

RIVEREAST

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Stone Work... On July 8, Mike Merriman, a local expert on cleaning and aligning stones, instructed the Andover Olde Cemetery subcommittee consisting of Mike Donnelly, Steve Fish, Bob Post and chairman Mike Kurdzo on how to align stones in the cemetery. They were able to complete three stones and their plan is to straighten four more stores in August. In September, the subcommittee will clean the stones.

Is 'Toxic' Situation Hurting Belltown GOP?

by Elizabeth Regan

Amid allegations of a "toxic" environment within the Republican Town Committee and the departure of several members, the town's Grand Old Party has put forth a scant slate of candidates for the 2017 municipal election.

Current Town Council Chairwoman Patience Anderson withdrew her candidacy for another term on the council and tendered her resignation from the committee in an email to RTC Chairman George Coshow immediately following the party's July 18 caucus.

"I cannot be part of a slate of candidates that includes a person that has done nothing but harm the party and the other members of the boards they served on," she wrote.

Anderson has gone on record in the past criticizing Town Councilor Ted Hintz Jr. for angry outbursts she said he has made publicly and in private.

"It's just been a very toxic, untenable situation for me for the time I've been on council as chair," she said.

Anderson said she has brought her concerns to the committee "in various forms," but does not feel they were addressed.

"It's hard enough to do the people's work and do what you think is best, but then when the organization that put your name into consideration works against you, it's just not worth it. It's not," she said.

Coshow said Wednesday he was aware of Anderson's viewpoint.

"That's her feelings," he said. "Maybe I didn't see it the same way."

Coshow described Hintz, an accountant, as someone with "an immediate grasp of the fi-

nancial impact of things" who brings a valuable skill set to the committee.

"He's a numbers guy. He's not a salesman," Coshow said.

Hintz is in his third term on the council and previously served as finance board chairman for four years.

Though Hintz emailed a brief statement on his candidacy, he said he was on vacation and was not available to respond further.

"I am honored that the East Hampton RTC wishes to have me continue to serve the town and am looking forward to a positive election season," Hintz wrote.

Hintz joins Republican council candidates Melissa Engel, Tim Feegel and Josh Piteo on this year's slate.

Board of Education member Debra Devin said Tuesday she also declined endorsement and withdrew from the committee. Board of Education member Erika Bonaccorso resigned from the committee but remains on the school board for the remainder of her two-year term.

Devin and Bonaccorso respectively credited Republican Town Committee "infighting" and "bickering" as the reason for their departure.

Bonaccorso said she felt pressured to vote the way the committee wanted her to, instead of being encouraged to act on what she felt was the will of the residents.

"It has to be about voters, not certain individuals," she said.

Republican Board of Education member Tania Sones, who is registered with the party but is not a member of the town committee,

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Rhonda Vincent to Headline Podunk Fest

by Lauren Yandow

With the 21st Podunk Bluegrass Music Festival coming to town, Rhonda Vincent and her band The Rage is ready to headline.

"We're bringing the party," Vincent said this week.

Vincent is the most decorated artist in bluegrass history, as a six-time Grammy nominee and eight-time International Bluegrass Music Association (IBMA) Female Vocalist of the Year.

"She is billed as the 'Queen of Bluegrass' and her shows live up to that," said Podunk Festival executive director Mike Wilcox.

As a singer-songwriter and multi-instrumentalist, Vincent plays the fiddle, mandolin and guitar.

"She is highly entertaining and her band is loaded with talent," said Roger Moss, Podunk's outgoing executive director.

Vincent has traveled to Connecticut many times, but hasn't played the Podunk Festival stage since 2010 – when the festival was held in East Hartford. That same year, the Podunk Festival won "Event of the Year" from the International Bluegrass Music Association and

Arts and Humanities Award from the National Recreation and Park Association.

This year marks the first time Rhonda Vincent & The Rage will perform at the festival in Hebron. "We have a lot of friends [in Connecticut] that we're always excited to see," she said.

Last month, Vincent performed in Preston at the Strawberry Park Bluegrass Festival with country singer Daryle Singletary.

Speaking of Singletary, Vincent said she's "especially celebrating" right now because the pair recently released a successful duet album – *American Grandstand*. Vincent noted *American Grandstand* has been No. 1 on the Billboard Bluegrass Charts, and last week it made the Billboard Top Country Albums chart.

The title track on the album, "American Grandstand," was penned by Vincent herself. It's a song she said she's excited to share with the Podunk Festival audience. "What we've been doing on our show... since Daryle's not there," she said, "I've just been singing it with just a guitar the way I wrote it."

Vincent said modern country music tends to sing about a story rather than tell a story – but

that "American Grandstand" actually tells a story. "A lot of people say it could be an old song and I love that," she said.

When asked what the Podunk Festival audience should expect, Vincent said, "I have this incredible band and everyone's featured... I have amazing, amazing musicians."

Vincent said it's important for artists to tailor the members of their band around the artists' music, because the performances are such a collective effort. "I set out with a goal of finding not just incredible musicians, but incredible people."

The Rage consists of five musicians who all lend different talent to make up the band. Hunter Berry's mainstay is the fiddle but he can play an array of instruments including the mandolin, guitar and autoharp. Berry is not just a part of the band, he's a part of Vincent's family – literally; he's married to her daughter, Sally.

"Hunter, he's a party all the time. He's so much fun, he never stops smiling... and that's onstage and offstage," said Vincent.

Brent Burke joined The Rage in 2012 as the band's first-ever dobro player. He's also mar-

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Rhonda Vincent and The Rage will headline the Podunk Bluegrass Music Festival, which returns to Hebron Aug. 10-13 at the Lions Fairgrounds.

Podunk Fest cont. from Front Page

ried to one of Vincent's daughters, her younger daughter Tensel.

Speaking of Burke's talent, Vincent said he is "one of the greatest."

As a 13-year member of the band, Mickey Harris is a vocalist and plays bass.

Aaron McDaris acts as The Rage's banjo player, but he can also play numerous instruments; and Josh Williams lends his voice, guitar skills and multi-instrument abilities to the band. "He plays all the different instruments, and he plays them all equally well," said Vincent.

And while there will be a variety of instruments on display at Vincent's show, there's one thing folks can expect *not* to encounter – auto-tune.

These days, Vincent said, artists can go into the studio and alter their voice and instruments – which is something she simply doesn't do. It means that her shows offer concertgoers the same sound they'd get from popping in one of her CDs.

"We bring the same sounds [on stage] as

when we record in the studio," she said.

Vincent invites people unsure of, or unfamiliar with, bluegrass music to come to the Podunk Festival anyway – because they'll likely end up loving what they hear. "There's country, there's bluegrass, there's gospel, and most of all authentic real talent that is on the stage," she said.

She added that the Podunk Festival will offer something for "all ages from grandma to the baby."

"There's something for everyone," she said, "and I'll guarantee they'll have a good time."

The festival launches Thursday, Aug. 10 at 5:30 p.m. with the Telefunken Band Competition – where four regional bands will go head-to-head for a spot in the 2017 Podunk line-up.

The bands will have their first set judged by professionals and then have an opportunity to play a second set without the pressure just for the audience. This year's bands include: Mamma's Marmalade of Massachusetts, High Strung Reunion of Massachusetts, The Korey Brodsky Band of Connecticut, and Beg, Steal, or Borrow of Vermont.

The 2017 festival line-up stacks up to be pretty impressive, with accolades that speak volumes, said Moss.

Friday's lineup includes two headliners – Rhonda Vincent & The Rage and The Boxcars. Additional Friday performers include Chasing Blue, Valery Smith & Liberty Pike, and The Surly Gentlemen.

On Saturday, last year's band competition winner Mile Twelve kicks off the music at noon – followed by Barefoot Movement, Cardinal Tradition, and Becky Bueller. The Gibson Brothers will close out Saturday's show.

"As always, we look to bring the best of bluegrass music and feel that the diverse line-up includes IBMA award winners," said Moss.

Some of those IBMA winners include Becky Bueller, Josh Williams, The Gibson Brothers and The Boxcars – 2011-13 Instrumental Group of the Year.

The festival doesn't just present established bluegrass musicians; it also provides an acoustic stage for local non-bluegrass talent. It's a way, Wilcox said, to give local musicians a

platform to perform and introduce them to the bluegrass genre – a style they may otherwise not be familiar with. It's also a way for the bluegrass performers to check out Connecticut musicians. Local musicians will play the acoustic stage on both Friday and Saturday of the festival.

Sunday's performers include a gospel sing and jam with Mike and Mary Robinson, Barefoot Movement and the Bluegrass Kids Academy Performance. The Kids Academy is a free of charge instructional and performance program offered by the festival for young bluegrass musicians.

The 21st Podunk Bluegrass Music Festival runs Thursday, Aug. 10-Sunday, Aug. 13, at the Hebron Lions Fairgrounds, 347 Gilead St. (Route 85) in Hebron.

Parking is available on the fairground site for \$5 per day.

There is a wide variety of ticket prices, and onsite camping is also available. For more information about the event, ticket prices and onsite camping, visit PodunkBluegrass.com.

Belltown cont. from Front Page

declined to run under the Republican banner at last week's caucus.

She told the *Riverast* this week she was nominated anyway, which left her feeling like a "placeholder."

"That was very disappointing because I made it clear of my intentions, but I still wasn't listened to," she said.

Sones did not dismiss the idea of running altogether, but said she was "taking a little break." She said she is open to running for office on the Chatham Party ticket.

Sones was a Chatham Party candidate for Town Council in 2015.

Minor parties must file their slates of candidates by Sept. 6.

The only Republican candidate for the Board of Education on this year's slate is Marc Lambert, the current chairman of the Board of Finance.

Lambert said Wednesday he is running for the school board because the committee was struggling to find candidates.

He described the lack of interest in the board as "unfortunate, to say the least."

The father of three East Hampton High School graduates who are now in their early 20s, Lambert said he views education as a pre-eminent issue in town.

"Education and public safety: Those should be the top two priorities of any municipal budget. It's just that simple," he said.

Lambert, an accountant, said he decided earlier this year not to run for another term on the finance board because of job uncertainty. But his prospects of stability at work improved, enabling him to put in his name for the school board when he saw the obvious need.

He said he will bring thoughtfulness, reason and fairness to his role if he is elected in November. And while he said he will answer questions from the Republican Town Committee and give them feedback on any votes he may cast, he emphasized members of the committee "don't have to agree" with him.

The Republican Town Committee slated three candidates for the four open seats on the Board of Finance: Incumbent Alannah Danaher Coshow; her husband, George; and Richard Brown.

The committee endorsed Maria Peplau for the Board of Assessment Appeals, which has three open seats; Margaret Jacobson for a five-year term on the Zoning Board of Appeals beginning in 2017, which has one open seat; Sal Nucifora for a five-year term on the Zoning Board of Appeals beginning in 2018, which has one open seat; and no candidates for Zoning Board of Appeals alternate, which has three open seats.

Incumbent Councilor Melissa Engel said it's getting increasingly hard in municipalities across the state to field a full slate for any party. According to the seven-term council member, the Republican Town Committee is running the same people over and over again with little in the way of new candidates.

She pointed out that elected positions are becoming more time-consuming – especially in light of a state budget shortfall that translates into tough decisions at the local level – even as many people have fewer hours available to them due to work and commute time.

"[Between] that and all the abuse, how do you get people to say 'wouldn't that be a fun thing to do,'" she said.

*From the Editor's Desk***Observations & Ruminations**

by Mike Thompson

Here we are at the last Friday in July. This month just seemed to fly by; I know they all typically do these days – a product of getting older, I suppose – but July seemed to move particularly fast. I know it had the same number of days it always did, though.

But it got me thinking – was there a month in history that actually was shorter than it usually is? A month where the days didn't just *seem* to fly – they really did?

The answer is: Yup.

In the mid-1700s, Britain was still using the old Julian calendar, which dated back to 45 BC, while most of Europe was using the newer, more-accurate Gregorian calendar, which was issued in 1582. As not having the same calendar as, say, Italy and France was just making things confusing, Britain finally agreed in 1750 to adopt the Gregorian calendar. Trouble is, there was some significant catch-up to be played. To get on the same page with the other countries that used the Gregorian calendar, Britain would need to skip 11 days.

So, in September 1752, it did just that. People living in Britain and all of its territories – including the American colonies – went to bed on Sept. 2, and when they woke up the next day, it was Sept. 14. Sept. 3-13 simply vanished.

Did July zip by? Yeah, at least to me, it definitely did. But September 1752: that was a month that *really* flew.

* * *

In the late '90s there was a weekly reality show called *America's Dumbest Criminals*. It was pretty much what the title suggested – an hour-long series showcasing rather foolish criminals. On Monday, I came across a case out of Hartford that would've been excellent fodder for the show.

According to the *Hartford Courant*, at about 2:15 a.m. Sunday, Noah Yankowski and Zachary Pillarella, both 21 and of Cromwell, approached a Hartford police officer as he was walking to his personal car, having completed his shift. Seemingly not knowing he was a cop, Yankowski and Pillarella told the officer they were looking to "buy coke."

The two told the officer they needed some cash to do so first – so the cop told them there was an ATM in the lobby of the police station.

Amazingly, Yankowski and Pillarella went along with this, and went to the police station's ATM to get \$60 to buy the cocaine.

Meanwhile, the cop called the officers at the front desk of the police station and let them know what was going on. Yankowski and Pillarella were quickly arrested, and the \$60 they had retrieved from the ATM seized as evidence.

The two were each charged with criminal attempt to possess narcotics and conspiracy to possess narcotics, the *Courant* reported.

* * *

This isn't exactly happening in one of the *Riverast* towns, but it sounds like a nice event with two good causes, so I wanted to share it: Disaster Restoration Services – which is, by the way, based in Portland – is sponsoring a golf tournament next month to benefit the Connecticut Food Bank as well as the Connecticut Burns Care Foundation, which is a Milford nonprofit that provides financial support to burn care units and promotes burn prevention.

The event will be held at Lyman Orchards Golf Club, 70 Lyman Rd., Middlefield, on Thursday, Aug. 17, starting at 9 a.m.

To register, contact Tammy Strong at 860-788-6822 or tstrong@drscleanup.com.

* * *

Last week I shared some quotes from baseball great Casey Stengel. This week, here are some lines from a man more widely celebrated for his wit – the great Groucho Marx: —"Outside of a dog, a book is man's best friend. Inside of a dog, it's too dark to read." —"I find television very entertaining. Every time somebody turns on the set, I go into the other room and read a book."

—"I've had a perfectly wonderful evening, but this wasn't it."

—"I'm not crazy about reality, but it's still the only place to get a decent meal."

—"He may look like an idiot and talk like an idiot, but don't let that fool you. He really is an idiot."

—"She got her looks from her father. He's a plastic surgeon."

—"I was married by a judge. I should have asked for a jury."

—"I intend to live forever, or die trying."

* * *

See you next week.

Portland Resident Tells of True Crime in Book

by Elizabeth Regan

Jim Steffman is hoping the release of his true crime memoir *Shadow of Death* will encourage Hollywood to pick up the stranger-than-fiction story of the former Portland businessman's unwitting friendship with a notorious drug kingpin.

The then-unpublished manuscript served as the basis for Steffman's screenplay "For What It's Worth," a feature winner at the 2013 Moondance International Film Festival.

Steffman's true crime memoir and screenplay both contain the shocking allegation that an agent with the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency shot him in the stomach while trying to shake him down for information in a Rocky Hill parking garage three decades ago.

It was only after production companies proved reluctant to take on Steffman's incredible tale of government coercion that he decided to "get the story out" by self-publishing the book.

With advice from his publicist, Steffman decided to have the manuscript examined by copyright attorneys and printed through Amazon to prove to Hollywood it's a properly-vetted story with an audience.

Describing himself as a "victim author," Steffman said the federal probe by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the DEA cost him his relationship with family, his health, his businesses and his civil rights.

"There's not a lot of these stories out there like this that are written by the victim," Steffman said from his Portland home on Great Hill Pond earlier this month.

Steffman was operating a lucrative car wash, gas station and storage facility in Portland as well as a strip club in Meriden during the mid-1980s when he met the man he came to know as retired airline pilot "John Hurley." It was only later, he said, that he found out his new friend was an international drug trafficker and made-man with the Patriarca crime family whose given name was Salvatore Michael Caruana.

"Hurley" proved well-connected and effective when he came to Steffman's rescue twice during the opening months of the Meriden strip club, according to the book: first when a motorcycle gang tried to assert dominance over Steffman and again when a business partner started skimming profits from the club.

Steffman was curious enough about the source of his friend's wealth and power to ask an attorney to run a credit check on the man, he wrote. He was satisfied when the inquiry came back showing Hurley was "exactly who he said he was: a guy who lived in a condo in East Hampton, owned a few cars, a boat, and a mortgage."

About a year after they met, a different truth emerged. Steffman said Hurley admitted to traf-

ficking drugs for Italian crime families throughout the northeast and landing on the FBI's Most Wanted list. He told Steffman he had been on the run for several years after posting a half-million dollar bond and then failing to show up at court on charges related to the importation of approximately 1.5 million pounds of marijuana valued at \$40 million.

Then he disappeared again.

With Caruana in the wind, federal agents descended on Steffman in an effort to get him to turn on his friend.

A synopsis of the book describes the dramatic progression of events starring Steffman and the DEA as one that nearly left the local man dead.

"Lies, threats, seizure of properties, trumped-up charges, attempted murder and bureaucratic corruption the likes of which Steffman had never before encountered would eventually capsize his businesses and drive away friends and family," the synopsis states. "Steffman would survive, but he would never be the same."

Steffman said he was never arrested, charged or convicted of any crimes.

His business aspirations, however, were finished. He said he now lives on Social Security benefits and his wife's income as a nurse as he refurbishes Chris-Craft boats with one of his two sons.

With the Drug Enforcement Agency's acronym highly visible on the book cover – the title is depicted as "Shadow of DEATH" – Steffman's self-professed goal was to publicize the government's efforts to ruin his life despite his insistence he was not involved in Caruana's affairs.

During the interview at his home, Steffman said the situation is complicated by the fact that the U.S. Constitution affords federal agents immunity from state prosecution.

He said lawyers wouldn't touch his case against the DEA; elected officials at the federal level wouldn't vouch for him.

Then there's the question of innocence.

"Some will say my involvement in Caruana's criminal activity or knowledge of it must be deeper because of the severe damage done to me by the government," he wrote in an author's note at the end of the book. "The violations of my civil rights and the millions of dollars taken from me wouldn't have happened if I were innocent. After all, the government wouldn't have spent the resources going after someone for no reason, right?"

But Steffman said he has the records to back up everything he wrote – though he added that some of the government documents he originally obtained through the Freedom of Information Act were reclassified as confidential before the book was published.

About half of the supporting documents remain in the book.



Portland's Jim Steffman recently published the story of his unwitting friendship with mobster Salvatore Caruana and the federal investigation that followed. The manuscript served as the basis for a script that earned top billing in the feature screenplay category of the 2013 Moondance International Film Festival. Here, Steffman is pictured with Moondance founder Elizabeth English.

"I was able to document enough so when you read the story, you know it's true. You may have a lot of questions, but there's an answer for each one. It's usually complicated, but it's there," he said.

According to a 2014 story in the *Courant*, organized crime investigators believe Caruana may have been buried decades ago under a garage at a home in Hamden as part of a war within the Patriarca crime family.

Steffman, who spoke alongside his wife, Leslie, and son, Matthew, said the book was written as part of psychological therapy sessions he attended weekly for 10 years.

He said he would "go in prepared" to each therapy session by writing down one part of his story that bothered him.

"I would write in detail what happened to me and we'd go over it for the hour. Then it would come home and get thrown on the bureau. And then after a year and a half, the bureau got really high," he said.

Leslie Steffman said there were times her husband wanted to throw out everything he'd written, to the point she decided to hide the papers so he couldn't get to them. Ultimately, she helped him organize the stories in chrono-

logical order to help the story take shape.

"Then all I really had to do was write to connect all the little stories together so it flowed," Jim Steffman said. "And then we had a manuscript."

Steffman was encouraged by a recent interview with a Hollywood producer, whom he said showed interest in the screenplay. He said he hopes the new book, with all the documentation he's collected over the years, will erase any concerns a production company may have about liability when it comes to Steffman's allegations against the government.

Steffman said any risk is squarely on his shoulders, adding that there hasn't been any response from federal agencies in the two months since the book was published.

"I think if I didn't document it, I may have problems," he said. "But it's a documented book. What are you going say? It happened. It's true."

Leslie Steffman brushed off the idea of any blowback from the government.

"It's been 30 years," she said. "We don't have problems."

Shadow of Death is available through amazon.com and barnesandnoble.com.

Colchester Democrats Welcome Diverse Slate

by Julianna Roche

A mixed bag of familiar names and newcomers highlight the Colchester Democrats' slate this year, after they caucused earlier this week.

According to Democratic Town Committee Chairman Don Kennedy – who has served as party chairman since 2014 – he will act as the placeholder for first selectman, while the Democrats search for another candidate.

"We're going to have to continue talking to people to see if they're interested," he said of the position. "In my mind, [we're looking for someone] who can win and can they govern? Can they do the job?"

For selectmen, veterans Rosemary Coyle and Jim Ford made the list – both of whom, Kennedy explained, were easy choices.

"Rosemary has served on the board for a number of years and she's a wonderful board member, so that was an easy one," he said, adding that Ford too has experience as a selectman and even ran as first selectman in 2013, but lost to Republican incumbent Gregg Schuster.

"His return to the Board of Selectmen we feel will be a great asset to the town with him bringing years of experience," Kennedy noted.

For the Board of Finance, Rosalyn Loiacono and John Malsbenden are listed as placeholders for the two six-year term seats, while resident Mike Egan – a former Board of Education member – is listed as a full member for the two-year term seat.

Egan has drawn some criticism from residents at Board of Finance meetings over the last year, after he interviewed for the finance board seat in November 2016 vacated by former Colchester Independent Party member James McNair.

Egan was charged in January 2010 with disorderly conduct and second-degree criminal mischief, following an altercation with a student at an October 2009 Bacon Academy high school football game; the charges were later dropped.

"My feeling is that it's in the past and it's never affected his ability on the Board of Education when I served with him for years," Kennedy said, adding he had "no issues or concerns" with Egan serving on the Board of Finance.

"He's passionate about the town of Colchester [and] the school district, and we feel he'll be a great [Board of Finance] member," he continued.

Kennedy added that the Democrats will continue looking for candidates to fill the two placeholder positions on the Board of Finance, though he said "we'd love to have any of our placeholders" take on the job.

"We're looking for people who understand that they will need to move the town of Colchester forward," Kennedy said. "The Board of Finance is unique in that they're like the fi-

duciary guardians of the town... It's a huge responsibility."

The chairman furthered that the committee is looking for candidates "who won't just walk in there and cut things," but also "on the other side, won't vote for every increase because that doesn't help anybody either."

On the Board of Education side, Kennedy explained the Democrats have four newcomers running, which include residents Michael Hayes, Mary Bylone, Amy Domeika and Julia Broad as a placeholder.

"We're very excited about all of them," he said, adding that while Bylone and Domeika are new to the political slate, Bylone has leadership experience in the nursing field, while Domeika is a parent of children in the school system.

Kennedy furthered the board felt Domeika could bring "new ideas" to the school system, which would be beneficial to the district's personalized learning initiative introduced last year, "Innovation Nation."

Newcomer Michael Hayes agreed that *Innovation Nation* would be a focus of his on the board, stating that he felt "right now our children need to have a technological education to stay ahead in the world."

"We are so far behind the rest of the countries, I think [*Innovation Nation*] is a great opportunity for the children of Colchester to take

advantage of," he continued, adding however, that while the children's education was of the utmost importance, running the ballot box at the town's referendums has taught him to "listen to both sides" of what the public wants "without making any snap decisions."

Kennedy, after serving on the Board of Education since 2008, will not be seeking reelection.

For the treasurer position, John Ringo will seek reelection, and Denise Turner and Andrew Cournoyer will seek re-election for the Board of Assessment Appeals.

"We're looking forward to the campaign," Kennedy said, adding the Democrats hope it will be "an exchange of ideas and an exchange of proposals."

"When all is said and done it's going to be about doing what's best for Colchester," he furthered.

"We work together well now, and we're going to have to work together well after the campaign... We're not looking to have something like what's been happening at the national level the last two years," he furthered. "That's not how you run a community."

Municipal elections will be held Tuesday, Nov. 7.

Colchester Republican Slate Stacked with Experience

by Julianna Roche

Only one new candidate landed on the Colchester Republican slate for the upcoming 2017 municipal election, with the rest of the list loaded with those running for reelection.

“I would say this – we have very experienced candidates running,” Republican Town Committee Chairman Brenden Healy said of the slate, which includes Republican incumbent Art Shilosky for First Selectman.

After serving on the Board of Finance, Shilosky won the Republican seat for first selectman in 2015 over Democrat Kurt Frantzen by a 1,686-1,422 vote.

“Art is very popular in town and we’re looking to support him,” Healy noted, adding that incumbents Denise Mizla and Stan Soby will also seek reelection as selectmen.

A Board of Selectmen veteran, Soby temporarily took over the role of first selectman in 2014 when Gregg Schuster moved out of state prior to Shilosky being elected to the position.

On the Board of Education side, the GOP endorsed newcomer Christopher McGlynn, who moved to Colchester with his family – which includes three children and one on the

way – two years ago.

“Christopher is relatively new to Colchester and has a young family with several kids in the school system,” Healy said. “We think he’ll bring an immediate perspective [to the board].”

McGlynn explained he wanted to raise a family in an area that had a good school system and a good sense of community,” adding it was specifically the Colchester school system that drew his family to town.

He furthered that having his own children in the school system would give him a “vested interest” serving on the Board of Education.

“There’s a very good group of people on there right now and I’m just really excited about having the opportunity to carry on that [role],” McGlynn said.

Currently, McGlynn works as relationship manager at Prudential Financial, and explained that his finance background and project management skills were some assets he’d be bringing to the table.

“The budget will be one thing that’s definitely on the forefront of a lot of people’s minds,” he continued. “I would like to be able

to assist with looking at all the facts and making decisions.”

Current Board of Education member Mitchell Koziol – who has served on the board for eight years – will also be running for reelection.

For the Board of Finance, incumbents Andrea Migliaccio and Roberta Lepore – who were both appointed to the board in 2016 – will be running for the six-year term seats.

Migliaccio had replaced Shilosky’s spot when he vacated the position after winning the first selectman seat in the 2015 election. A Colchester resident since 1997, Migliaccio has 25 years of banking experience, including 15 years in securities registrations. She’s currently with REED Wealth Management in Colchester, a Wells Fargo financial advisor business. Before that, she was vice president of Citizens Bank and Webster Bank, along with being a financial advisor for Webster Investments.

Migliaccio is also familiar with the Colchester school system as she’s had three children who have gone through the district and

taught in the Colchester Public Schools from 2006-09.

Lepore meanwhile – who was unanimously appointed to the board in August 2016 following former board member Robert Esteve’s resignation due to time conflicts – has worked as a senior director of global risk compliance and control at Pfizer since 2007 and also has experience working as an auditor for Arthur Andersen, LLP and executive director of finance for the Mohegan Tribe of Indians.

“At the end of the day, experience is the recurring theme here [on our slate],” Healy reiterated.

Also on the slate is incumbent David Anderson, who will be running for reelection for the Board of Assessment Appeals and Healy – who works as a CPA for Whittlesey & Hadley, P.C. – and plans to run for the town treasurer position, currently held by Democrat incumbent John Ringo.

Municipal elections will take place Tuesday, Nov. 7.

Old and New Faces Make Up East Hampton Dems’ Slate

by Elizabeth Regan

The Democratic Town Committee has endorsed a slate of new and experienced candidates.

DTC Chairwoman Barbara Moore said the ticket represents a “large cross section of ages, ideas and energy.”

The Democrats endorsed incumbents Kevin Reich and James “Pete” Brown for the town council. Joining them on the ticket are Dean Markham and Alan Hurst, both current finance board members, as well as newcomer Matt Bennington.

Bennington said he was unavailable for an interview this week. Moore declined to give any information about him.

Reich, a two-term incumbent, said he’s encouraged by this year’s endorsed candidates.

“There are some new, young faces and I am anxiously looking forward to inviting them to join me to go door-to-door so I can introduce them to the rest of the community,” Reich said.

The 67-year-old educator listed the municipal hub project, an expanded water system and the health of Lake Pocotopaug as some of the key issues in town going forward.

“I chose to run again because I want to see the police department/town hall project come

to fruition,” he said this week. “I have been on the Town Council for a number of years and it’s a project I firmly believe needs to be completed.”

He said he wants to be involved in bringing the proposed facility, which would be part of the Edgewater Hills mixed-use development on Route 66, to voters at referendum in November – and, if it’s approved, he wants “to see the project under way.”

The Democratic candidates for the Board of Finance are Moore, whose resume includes one and a half terms on the finance board and three on the council; former finance board chairman Ted Turner; and new faces Robyn Letourneau and Ben Phillips.

Phillips, 35, is a communications director for the Connecticut State Employees Association. He is currently working toward his graduate certificate in business economics through the Harvard Extension School.

Phillips and his wife, Jennifer, have two school-aged children and one preschooler.

“We care about making our community as good as it can possibly be, because it’s where we’re raising our kids,” he said this week.

Phillips expressed a commitment to grow-

ing the town while maintaining its unique charm.

“I want to ensure tax dollars are being spent wisely and I want to make sure, with any expenditures being made, that taxpayers are not going to be taken for a ride,” he said.

The Democratic ticket for the Board of Education is made up of incumbents Chris Goff, who currently serves as chairman, Jeff Carlson and Lois Villa. New candidates are Amanda Amtmanis and Lori Caldwell.

Amtmanis, 51, is a physical education teacher in Middletown.

While she has not run for elected office before, her advocacy for education and sports has deep roots. As a high school student in the early 1980s, she successfully rallied support for a girls’ soccer team.

She said initial plans for a girls’ team were scrapped due to financial constraints. That’s when she learned about the recently-enacted federal law prohibiting discrimination against women in federally-funded education.

She said she petitioned under Title IX to institute a girls’ soccer team after the proposed program was cut from the budget.

“That’s how we got a girls soccer team at East Hampton High School,” she said.

Amtmanis, who has two adult children, said she only recently became interested in taking an active political role in town.

Her candidacy stems from the belief that school boards should be filled with people who are committed to education, which she said is not always the case.

“I know the financial reality is an important issue to people, obviously, but we can’t have anti-education people filling our boards of education,” she said. “It’s important work that needs to be done and I think you need to have people that value education doing the work.”

The committee endorsed Carol Williams and Jack Soloman for the Board of Assessment Appeals, which has three open seats; Charles Nichols for a five-year term on the Zoning Board of Appeals beginning in 2017, which has one open seat; Brian Spack for a five-year term on the Zoning Board of Appeals beginning in 2018, which has one open seat; and Bob Hines (incumbent), Joe Carbonell and George Pfaffenbach for Zoning Board of Appeals alternate, which has three open seats.

Fourteen Marlborough GOP Candidates Seeking Re-Election

by Julianna Roche

There’s a lot of old mixed in with the new on the Marlborough Republican Town Committee’s slate of candidates this year. Of the 20 people the committee endorsed at its caucus last week, 14 are incumbents seeking re-election.

According to RTC Chairman Ken Hjulstrom, each of the endorsed candidates is positioned to “bring a lot of experience forward to [the town’s] boards and commissions.”

Among the group, he explained, are both new and recognizable faces – which, for example, include Board of Finance members Susan Leser and Midge Denno.

Hjulstrom explained that Denno, who has served as an alternate since 2013, would replace the seat filled by the board’s current vice chairman Cliff Denniss, a veteran of the board who Hjulstrom said has “decided to step back from public service for a while.”

This week, Denniss explained that he felt it was simply his “time to turn the seat over” to someone else, after serving four years as an alternate and the last eight as a full member on the board.

“Over the years it hasn’t always been easy, but I’d like to think that I did my part in holding taxes at a reasonable level,” he said. “I think

it’s time someone else take it over and hopefully they will share my concern in trying to keep Marlborough affordable.

“Cliff has served the community for many years,” Hjulstrom said of the vice chairman. “We will miss him as a member of [the] Board of Finance.”

“I wish he’d stay,” Board of Finance Chairman Doug Knowlton said.

“He’s always been an active contributor and has [shared] his point of view,” he furthered. “He’s definitely been an asset on the board. I think maybe he just got burned out a little, but he’s always cared about the town.”

Knowlton added that he also appreciated that Denniss has always “been very thorough going through the budgets and all the various line items.”

As for his replacement, Knowlton said the board would “certainly welcome” Denno as a full member and applauded her ability to be “very conscientious.”

“She’s very active on the board, and even as an alternate she’s almost always attended all the meetings,” he said.

As for alternates, Hjulstrom said Bob Cindric and Liz Gorgoglione have been endorsed, and

while “both are new to municipal government,” they “both have careers in financing.”

Cindric is also president of the Marlborough Lions Club.

As for the Board of Education, Susan Rapelye and unaffiliated Wes Skorski both booked spots on the ticket, with resident Richard Denno as a placeholder.

“We see both Sue and Wes as strongly-committed persons who have striven to make our elementary school among the best in Connecticut, while at the same time controlling costs,” Hjulstrom said.

Skorski, who has served on the board for the last four years, explained he “originally” reached out to the Democratic party to run on its ticket, but “did not get the expected support” from them and turned to the Republicans instead.

“We are very pleased to add Wes to the Republican ticket,” Hjulstrom said, adding Skorski has “proven himself to be a very valuable and thoughtful member of the Board of Education.”

“It’s been a tough several budget years,” Skorski reflected, adding however, he felt the Board of Education overall has “done a good job balancing between doing just what was re-

quired without impacting the taxpayers too much and being able to maintain a high level of education for the kids.”

Moving forward, Skorski said his goal is “primarily to keep that balance” between what some of the “more conservative taxpayers desire” and “maintaining a high level of education.”

On the Board of Assessment Appeals, Republicans endorsed John Varney and David Morganson; Brendon Monstream and Larry Pryor for the Planning Commission; Mark Merritt, unaffiliated Susan McFarland and unaffiliated Eric Colantonio, and David Fisher as an alternate for the Zoning Commission; Corinne Machowski, Eric Kelly, Carl Carlson as a placeholder, and Joseph Weber as an alternate on the Zoning Board of Appeals; and Judy Benson-Clarke and Carl Carlson as a placeholder on the RHAM Board of Education.

The Board of Selectmen, including the first selectman position – currently held by Amy Traversa – serve four-year terms in Marlborough and will not hold another election until November 2019.

Election Day is Tuesday, Nov. 7.

Hebron Democrats Endorse Slate of Candidates

by Lauren Yandow

While most are working to soak up some summer sun, the Hebron Democratic Town Committee is looking ahead to autumn. Last Tuesday evening, the committee endorsed a slate of candidates for the Nov. 7 municipal elections.

Speaking on the endorsed candidates this week, Hebron Democratic Town Committee Chairman Ted Bromley said the caucus went very well – “we had the largest turnout of Hebron Democrats in recent memory.”

People are motivated to get involved due to recent events at both the State and Federal level, he added.

“We were able to put together a very strong slate of candidates all with extraordinary qualifications that will prove invaluable when working for the residents of Hebron,” he said.

Two newcomers were endorsed for the Board of Selectmen – John Collins and Marc Rubera.

Collins said, “I think we’re at a time right now of transition, we have a beautiful town and we want to keep it beautiful.” But, “we also want to be fiscally responsible and prudent,” he added.

If elected, “one thing I want to do is help bring business to the business district so that we can lower property taxes,” said Collins.

“We’re so close to UConn so it seems that Hebron should be able to attract high-tech businesses,” he said; Which could help mitigate those community property taxes and add to the

community overall, he added.

With a Ph.D. in soil science and 35 years in the environmental business, Collins said he gives the town “great credit” for transitioning to a single stream recycling facility and bringing natural gas to the town.

The addition of natural gas, he said, is a “boon to the town because it’s cheap and more environmentally friendly.”

However, Collins said solar energy should still be promoted – and added he plans to advocate for it.

Board of Selectmen candidate Marc Rubera serves as a sergeant with the Hebron Police Department.

Rubera said as a police officer, he’s grown to “love the town and its people.” That community connection is what, he said, ignited his decision to run for the board. He credits Town Clerk Carla A. Pomproicz and Board of Finance Chairman, Malcolm Leichter, for inspiring him to run.

Rubera said what makes him unique is “as a police officer, people speak very freely to you.”

The number one complaint he hears – “the taxes are too high.”

The public’s concern about high taxes, Rubera said, is a concern he plans to tackle – “because of the tax pace we’re not attracting businesses and new residents so I’d work to lower taxes,” he said.

Ultimately, Rubera said, he wants to listen to the people of Hebron and act as their overall voice on the board.

Among the more notable names of those not running for re-election is Board of Selectmen member Mark Stuart.

Stuart said he’s a firm believer in term limits and that after 12 years on the Board of Selectmen – and previously serving for four years on the Board of Finance – it’s time to call it a day. “I’m self-limiting myself,” he said.

“I’ve been happy to serve the town and it’s been a great experience,” he added.

Speaking on the slate of candidates, Stuart said, “I believe they’ll continue to serve the town very, very well – as the democrats always have in the past.”

Among those endorsed for Board of Education is current Chairwoman Erica Bromley.

Bromley said she’s running for re-election because she feels great progress has been made over the last couple years.

“Being a part of that progress and helping to lead the way is important to me, and I am not ready for that to end yet,” she added.

If re-elected, she said, “I want to bridge the divide between those who are skeptical about what we provide as a school district and make sure everyone is aware of the amazing things that are happening.”

With a 19 year career in youth work, she said,

“I have grown and learned a tremendous amount across a variety of sectors.”

She added, “I feel that I am well positioned to continue this work and look forward to the opportunity and the support of my community.”

Looking ahead to the election, Ted Bromley said the committee was able to place candidates in “almost all available seats, which is a rare accomplishment when you factor in that these dedicated residents are serving without pay on a voluntary basis.”

He added, “It is our hope that the residents of Hebron will find our candidates excellent additions to our local government.”

The full slate of endorsed Democratic candidates is as follows: Board of Selectmen, John Collins, Marc Rubera; Town Clerk, Carla A. Pomproicz; Board of Finance, Malcolm Leichter, Janet Fodaski; Board of Education, Erica Bromley, Heather Petit, Wendy Oakes; Board of Assessment Appeals, Peter Byram, Ted Bromley; Planning and Zoning Commission, Tiffany V. Thiele, Daniel Grady; Planning and Zoning Commission alternate, Cindy Kelly; Zoning Board of Appeals, Anthony Novak, Nicole Lotko, William Malitsky; RHAM Board of Education, Joseph E. O’Connor, Kathleen Goodwin, Robert Schadtle.

Election Day is Tuesday, Nov. 7.

Selectmen Move Forward with Hebron Land Purchase

by Lauren Yandow

Immediately before its regular meeting last week, the Board of Selectmen held a special town meeting to discuss purchasing roughly 10 acres of land on Grayville Road from Joseph Serra for \$65,000.

After discussion, the board voted in favor of buying the property – which abuts the state forest and is in the area of Grayville Falls Town Park.

Purchasing the land will add to the town’s open space for recreation, said Town Manager Andrew Tierney.

The Open Space Land Acquisition Committee looked at the land, appraised the area and believed it would be in the town’s best interest to buy it, said Tierney; thus, pushing it forward to the board.

Funds from the Open Space Land Acquisition account will be used to purchase the property, Tierney said, noting this means there’s no need to add anything to the town budget to buy the land.

Just after the special town meeting, the board held its regular meeting – where it discussed buying even more open space. The selectmen proposed purchasing an estimated 47.5-acre parcel of land on Gilead Street. The area abuts Gilead Hill School to the north; on the far end towards the brook, it abuts preserved land; and on the opposite side, a cemetery.

“It’s a great piece of property,” said Board of Selectmen member Brian O’Connell.

The idea to purchase the land was initially presented to the board by the Open Space Land Acquisition Committee, sparking conversations with current property owners, the Fish family. Those talks have continued over the last eight years – but it wasn’t until just over a year ago that both the town and Fish family started getting serious about moving forward.

The proposal will head to town meeting next

month and, if the acquisition is approved, the town would purchase the land for \$175,000.

O’Connell said the town will later apply for a grant in hopes to offset the cost, but the land must first be purchased outright by the town, said O’Connell.

It’s a piece of property the town wants, O’Connell added – due to the desirable location, rich soils and trails. He noted the acquisition would allow the trails at Gilead Hill School to connect with the new acreage.

“The whole Gilead area is extremely important,” said O’Connell. “This is a win-win for both the property owner and I think the town.”

The board unanimously agreed to send the proposal to town meeting, which will be held Thursday, Aug. 17, at 7 p.m. at the Town Office Building.

Also last week, the board unanimously voted in favor of the town applying for a grant from the Community Connectivity Grant Program (CCGP) through the state Department of Transportation. The new program funds local projects that are intended to make areas safer for people of all ages to walk, bike and get outdoors.

Thomas Fenton, the town’s consulting engineer, attended the meeting to present the project that would connect Hebron Center with the Air Line Trail.

While a portion of the project has already been funded by a previous grant and is currently underway, the new grant would fund the “third phase” of the project, said Fenton.

The new project is estimated to cost just under \$400,000 – which is also the maximum amount the grant would award. The grant covers the cost for the trail construction, but the engineering design and contract administration costs – estimated at \$80,000 – would be the town’s responsibility.

If the project is endorsed, it would be proposed that the \$80,000 come from the town’s Capital Improvement Program (CIP) budget. CIP is for capital projects and one time capital expenses; and separate from the town’s operating budget for departments. The CIP budget process happens yearly, starting in the late fall. If the grant is approved and the CIP does not allow for the additional expense, Tierney said, the project will not be done.

An executive session also took place last Thursday – where the board discussed two separate collective bargaining agreements.

The board came out of executive session and voted to approve the collective bargaining agreement between the town and the town supervisors union. The agreement is retroactive to July 1 and runs through June 30, 2020.

Currently, the supervisors’ wage percentage is 2.25. The newly approved contract increases that wage over three years – 2.25 percent for 2017-18; 2.25 percent for 2018-19; and 2.25 percent 2019-20.

The agreement also gives all four supervisors in the union the option to receive a one percent reduction on premium insurance share plans starting at year two; but only if a health risks assessment and biometric screening is completed by the supervisor and – if applicable – their family member(s).

As for the second collective bargaining agreement, Tierney said Monday, “the board didn’t take any action” regarding the approval of the tentative agreement between the Board of Education and the Administrator’s Association earlier this month. The contract, which covers 2018-21, increased both salary and insurance.

Tierney said no action was needed because the selectmen “didn’t have any issues” with the

agreement.

During the meeting, the board also shared plans to initiate a charter revision review committee – likely by January 2018.

Board of Selectmen Chairman Daniel Larson said the committee would help bring light to details in the charter that may be an obstacle to town operations. “We’re trying to get ideas, concerns... things that would help to make things easier for the town,” said Larson.

Once we get the charter commission going, he said, the board will be looking for volunteers to help brainstorm those ideas and concerns. It’s something that’s done by the taxpayers and voters of Hebron, so Tierney advised residents to “keep your eyes and ears open because we need volunteers to do the review.”

The opportunity to volunteer for the commission will be advertised in the next several months.

For the 13th consecutive year, Hebron has been awarded the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting by Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada for its comprehensive annual financial report.

When announced, board members and public attendees alike began filling the meeting room with compliments and gratitude for the town’s Finance Director, Elaine Griffin and her staff.

Tierney said, “[they’ve] done a great job once again... this shows the tax payer that the town is handling their money appropriately year after year.”

The next Board of Selectmen meeting will be held Thursday, Aug. 17, at 7 p.m., in the lower level meeting room at the Town Office Building, 15 Gilead St.

Hebron Republicans Endorse Slate of Candidates

by Lauren Yandow

While it may be summer, the Hebron Republican Town Committee is looking ahead to fall. On Monday evening, the committee endorsed a slate of candidates for the Nov. 7 municipal elections.

Republican Town Committee Chairwoman Catherine Marx said Monday's caucus was well-attended, and "ended with a very good slate mixed with both incumbents and newcomers."

One of those incumbents is current Board of Selectmen Chairman Daniel E. Larson. "We're very proud Dan is seeking another term," said Marx.

When asked why he's running for reelection, Larson said, he'd like to see projects he – along with the board – have helped facilitate come to fruition. Those projects include the new nursing home, installation of the natural gas pipeline, and a possible expansion of the senior center.

Discussing the concerns he plans to address if re-elected, he said, "there's always the tax issue but, between the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Finance, I believe Hebron is in very sound financial footing."

He went on to reference the town's recent honor – for the 13th consecutive year, Hebron has been awarded the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting by

Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada for its comprehensive annual financial report.

"It's all due to the great people in Town Hall," he said, "as well as good solid planning."

Larson added "it's good people working together... I'd like to see that continue and I'd like to be a part of that."

Larson has the make ability of listening to all constituents, said Marx.

I hope people take a look at where Hebron stands, said Larson, and if they do have concerns they should know the town staff and elected officials are only a phone call away, "we don't bite."

Newcomer Diane Del Rosso is endorsed to run for the Board of Finance. As a 25-year Hebron resident, Del Rosso said she's raised her kids in town and is now looking to give back to the community. "It's very important to me to reconnect with the community and serve the people of Hebron," she said. "That's my goal."

Earning a Master of Business Administration degree and working in finance and accounting for over 20 years, Del Rosso said she chose to run for a spot on the Board of Finance because it's a "natural fit."

If elected, Del Rosso said she'll strive to ensure budgets are balanced and everybody's

concerns are being heard. "The expenses regarding the [local] Board of Education and the RHAM Board of Education can be a concern and I want to make sure those concerns are heard, conversations are clear, and people can understand why things like taxes might have to increase."

Ultimately, she said, she wants balance between parties when it comes to sharing thoughts and concerns. "I'm all about collaboration and making sure all people are heard," she said.

"We're always happy when newcomers come to seek public service in the atmosphere of partisanship," said Marx.

"The people on our slate are truly thinking about Hebron first," she added.

While policy and partisan is a vehicle to get elected, she said, they're all for making Hebron a place to work, live and raise a family.

Newcomers were also endorsed to run for the Board of Education. One such newcomer, Chris Aker, said it's important for adults in the community to be a part of town government. "Rather than be on the sidelines," he said, it's his position to try and "join the solution and help make decisions" in making sure the kids of Hebron get a "top notch" education.

He added it's important to provide that education "within the financial perimeters that are reasonable."

As an assistant attorney general for the state, Aker said, "I prosecute neglect and abuse cases, so I'm very focused in my work in protecting children and trying to facilitate their appropriate development." He added, "education comes into that."

If elected, he said he hopes to start more conversations about the education of kids with special needs, "I'm not saying that it isn't being addressed," he said, "but I'm definitely interested in making sure that our special needs kids get the best services educationally."

Looking ahead to the election, Marx said, "we know almost every race is a contested one and we look forward to putting our Republican ideals up against the Democrats."

The full slate of endorsed Republican candidates is as follows: Board of Selectmen, Daniel E. Larson; Town Clerk, Carla A. Pomponowicz; Board of Finance, Peter Kasper, Diane Del Rosso, Keith Petit; Board of Education, Chris Aker, Ryan Cordier; Board of Assessment Appeals, Phil LoBianco; Planning and Zoning Commission, Natalie Wood, Devon Garner; Planning and Zoning Commission Alternate – Joseph Colletti; RHAM Board of Education – Richard Jacobson, Bruce Olmstead.

Election Day is Tuesday, Nov. 7.

Portland Resident Charged in Fatal Crash

by Elizabeth Regan

A 10-month investigation into a fatal motorcycle crash on Route 66 culminated with an arrest of a local woman last week.

Portland police last week charged Pamela Tracy, 59, of 693 Portland Cobalt Rd., with negligent homicide in the Sept. 18 crash that killed East Hampton resident Donald E. Smith, 34.

The misdemeanor charge is punishable by a maximum \$1,000 fine and six months in jail.

Smith died a day after the crash of complications from blunt force trauma to his head and torso, according to autopsy results outlined in the arrest warrant affidavit.

The affidavit said Tracy was pulling out of her driveway, which she shares with the auto body shop Moore Brothers, Inc., when the crash occurred. She was driving a 1991 Geo Prizm with her two grandsons as passengers.

Officers concluded Tracy drove "directly into the oncoming path" of Smith's 2015 Suzuki motorcycle, which was traveling in the left lane.

Tracy and several witnesses said they saw Smith fly through the air upon impact, the affidavit said.

Tracy told officers she did not see the motorcycle prior to pulling out of the driveway.

The affidavit said an accident reconstructionist from the Middletown Police Department Traffic Unit found Smith had been traveling on a straight, unobstructed path for about two-tenths of a mile when the crash occurred. Smith had been riding as slowly as 43 mph and as fast as 59 mph during the timeframe examined by investigators, according to the affidavit. The posted speed limit was 45 mph.

In addition to accident reconstruction and autopsy results, investigating officer Paul Liseo said Tuesday police relied on multiple witness statements, vehicle inspections and toxicology results.

Vehicle inspection results described in the affidavit showed investigators did not find any defects that would have contributed to the crash.

Liseo said toxicology tests for both Tracy and Smith came back clear.

Liseo worked with the Middlesex state's attorney's office to assign charges that take into account "the totality" of the evidence.

"It has to be fair to everybody," he said, including the victim, the victim's family and the accused.

He noted the term "negligent homicide" confuses some people because it's a misdemeanor, yet it can sound more severe than more serious felonies such as "misconduct with a motor vehicle" or "second-degree manslaughter with a motor vehicle."

The felony charges come into play when investigators find recklessness or intent, which Liseo said did not occur in this case.

Tracy was also charged with failure to grant the right of way from a private driveway.

"It's a tragedy," Liseo said. "There was nothing that was negligent other than not seeing him."

Also arrested July 21 was Tracy's son, Matthew Tracy, 34, also of 693 Portland Cobalt Rd., who owned the Prizm. He was charged with failure to maintain insurance, police said.

East Hampton Police News

7/8: Bryan Patrick Kneeland, 34, of 157 Daly Rd., was arrested and charged with second-degree breach of peace and two separate counts of sixth-degree larceny, East Hampton Police said.

7/10: Erik Brunsgaard, 29, of 24 Tarragon Dr., was issued a summons for following too close with intent to harass, passing in a no-passing zone, operating an unregistered motor vehicle and failure to maintain minimum insurance requirements, police said.

7/14: Katherine Lynn Langan, 34, of 30 Parker Rd., Marlborough, was arrested and charged with second-degree failure to appear, police said.

Also, from July 10-16, officers responded to 16 medical calls, four motor vehicle crashes and six alarms, and made 21 traffic stops, police said.

Portland Resident Charged with Dealing Drugs

A Freestone Avenue resident was arrested last week on several drug-related charges, following a Portland Police investigation into neighborhood complaints of drug dealing.

At 10 a.m. Friday, July 21, Portland Police officers, with the assistance of the Middletown Police Street Crime Unit, executed a narcotics search-and-seizure warrant at 7 Freestone Ave. Police said they received several neighborhood complaints of drug-dealing, and that weeks of surveillance confirmed the com-

plaints.

As a result of the search warrant, police said, Akeal Halliman, 19, of 7 Freestone Ave., was arrested and charged with illegal possession of more than two ounces of marijuana, possession with intent to sell, illegal possession of prescription medication, possession of drug paraphernalia and interfering with a search warrant.

Halliman was released on a \$5,000 non-surety bond, and is due in court Aug. 1.

Colchester Police News

7/17: State Police said Jason W. Carrier, 30, of 7 School Rd., Apt. 5, was arrested and charged with third-degree larceny.

7/21: Colchester Police said Wesley R. Brady, 59, of 56 Norwich Ave., was arrested and charged with second-degree reckless endangerment and criminal violation of a restraining order.

7/22: State Police said Colleen Leonard, 26, of 80 Mohegan Rd., Apt. 4, Norwich, was arrested and charged with criminal violation of a restraining order and disorderly conduct.

Hebron Police News

7/23: State Police said Gregory V. Allen, 21, of 71 New London Tpke., Norwich, 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 a stop sign violation.

Obituaries

Hebron

Casey A. Forte

Casey A. Forte, 83, of Hebron, passed away from this world to be with the Lord Wednesday, July 19, peacefully at home, surrounded by family. She was born Dec. 16, 1933, to the late Thomas Forte Sr. and Rose (Caruso) Forte, and raised in Meriden.



She lived in Glastonbury for many years, where she loved to attend St. Paul Church. She also resided in Highland Beach, Fla., Delray Beach, Fla., and enjoyed spending summers at the Norwich Inn and Spa Villa. She attended Quinnipiac University.

Casey loved spending time with her beloved family and friends and all were very blessed to have Casey in their lives. We will all miss her gorgeous smile.

Left to cherish her memory are her loving and devoted daughter, Kari Burgess and son-in-law Jim Burgess of Hebron; her beloved and adored grandchildren, Stanley Najdich III, Karissa Burnett and her husband Ian, and Brian Burgess. She will also be greatly missed by her Aunt Barbara Zawacki and great-nephew Michael, along with an abundance of friends. She will be missed by her faithful companion, Harley the dachshund.

Casey was predeceased by her adored son Stanley Najdich Jr. (who she missed greatly everyday); her infant son Kerry Najdich; her brother Thomas Forte Jr.; and her loving companion, Thomas Thompson. Casey had a wonderful career as a buyer of handbags, accessories and sportswear and was the first woman divisional merchandise manager in G. Fox & Company. She also worked for D&L and Weathervane, Ames Department Store, and Jordan Marsh. Casey enjoyed her extensive travel experiences in Europe and Asia throughout her career.

Casey was truly an inspiration to all women in the retail industry. She received many awards including "the most successful merchant of the year" and Casey appeared in *Handbag Accessory Magazine* several times. She was also the owner of the Added Touch Boutique and Casey's Unique Wine Cellar.

Our family would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to the Hartford Healthcare Hospice Home Care team of Mansfield for their compassionate care, kindness and support over the past few months.

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated Monday, July 24, in St. Paul Church, 2577 Main St., Glastonbury. Burial followed in Sacred Heart Cemetery, Meriden. Friends called at the Mulryan Funeral Home, 725 Hebron Ave., Glastonbury, Sunday, July 23.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to the American Cancer Society, 825 Brook St., Rocky Hill, CT 06067 or Hartford Healthcare at Home, 34 Ledgebrook Dr., Mansfield, CT 06250.

For online condolences, visit mulryanfh.com.

East Hampton

Catherine E. Keeley

Catherine E. (Perretti) Keeley, 76, of East Hampton, passed away Tuesday, July 11, with her oldest daughter by her side. She was the daughter of Anna and Rocco Perretti and was born on March 23, 1941, in Bronx, N.Y.



Cathy worked at Center School serving meals and bartended at O'Neil's for many years.

Catherine is survived by her oldest daughter MaryAnn Keeley and son Kevin Keeley and several nieces and nephews. She is predeceased by her youngest daughter Laura Keeley.

Catherine is now in peace and has joined her family in heaven.

A Mass will be held in her name at St. John Fisher Church, 30 Jones Hollow Rd. in Marlborough, on Saturday, Aug. 5, at 4 p.m.

Portland

Richard C. Bell Jr.

Richard (Richie) C. Bell Jr., 49, recently of Palm Bay, Fla., passed away Wednesday, July 12, 2017, after a battle with cancer.



Richie was born in Middletown, CT on January 12, 1968. He graduated from Portland High School in 1986. He spent the last 25 years traveling the United States as a cross-country truck driver. Richie, like his father and grandfathers before him, was a long-term member of the Masons. He belonged to St. Helens Masonic Lodge No. 32 A.F. & A.M. of Oregon. He was an avid fan of *Star Trek*.

Richie is survived by his mother, Margaret (Peggy Brittingham) Bell of Barefoot Bay, Fla.; his son, Brian Cosner; and his sisters, Holly Bell, Susan Bell Davis and Jennifer Bell. Richie had a special place in his heart for his nephew Tristan and his niece Rowan. He will be remembered by friends and family for his wit and his humor.

Richie is preceded in death by his father, Richard C. Bell Sr. of Portland; his grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Henry C Bell and Mr. and Mrs. Raymond M. Brittingham, also of Portland.

A celebration of Richie's life will be held at a later date. In lieu of flowers, the family asks that a donation may be given to a cancer fund of your choosing.

The family of Richard C. Bell Jr. would like to express our thanks and gratitude for the wonderful care and help given by Vitas Hospice and Shelley Newsom.

Colchester

Loraine Snyder

Loraine (Stelmach) Snyder, 87, of Colchester, passed away Wednesday, July 19, at home. Loraine was born in Dudley, Mass., Feb. 22, 1930, to the late Joseph and Barbara (Pyra) Stelmach. The 13th of 14 children, she was predeceased by all of her brothers and sisters and cherished son-in-law, Scott Mackler.



For nearly 62 years, Loraine was the beloved wife and dancing partner to Richard. Together they enjoyed summers in Cape Cod, the UConn Huskies, gardening and a lifetime of exercise and good health. She was Richard's devoted email assistant, occasionally signing off with the disclaimer, "This is Loraine Snyder, and I do not approve this message!"

Loraine was a loving mother to Lynn Snyder-Mackler (Michael Axe), Kurt Snyder (Kathleen) and Jane Snyder DeMaio (Paul), setting an example of unconditional love, commitment and hard work. Her home was a lovely haven for all with her hand finished molding and braided rugs. She showered her family with all that was needed in life. She was a role model and trailblazer, even becoming a shop supervisor at Pratt and Whitney, where she worked for 24 years. Her example encouraged and inspired her family. She never stopped learning and achieving, even taking up roller blading at the age of 70.

Loraine's pancakes were coveted by her grandchildren, Kris Snyder (Jess), Alexander Mackler (Laura) and Noah Snyder-Mackler (Kelsey Lucca), and Jackie and Aaron DeMaio. With Richard, she cared for each one when they were babies getting right down on the ground to play! Her great-grandbabies Sam, Sadie and Bridget were a delight, bringing joy to her last days.

In recent years Loraine had many caregivers whose loving support enabled her peaceful transition in the home she loved. We are forever grateful to Claudia, Barbara, Gerri, Shirley and Sheila.

Loraine, La, Mom, Grandma – you were generous and loving and steadfast. You loved us deeply and that will sustain us now and forever.

A memorial service celebrating Loraine's life was held Sunday, July 23, in the Congregational Church in South Glastonbury, 949 Main St. (corner of Main and High streets), South Glastonbury, CT 06073.

Memorial donations may be made to the Alzheimer's Association or Yale's Alzheimer's Disease Research Center (ADRC), 295 Congress Ave., BCMM 436D, New Haven, CT 06519 (email adrc@yale.edu).

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

Amston

Adam Franeski

Adam Scott Matthew Franeski, 39, born June 27, 1978, passed away suddenly Friday, July 21. He was the beloved son of Peter and Pamela (Lopez) Franeski of Charlestown, R.I. (formerly of Amston).



Adam was raised in Amston and graduated from Xavier High School in Middletown. He then went on to attend Central Connecticut State University and studied communication. Adam worked for many years in sales and marketing, working in Ohio, Georgia, Connecticut and Rhode Island. Adam was an amazing and loving son, brother, nephew and uncle.

Besides his parents he leaves behind his brother, Peter Franeski III and his daughters, Jennifer, Alyssa and Ashley; and his sister, Jennifer Ventrillo and her husband, Donald and their sons, Chase and Jesse. He also leaves behind his aunt, CindyLou Lopez, extended family and many friends.

Adam truly was a friend to everyone he met. He left a lasting impression with his humor, love of life and kind heart. He loved people, music, movies, dogs and the outdoors especially many happy memories at East Beach in Rhode Island. He was always there with a kind hug and just brought a sense of calm that everything would be alright. He shared a special bond with his whole family, but especially his mother. He always said he couldn't imagine life without her. He was a son that filled her heart with so much love, kindness, humor and friendship.

We are forever broken without him. The light he brought to our lives went out so much sooner than any of us were ready for. Our lives were forever changed by his love and beautiful soul and we will hold onto that and many memories made through this life until we see him again. He will forever be remembered and missed deeply.

Services will be private. If anyone would like to make a donation in his memory you may choose an animal rescue of your choice.

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

Colchester

Benjamin Labonosky IV

Benjamin Labonosky IV, 57, of Colchester, was reunited with the love of his life, Ruthann Labonosky (née McDine) Tuesday, July 18. He was a beloved father, uncle, brother and friend.



Ben leaves behind his two daughters, Jamie Labonosky and her partner, Mike Whitman and Jessica Scotti (née Labonosky) and her husband Nicholas Scotti IV; his sister, Susanne Zahacefski (née Labonosky) and her husband John Zahacefski; his brother, Stephen Labonosky and his partner Joanne Halpern. He also leaves his nephews, his brothers of the Branded Ones MC, and many extended family and friends.

Along with Ruthann, he rejoins his late father, Benjamin Labonosky III; his mother, Eleanor Labonosky (née Zisk); and his stepmother, Marion Labonosky (née Clark). Ben will be remembered by all for his warmth, gentle nature and generosity. He was a hard-working family man who would do anything to provide for his loved ones. The callouses on his hands and the cement dust on his clothes were the evidence of his commitment to supporting his family – from raising and providing for his two daughters to assisting his elderly parents in their final years. His larger-than-life presence could at first glance seem intimidating to some; however, anyone who met him saw quickly his kind eyes, a beautiful smile, contagious laugh and a warm heart.

Ben died doing something he loved immensely – riding his motorcycle. He was an ongoing member of the Branded Ones MC over the past 15 years, having served in the past as president of the MC. Everyone who had met Ben agrees, without exception, that his best quality was his willingness to do anything needed to support and help others. This remained true to his very final moment as he gave of himself the gift of life to others through organ donation.

If Heaven has Harleys, Ben and Ruthann are riding together again. BFF1.

The family received guests Monday, July 24, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Road, Colchester. The funeral gathered Tuesday, July 25, at the funeral home before a chapel service that morning. Burial was private.

In lieu of flowers, the family suggests that donations in his memory be made to "End Distracted Driving" online at enddd.org/how-to-help/.