military Academy and then served as staff sergeant in the United States Air Force. Upon return from military duty, he also attended Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He worked as an electrical engineer at United Technologies in Pratt and Whitney Aircraft on many interesting projects and helped to develop a solar powered air conditioner in Phoenix during the early 1980s.

He continued with his love for athletics in a weekly bowling league, played tennis and baseball, and attended a mountaineering school in the Grand Tetons then climbed to the summit of Mount Aconcagua in Argentina at 40 years old. He also enjoyed spending time with his family and cats, fly fishing with his family, working in his yard, photography, reading, and travel, especially camping and hiking in Maine and out West. May he rest in peace.

The funeral was held Wednesday, May 31, in the Trinity Episcopal Church, 345 Main St., Portland. Burial was in the family plot with full military honors in Trinity Cemetery, Portland. Friends called at Portland Memorial Funeral Home, 231 Main St, Portland, on Tuesday evening, May 30.

Portland

Elizabeth Jacobucci

Elizabeth "Bette-Ann" Jacobucci passed away peacefully Sunday, May 21, surrounded by her loving family. She was the beloved wife of Albert Jacobucci.



Bette was born April 17, 1935, in Hartford. She and her family lived in Hartford, Portland and Cromwell, and for a brief time in El Paso, Texas, before retiring to Delray Beach, Fla., in 1995.

Bette is survived by her son, Vince Jacobucci of Delray Beach, Fla.; daughter, Lynn Muscatello and her fiancé Sabin Spalding of Woodstock; daughter, Lori Haglund and her husband Steve of Portland; her son, Chuck Jacobucci and his wife Mindy of Portland; and her devoted cat, Shadow.

She was predeceased by her loving daughter, Dana Sweet of Portland.

She is also survived by her sisters Nancy Coman of Portland; Maureen Lawlor of Hampton and Mary-Ellen Mozdierz of Portland; 10 grandchildren; four great-grandchildren and several nieces and nephews.

Bette was a devoted wife and mother who was beautiful inside and out. She was a social butterfly who loved to entertain with her amazing sense of humor. Throughout her years as a bartender she was able to share that gift.

Bette was a generous individual who loved children and was passionate about giving. She never let a month go by without supporting St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital. If you were ever fortunate enough to have met Bette and shared any kind of hardship big or small, you were sure to be added to her list of nightly prayers...her list was never-ending, always putting others first.

She will be remembered as a wonderful wife, mother, sister and especially a friend. Her sparkling green eyes and contagious smile will forever be missed but will never be forgotten.

East Hampton

Ernest Cordeiro

Ernest Cordeiro, 82, died peacefully Sunday, May 28, at Marlborough Health & Rehabilitation Center in Marlborough. He was a resident of East Hampton for 42 years.

He was born June 15, 1934, in Bristol, R.I., to John and Mary (Feliz) Cordeiro, who immigrated to Bristol, R.I., from Sao Miguel, Azores, Portugal in the early 1900s and was one of eight children.

Ernie graduated from the former Colt Memorial High School in Bristol, Rhode Island in 1951. Mr. Cordeiro served in the Army right out of high school, first at Fort Dix, New Jersey, then in Reykjavik, Iceland, and was a veteran of the Korean War. He was an expert marksman, and taught marksmanship to new recruits.

After a few-year courtship, he married Cecelia May Price from Warren, R.I., on Aug. 16, 1958, and they started a family which would eventually grow to four children.

He played upright bass in a jazz band in his early twenties, performed all around Rhode Island and the New England area, and was a huge fan of jazz throughout his life. Stan Getz, Mel Torme, Tommy Dorsey and Sarah Vaughn were always playing on his beloved Fisher stereo at home. He most admired Frank Sinatra, and owned almost every recording he ever made. When a Sinatra song came on he would always say, "that's Frank".

During his professional years, Ernie was a credit manager for W.T. Grant, moving around to many different locations where new retail stores were opened. When receiving a promotion from Grant's to their corporate office in Glastonbury, the Cordeiros bought their first house together on Quiet Woods Road in East Hampton. They would spend the next 42 years there together. Ernie was also employed locally by Royal Typewriter/Konica Business Machines, and finally at Moore Medical in New Britain. He made friends everywhere he worked and was always the office comedian ready to tell a joke, a funny story or carry on with pride about his kids.

When first moving to East Hampton, Ernie served on the Board of Finance and was always involved in the East Hampton Little League, where he coached and umpired for many years.

Ernie was an avid fan of the Boston Red Sox and New England Patriots. Mr. Cordeiro loved his Sunday *New York Times* and its crossword puzzle. An avid reader, he loved the East Hampton Public Library and would make many trips per week for new books.

Above all, Ernie Cordeiro was a dad and grandpa to his kids and grandchildren. When his kids were of school-age, he attended every practice and was in the bleachers for every game and in the audience for every concert or performance. And when his kids were grown and had kids of their own, he loved visiting with his grandchildren, watching them play and making them laugh.

Mr. Cordeiro is survived by his loving wife of 58 years, Cecelia; their children, Derrie Ann Cordeiro, Steven Cordeiro and his wife Camille Cordeiro, Thom Cordeiro and his wife Kimberly Jones Cordeiro, and Grant Cordeiro; his brother, Raymond and his wife Ory Lima of Bristol, R.I.; his grandchildren, Andrew, Ryan, Samantha, Eric, Sydney and Richie, Jenna, Mason and Lily; great-grandchildren, Emily and Adelynn; and numerous nieces and nephews.

He was predeceased by four brothers, John, Arthur, Richard and Robert, and his sister, Evelyn.

The family would like to thank the doctors, nurses and staff at East Hampton Family Practice, Middlesex Hospital Hospice & Palliative Care and Marlborough Health & Rehabilitation Center for their care.

Friends may call at the Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton, Monday evening, June 5, from 6-8 p.m. Funeral services will be held Tuesday, June 6, at 11 AM in the funeral home, burial will follow in Lake View Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the East Hampton Public Library, 105 Main St., East Hampton, CT 06424.

To leave online condolences, visit spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.



Colchester

Carol K. Guarnaccia

Carol K. Guarnaccia, 74, passed away at home with her loving family at her side Monday, May 29, following a courageous battle with cancer. She was born in Middletown Sept. 16, 1942, to the late Michael and Rose (Jackson) Kromish.



Carol graduated from Bacon Academy in 1960. On June 1, 1963 she married Charles V. Guarnaccia at St. Andrew Church; he predeceased her. Carol worked as a mortgage originator at several local banks. Carol was a fan of Elvis and the Red Sox; she was an avid reader who enjoyed the beach, floral arranging, music and crafting with her granddaughter. Her family was the center of her life.

Carol is survived by her loving daughters Rosemary Guarnaccia-Jayaseelan and husband Ebe of Fairfield and Charleen Guarnaccia-Albanese and her husband Matthew of West Bridgewater, Mass.; brothers, Paul Kromish and his partner Stephen Young of Florida and North Carolina and Michael Kromish and wife Barbara of Florida; granddaughter, Lucia Jayaseelan of Fairfield; as well as numerous nieces and nephews.

Calling hours will begin at 9:30 a.m. Saturday, June 3, at Belmont Funeral Home, 144 S. Main St., Colchester followed by a Mass of Christian Burial at St. Andrew Church at 11 a.m. Burial will immediately follow at New St. Andrew Cemetery.

Donations may be made 'In memory of Carol K. Guarnaccia' for the Women's Cancer Prevention - MB Fund #23125. Make checks payable to The UConn Foundation, Inc. and forward to the following address: 2390 Alumni Drive, Unit 3206, Storrs, CT 06269.

Visit belmontfh.com to leave condolences.

East Hampton

June A. Stratoti

June A. (Trzcinski) Stratoti, 65, of East Hampton, beloved wife of 42 years to Raymond Stratoti, died Friday, May 26, at Middlesex Hospital. Born June 11, 1951, in Ridgefield, she was the daughter of the late Henry and Audrey (Crooker) Trzcinski.



June was employed by Stop & Shop for over 25 years, working mostly in Cromwell and Montville. She was a diehard Red Sox and Patriots fan and enjoyed spending time with her family, boating in the Connecticut River and Long Island Sound. June liked to travel to the Cape and Worcester, Vt. Her favorite saying was "It is what it is." It gave her great pleasure in life to be able to give her grandchildren anything they wanted to put a smile on their faces.

June is survived by her loving husband Raymond of East Hampton; her son David Stratoti of Colchester and his better half Dawn Puglisi; her daughter Sara Stratoti of East Hampton and her fiancé Ted Thereault; two brothers, Wayne Trzcinski and wife MaryLou, Chris Trzcinski and wife Laurie; two sisters, Lisa Bassett and Dawn Lucas and husband Paul; her goddaughter, Heidi Redfern; and her two beloved grandsons, Michael and Aiden.

Friends may call at the Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton, Sunday, June 4, from 5-8 p.m. A funeral service will be held Monday, June 5, at 11 a.m., in the funeral home. Burial will be private.

To leave online condolences, visit spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.