

RIVEREAST

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Welcome Aboard... East Hampton Police Department's newest officer, Timothy DeRoehn, graduated from the police academy Wednesday as part of the State of Connecticut Police Officer Standards and Training Council's 357th recruit class. Pictured here with Town Manager Michael Maniscalco, DeRoehn brings the department to 11 patrol officers and four sergeants.

Hintz Withdraws from GOP Ballot

by Elizabeth Regan

Three-term Republican Town Council member Ted Hintz Jr.'s name will not appear on the ballot in November.

Hintz dropped out of the race for Town Council at a Republican Town Committee meeting last week and confirmed it when the party met again this week. Current councilor Mark Philhower has agreed to take Hintz's place on the ballot.

"I just had a great opportunity this summer to spend time traveling the country and saw what many leaders in the past had done to preserve our natural resources and preserve history," Hintz said this week, describing the backdrop to the "soul searching" that led him to withdraw his candidacy.

A Sept. 11 email from Hintz to the Republican Town Committee, obtained by the *Rivereast*, said his summer travels gave him the time and occasion to think about his role on the council.

"It has become abundantly clear that my values and principles and some of the members running are not in alignment," he wrote. "Therefore I think the best solution is to remove myself for the situation."

At the time, he said he had tried to find a replacement "to no avail."

Hintz said on Wednesday that he asked the Republicans to put Philhower in his spot and did not resign until he was assured Philhower would step in.

Hintz thanked Philhower for agreeing to run again and residents in East Hampton for their

many years of support.

Neither Hintz's withdrawal from the race nor Philhower's candidacy had been filed at the town hall as of Thursday morning, according to the town clerk's office.

Philhower will be joining Republican council candidates Tim Feegel, Josh Piteo and Melissa Engel.

He said Wednesday he had been shocked to hear Hintz was withdrawing from the race.

"I still think he would've been the highest vote getter," Philhower said.

Hintz received the second highest number of votes in 2015 among the Republican candidates, behind current chairman Patience Anderson. He received more votes than any other Republican in the prior two elections.

Anderson resigned from the Republican Town Committee and decided not to run for reelection in July. She cited the "toxic" nature of the local Republican party.

She has criticized Hintz for angry outbursts she said he has made publicly and in private.

Hintz has been opposed to the plan to build an \$18.98 million municipal hub in the Edgewater Hill mixed-use development on Route 66. The project, which is going to voters

See Hintz Withdraws page 2



Ted Hintz Jr.

PE Instructor Named Colchester Teacher of the Year

by Julianna Roche

Jennifer Karcich never pictured herself becoming a middle school gym teacher.

But after 18 years of teaching physical education and health to William J. Johnston Middle School (WJMS) students, the Deep River resident can't imagine doing anything else.

"I'll never leave this age group," she said. "They're a great group of kids. They want to perform. They want to do well, and they like to play, but they aren't too old for it."

This month, Karcich was named Colchester's District Teacher of the Year after being selected for the award by her colleagues and the school's administrative team, with WJMS Principal Chris Bennett describing her as "the kind of teacher that new teachers aspire to be" in a press release issued last week.

"It's a huge honor to be selected to represent the school," she said. "It makes you realize you do make a difference."

After receiving her bachelor's degree from Eastern Connecticut State University in 1999, Karcich – who would later obtain a master's in education from Central Connecticut State University, in 2009 – immediately took a job as a physical education and health teacher at WJMS and as the girls' cross country coach at

Bacon Academy. (After 18 seasons of coaching, she said she's "retired" from the sport.)

In her 18 years as a coach and educator, however, Karcich explained her "biggest accomplishment" was "helping to change the way PE is taught" at the middle school alongside her colleagues.

"Before, PE was very team-oriented, with sports like hockey, basketball, volleyball," she explained, adding that the program has since been morphed "into more of a lifelong fitness program" by teaching sports such as golf, badminton, in-line skating, even snowshoeing "if we have enough snow."

"Hopefully, by the time a kid leaves in eighth grade, they've found a niche for themselves and don't feel like they have to be on a team sport, because when you hit 40 years old, you're probably not going to be on a team sport," Karcich laughed.

The WJMS physical education program also focuses heavily on physical fitness concepts, adventure education, and incorporates an extensive outdoor and indoor high and low ropes course giving students the chance to participate in the experiential learning process.

Karcich celebrated another victory earlier this spring when she, along with her colleague,

WJMS seventh-grade social studies teacher Marcy Lavoie, were selected as recipients of this year's Fund for Teacher Fellowship, a program which annually provides grants of up to \$5,000 per teacher to pursue a learning experience they are passionate about and to bring their learning back into the classroom.

"This spring, us and our husbands all piled into an RV with our kids and a dog and traveled across the U.S. for 30 days," Karcich said, explaining that "the whole focus" of the experience was to tour both popular and lesser-known "historical and geographical locations" and once there, participate in a physical activity – which included everything from hiking Mount Rushmore and white-water rafting at Jackson Hole, to biking in Utah and horseback riding in Colorado.

"We went to Mount Rushmore, but we also went to [places like] this state park called Kodachrome and nobody was there," Karcich said. "It was amazing. ... The whole purpose was [to come back] to Colchester to get the kids excited about what is around us and what can we do right here in our backyards."

Karcich cited the Air Line Trail – which runs from East Hampton to Willimantic, crossing

See Teacher of the Year page 2



Jennifer Karcich is the new District Teacher of the Year in Colchester.

Hintz Withdraws cont. from Front Page

at referendum as part of the municipal election, has the support of a majority of the members on the council.

He has also been a vocal critic of the length of time it takes to process building and zoning permits in town.

Hintz declined to say if he would run for elected office again.

“[I] have plenty of time to make those decisions in the future. Right now, I have a young family and that’s what I should be focusing on,” he said.

Republican Town Committee Chairman George Coshow credited Hintz with a decade of service to the town between the council and Board of Finance.

“While it hasn’t always been smooth, he’s been steady. [He is] one of the most well-researched members we’ve had and, in that regard, he’ll be missed,” Coshow said.

Philhower, who owns an East Hampton-

based HVAC company, said his family agreed that taking Hintz’s place on the ballot was the best thing to do.

Philhower is in his second consecutive council term, which is actually his third term in the office; he served his first term in 1999. He was a member of the Planning and Zoning Commission for more than two decades, serving as chairman for many of those years.

“My main priority is the budget,” he said.

Citing a trend of reduced funding from the state that only seems to be getting worse, he said it’s up to the town “to look at how we’re spending and to get it under control.”

Philhower described the local Republican Party as “alive and strong,” while acknowledging there have been a few bumps over the past few years.

“We’ve never, ever stood lockstep with each other; sometimes [that’s] good, sometimes not so good,” he said.

Teacher of the Year cont. from Front Page

through Colchester – as an example.

“How many people have tried that? How many people know the historical significance of that? Our goal is to do more enrichment-based activities where [the students] are researching history in Connecticut and then we visit those locations,” Karcich said, adding that she and Lavoie hope to create a local geocaching project for students to participate in, which once the geocaches were found, provide students with a brief history of the specified location and then encourage them to participate in a physical activity located nearby – a bike trail, for example.

In addition to teaching and coaching, Karcich also acts as the Safe School Climate specialist and the Positive Behavior Interventions and Support Coach. Additionally, this spring she was hand-selected to become one of 20 teachers to participate in the first national cohort of the No Barriers Global Impact Challenge team, in which she was given tools to provide her students with the foundation for creating their own social impact project that would benefit the school and community.

(No Barriers is a nonprofit based in Colorado that helps organize life-changing experi-

ences for youth, veterans, and people with mental or physical disabilities.)

Karcich explained her teaching style reflects striking a fair balance between different types of students or athletes, while also encouraging them to push themselves.

“Even if you’re an athlete, [my style] is to get you to push yourself to do something that is not the norm,” she said. “So if you’re doing basketball layups, instead of saying ‘that’s great, you can do nine out of 10 layups,’ [I’ll say], ‘how about we try lefty?’”

“Can I get that kid to be working on skills for themselves, but at the same time get the kid who never played a sport to make sure they feel like they’re part of a group?” Karcich added. “I make sure I make a daily connection with almost every kid I can, [because] making a connection with them is huge even if it’s just saying good morning [to them].”

On Nov. 15, at 5 p.m., Karcich will be honored at the Connecticut Teacher of the Year Council’s recognition ceremony at The Bushnell Performing Arts Center at 166 Capitol Ave., Hartford.

Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

Those of you with good memories may recall a story we did back in 2015 about an East Hampton boy who got the chance of a lifetime when, thanks to the Make-a-Wish Foundation, he was able to design his very own video game.

Hunter Allis was 11 at the time, and had a life-threatening heart condition. He had a concept for a video game entitled *Project SRAM*, and the folks at the company Bottle Rocket worked with him to develop the game.

The story of Hunter and the chance to live his dream was a sweet one – and, two years later, I’m happy to say the game is now available.

Last week, the game was officially released to the public for download. If you’re an Apple iPhone user, it’s available in the App store.

By the way, if you’ve forgotten Hunter’s story and want to read more about it, now’s a good time to remind readers that archive copies of all of the *Rivereast’s* bylined stories dating back to the start of 2007 are available online, for free. With political season starting up, it can be interesting to look at political battles of the past 10 years – how some things have changed, and how in other cases they’ve stayed the same.

To check out our past stories, go to glicitizen.com, select “archives” and then “Rivereast News Bulletin.”

As for Hunter, his proud mom states that he’s off to a magnet school, where he’ll study game design.

The Republicans are at it again. They’ve been quietly at work on another bill to overhaul Obamacare – and this may be the worst one yet.

USA Today on Tuesday had a handy list of some of the highlights of the vile Graham-Cassidy bill. The bill would repeal penalties for large employers who don’t offer health insurance to their employees. While insurers would still be unable to deny coverage to people with pre-existing conditions, states can waive the provision that caps what they can charge. States can also waive various coverage that was mandated coverage under Obamacare, such as maternity care, mental health services and hospitalization.

People would no longer be required to buy health insurance. But if they wanted to, the Republicans would make it much more difficult. According to *USA Today*, Graham-Cassidy would end subsidies in 2020 for those who purchase insurance on their own rather than getting it through an employer or government program.

Also, Graham-Cassidy would kill expanded Medicaid, and vastly change what’s left of it. Under Obamacare, 31 states and the

District of Columbia expanded Medicaid to people earning up to 138 percent of poverty, *USA Today* reported. Graham-Cassidy would immediately stop more states from expanding Medicaid, and in 2020 the existing expansions would be eliminated. Instead, through 2026 states would receive a block grant to devise their own way of helping residents who had gotten Obamacare coverage either through Medicaid or with private insurance subsidies.

The bill would also alter the way Medicaid is traditionally funded. Instead of reimbursing states, the federal government would send states a per capita allotment, with limited growth, *USA Today* said. States could also elect to have a Medicaid work requirement, though disabled or pregnant people would be exempt.

And the conservatives’ rallying cry of “defund Planned Parenthood!” will be heard – but not in the way you might think. According to *USA Today*, it’s already illegal for the federal government to pay for abortions. However, the government currently reimburses Planned Parenthood for non-abortion services that are covered by Medicaid. Graham-Cassidy bill would end this for one year, and instead provide money for community health centers in an attempt to supplement the coverage that will be lost from Planned Parenthood.

According to Planned Parenthood, just 3 percent of the services it provides are abortions. Its non-abortion services include such things as sex education, pre-natal care, cervical cancer screenings and breast cancer screenings. So why do Republicans want to end coverage of these services? It just seems cruel.

The whole bill, in fact, is cruel. It amazes me how little regard Washington Republicans and the Trump Administration have for so many of this country’s citizens. As I’ve said before, I know people on Obamacare; indeed, some of my relatives are on it. Without it, they simply wouldn’t have medical insurance. And don’t forget, under Graham-Cassidy, people could have their pre-existing medical conditions be charged more, and people who make the mistake of getting pregnant could just not be covered at all.

The people impacted by this wouldn’t just be the dreaded “coastal elite.” It would be people all across the country – many of whom probably voted for Trump.

Like I said, hopelessly cruel. Fortunately, the bill hasn’t been voted on yet – but I’m sure the Republicans will give a full-court press to make sure everyone toes the line. I hope enough Republicans, though, come to their senses and kill this bill.

See you next week.

Colchester to Celebrate 57 Fest This Weekend

by Julianna Roche

Along with the arrival of autumn today, Colchester is also gearing up for the town’s 13th annual 57 Fest, to be held this Saturday, Sept. 23. This is community-wide celebration first held after the town was named the 57th best place to live in the country by *CNN/Money Magazine* in 2005.

In 2013, Colchester was also named by the magazine as the eighth best place to live in the “least-crowded towns” category – giving the town even more to celebrate.

“We hope to illustrate to the community that Colchester is still a fantastic place to live, work, play and grow since it received this award as the 57th best place to live back in 2005,” said Parks and Recreation Director Cheryl Hancin. “We have a great community that really supports one another.”

According to Hancin, both classic festival favorites and new additions will be a part of this year’s festivities – including a new band, Wooden Horse, which she described as having a Crosby, Stills & Nash and America type of vibe, with “a nice, crisp sound.”

“A band member is from Colchester so it is nice to [also] support locals,” she furthered.

As per tradition, when attendees first arrive

to the festival they can make their rounds to community and sponsor booths on the concourse in the pavilion area and in the Midway area below the skate park, as well as participate in a variety of games and activities (with the chance to win prizes) throughout the evening.

In the main stage area, Hancin added that several different dance and karate teams, including the Bacon Academy dance and cheer teams, will perform, with live music kicking off at 6 p.m.

The festival also includes other interactive activities such as the Tomahawk Throw, archery, spin art, face painting, a balloon artist, a photo booth, a rock wall, and a robot display at the skate park.

In the kid’s zone, Hancin explained some new inflatables were also added this year, including a double trouble slide and an obstacle course, to complement the already-popular bounce house.

“We’ll also have a Touch-a-Truck on the R2 field where children can get up close [and] look at town tractors, fire trucks and other vehicles,” she said, adding that one of the most special parts of 57 Fest is to see that “many children,

who grew up on these fields [and] who are now adults come back for the event.”

When families and kiddos work up an appetite, they can head to the food court area where they’ll find everything from Uncle D’s Blazin’ BBQ ribs, chicken and pulled pork sandwiches to gyros, souvlaki, Greek fries and salad from Greekin’ Out. Other food vendors include Mamoun’s Falafel, Celiac Epicurean serving up gluten-free eats, Szabo’s Seafood and J & R’s Lemonade. For something sweet, head to Sugar Bakery for gourmet cupcakes or New England Soft Serve for soft-serve ice cream. The Colchester Lions Club will also serve up hamburgers, hot dogs and fried dough.

“We hope to run another amazing festival despite the budget cuts to the Recreation Department and the reduction in staffing in the last few years,” Hancin said, adding that the department has “worked very hard this year” to raise money through sponsorships and donations from the community.

She also encouraged festival attendees to stick around until 8 p.m. for 57 Fest’s grand finale – which will include a spectacular fireworks display over the RecPlex, produced by

Zambelli Fireworks.

“At the event, families [can] visit with one another face to face, be entertained, eat good food and see remarkable fireworks,” she said. “Less and less communities are offering [fireworks] so we work extra hard to keep Colchester standing out.”

The 57 Fest will be held Saturday, Sept. 23, at the Colchester Recreation Complex at 215 Old Hebron Rd. from 4 to 8:30 p.m. The rain date is Sunday, Sept. 24. Entrance is free and access to the Kids Zone is \$7 per child. The band starts at 6 p.m. and fireworks begin at 8 p.m.

Shuttle service will be available from the Town Hall parking lot at 127 Norwich Ave. and Jack Jackter Intermediate School at 215 Halls Hill Rd., to and from the RecPlex beginning at 4 p.m. Limited parking will be available at the RecPlex in the parking lots and on the street along one side of the street on both Old Hebron and Stollman roads. People are asked to obey posted parking restrictions.

For more information, call Parks and Rec. at 860-537-7297.

Portland Resident Runs for Those Who Can't

by Elizabeth Regan

Danielle Marcue has made a life of helping service members and veterans both on and off the field of battle.

The 29-year-old Portland resident will compete in the Eversource Hartford Half Marathon under the banner of the 2017 Aiello Inspiration Team, alongside nine Connecticut residents whose stories serve as an example to other runners and those who look on.

A member of the Connecticut National Guard for almost twelve years, Marcue was a combat medic in Afghanistan in 2011. She said she started running while overseas as a way to decompress from the realities of war she experienced on a daily basis.

Her initial goal was to improve her time on a two-mile run, she said – “Then an hour would go by and I was still out there in that same little circle.”

Now, she uses running both as a personal outlet and to help others.

Marcue is slated to complete 17 races for a total of 100 official miles this year. She'll be raising money for 10 different charities by participating in eight 5K races, four 10K races, three half marathons, the Army Ten-Miler and the Manchester Road Race.

“I run for those who can't run, those that I lost while serving overseas, for family members who battled cancer and to help bring awareness to these causes,” she said.

Marcue currently serves as a staff sergeant in the Connecticut National Guard's first-ever unit of flight paramedics as part of the 3/126th Aviation Battalion.

She is also a veteran support specialist with the nonprofit Homes For Our Troops organization. The group helps severely injured post-9/

11 veterans rebuild their lives by constructing and donating specially-adapted custom homes.

She said her work with Home For Our Troops is a complement to her active but fleeting role in caring for injured service members while stationed overseas.

“As a medic, for the most part we just treated them as quickly as possible, got them to the next level of care,” she said. “It's nice to see how they're rebuilding their lives afterward.”

Marcue recalled crossing the finish line of the Star Wars Half Marathon in Disney World last year on the Home For Our Troops team alongside a man who lost a leg in Afghanistan. The medically-retired veteran had received a house through the nonprofit program.

As he started struggling toward the end of the race because his leg sock and prosthetic limb were no longer allowing for smooth movement, Marcue told him she would not leave him behind. Another veteran kept pace with them.

“The three of us, all Army veterans, stuck together until the end,” she said. “There's hardly any words that can describe that feeling of happiness, the humble feeling and the sense of pride.”

Marcue will participate in the Hartford Half Marathon with other Inspiration Team members who are motivated by a diverse range of experiences and goals, according to the Hartford Marathon Foundation.

“This year's team includes inspiring individuals who run for many different reasons – they run to honor loved ones who have passed away, they run for weight loss and health, they run to overcome illness or difficult times,” the organization said on its website. “Their intrinsic motivation will help carry them to the finish line of this year's event in Hartford.”



Danielle Marcue knew she would take a military path ever since Sept. 11, 2001, when she was still a student in middle school in Lebanon, Conn. “I told my dad in eighth grade and he didn't believe me that I was signing up,” she said. Now a flight paramedic with the Connecticut National Guard and an avid runner, she is being honored by the Hartford Marathon Foundation as part of the Aiello Inspiration Team.

Marlborough Selectmen Discuss School Grounds and Maintenance Issue

by Julianna Roche

Town Hall was packed full Tuesday night – the crowd actually overflowed into the hallway – as the Board of Selectmen discussed whether the town or school should be responsible for maintaining Marlborough Elementary School's grounds.

Ultimately, First Selectwoman Amy Traversa deemed it to be the school's responsibility – much to the dismay of school officials.

At the meeting, selectmen, along with Superintendent of Schools David Sklarz, Board of Education Chairwoman Ruth Kelly, and public works facilities and grounds foreman Tony Gallicchio held an open dialogue on the issue – which Amy Traversa explained has been an “ongoing” discussion that “hasn't been terribly productive” as there are “two very divergent points of view” as to who is responsible for maintaining MES grounds: the town or the school.

The question of where the responsibility for maintaining the school falls has been a matter of debate between the town and school since 2004, when the elementary school underwent a major renovation which included a new addition. According to Sklarz, upon completion, town officials at the time made a commitment to oversee school building maintenance to ensure it would not fall into disrepair again.

At that time, the superintendent explained, the public works department was determined

to be responsible for supervising the grounds and maintenance care of the school for 65 percent of its time – which was then reflected as in-kind services from the town.

Over the years, however, Sklarz said, that percentage dropped to 50 percent in the 2012-13 school year and later 30 percent in 2015-16, with the current school year showing little to no assistance from the town so far in overseeing the school building's maintenance.

“I think we were a decade ahead of what the state is now talking about with shared services,” Sklarz said during the meeting, adding that having a one-school district was “unique” in that it allowed for those types of services to be easily shared between the town and school.

“I don't know why that model has changed,” he said, “because our needs haven't changed.”

However, Traversa argued that “the entire economic picture has changed,” citing the lack of a secure state budget as well as major changes to the town – including a new sewer and water system, which were not part of the picture in 2004.

She furthered that while the public works department would continue providing snowplowing and lawn care services for the school as in-kind services, the town did not have “the capacity” to provide any additional maintenance services inside the school building.

Gallicchio backed up Traversa's statement –

stating that “at this point, I have zero time” to provide the oversight the school needs, but that he would assist in finding someone right for the job.

“You need a mechanical person there every day for eight hours a day,” he said. “Even if there's one school, that's what you need [and] I'll help you pick someone, [but] there's not an hour left in my day to see you [even] once a week.”

He added, however, if there were ever any emergencies, for the school to call him.

Sklarz then, stated that if the town providing additional maintenance and ground services was “not going to be a reality,” it was time “to move on” whether that was going out to bid and outsource for services or to further investigate what those service costs would be and how to budget for them.

On Thursday, the superintendent added that while he was “disappointed” the shared-service model that “worked for so many years” was being “dismantled,” he said the next step would be to look for a part-time manager that “can do for us what Tony [Gallicchio] does for the town.”

Board of Finance Chairman Doug Knowlton also explained Thursday that he felt the school board has several options moving forward – but ultimately, they should “put together a concrete plan about exactly how they want to handle

the maintenance [at the school]” and what that consists of before they “put any dollar amount” on it.

“Once they've gone through that process, I fully expect they will come before the Board of Finance and will, at least reflect... on how much this is going to add to their budget, [but] how they get the money to cover that budget will be a matter for the board to discuss,” Knowlton continued. “I think it's a little premature to guess what we might do.”

At Tuesday's meeting, Traversa mirrored Knowlton's statements, stating she felt the issue came back to still not having a state budget set in place and the need for the town to limit additional spending – including providing additional services to the school – until one is.

“I never said it shouldn't be taken care of. It's a matter of who has the capacity to take care of it,” she said. “When you're at an all-you-can-eat buffet, nobody fights for the last roll. [But] we've reached a crossroads and it's a battle for resources.”

“We don't want the last roll,” Sklarz retaliated. “We just want half the roll and you have the other half, and we'll say ‘thank you’ at the end of the day.”

The Board of Education will hold its next meeting on Thursday, Sept. 28, at 7 p.m. in the Marlborough Elementary School media center.

Hebron Selectmen Repeal Snow Removal Ordinance

by Lauren Yandow

The repeal of a sidewalk snow and ice removal ordinance means the town will now be responsible for removing ice and snow from all town sidewalks.

Board of Selectmen voted unanimously Sept. 14 in favor of repealing the ordinance.

Town Manager Andy Tierney said repealing the ordinance will help to “uniformly get the sidewalks safe and clean.”

Under the old ordinance, Tierney said some portions of sidewalk were cleared while others were not. He said the town would clean up sections that weren’t its responsibility “because residents should be using the sidewalks; that’s what we put them in for.”

The now-revoked ordinance stated the town “shall not be liable” to anyone who may get hurt from ice or snow on a public sidewalk unless the land, with the exception of a highway or street, abutting the sidewalk is in possession or control of the town.

Landowners in possession or control of land abutting a public sidewalk were responsible for snow and ice removal and liable if anyone were hurt due to wintry conditions.

The old ordinance stated the owner or occupant of any building or lot of land abutting any “street, square, or public place within the town where there is graded or paved sidewalk” needs to remove all snow, sleet and ice from the sidewalk to make it safe. In addition, those owners or occupants needed to use sand to cover the area within eight hours of snowfall or ice formation from sunrise to 8 p.m. Any person found in violation could have faced up to a \$50 fine.

No fines were ever implemented, according to Tierney.

The ordinance was “pretty tough” to enforce because it didn’t have any “bite,” he said.

Chairman Dan Larson said the new standard will help maintain continuity.

“I think it is the smart thing to do for the citizens of the town,” he said.

Tierney said a snow removal machine was purchased in May for about \$50,000 using budgeted Capital Improvement Project funds.

“It’s needed for snow operations this winter,” and is expected to be delivered soon, he added. Now, with the ordinance repealed, the

snow removal machine will be used to clear all town sidewalks.

* * *

Also at last Thursday’s meeting, the board unanimously granted a request from the Lions Club to waive an \$840 permit fee for the 2017 Hebron Harvest Fair. It’s customary for the board to waive the fee for official building, tent and ground inspections for the annual fair, said Larson, adding this year’s fair was “fantastic.”

The Lions save the town thousands of dollars each year by storing town garage equipment free of charge on their grounds during the winter months, he also noted.

Waiving the permit fee is “financially a plus for the town,” he said.

Selectmen Member Brian O’Connell said the Lions “do so much for the community” by donating thousands of dollars to local organizations each year.

According to Tierney, the harvest fair is the only town event for which the Lions annually request a permit fee waiver.

During his town manager report, Tierney

gave an update on the gas line installation and conversion of buildings. Overall, the project is “going very well” and is set to finish “right on schedule,” he said.

Since the \$1.2 million project is still underway, there’s no final cost numbers to give just yet, but Tierney said “we’re within budget and as things remain on course we will come in with a surplus.”

Tierney said the gas line is projected to be “fired up” by Oct. 2.

* * *

Tierney announced the launch of the quarterly magazine *Hebron Views*, which is set to be delivered to mailboxes on Nov. 13.

The publication will let people know “what’s going on in their town,” said Tierney. It will include information from town departments, local advertising, and local stories relevant to the season.

* * *

The next Board of Selectmen meeting will be held on Thursday, Oct. 5 at 7:30 p.m. at the Town Office Building, 15 Gilead St.

Hebron Boards Share Concerns Over State Budget

by Lauren Yandow

It’s now the latter half of September and the state still doesn’t have a 2017-18 budget – and this has town officials very concerned.

At separate meetings last Thursday, members of the boards of selectmen and education shared their thoughts on the budget situation with one another.

It was selectman Mark Stuart who suggested the board discuss the lack of a state budget at its Sept. 14 meeting. The discussion centered around what at the time was Malloy’s most recently-proposed budget. A little over a day later, in the wee small hours of Saturday morning, lawmakers in the House and Senate would pass a budget that Malloy immediately pledged to veto.

Under Malloy’s executive order, which goes into effect if a state budget isn’t approved by October, the town would receive \$687,512 in state revenue for the 2017-18 fiscal year – a roughly \$6 million decrease compared to last year.

Town Manager Andy Tierney said Hebron’s 2017-18 fiscal year budget of \$38.62 million was put together using the town’s 2016-17 state revenue funding of about \$7 million as a point of reference.

Under the current town budget, about \$28 million goes to education; \$1.4 million is set aside for teacher retirement; the remaining money – \$9.33 million – funds the town’s general government.

As previously reported, the Board of Finance last month implemented a freeze for non-essential spending in response to the governor’s disclosure of the possible state revenue reduction. That freeze is still in place.

Essentially, the state government is looking to “fund the state budget off the backs of the municipalities,” said Stuart.

“All state budget proposals have been terrible,” he added. He said Connecticut’s budget problems have nothing to do with the Democratic or Republican parties; “this is decades upon decades of fiscal mismanagement.”

As a whole, Connecticut is a “beautiful state” that used to be one to “envy,” said selectwoman Clara O’Brien. But, she added, “politicians have ruined it.”

If the executive order goes through, Hebron will likely see a significant impact in town rating, said Stuart. Currently, the town stands at a Triple-A rating because it’s “very well-managed and financially very strong,” he said. But, with a potential \$6 million cut, the town’s rating

could drop to a B.

In addition, Board of Selectmen Chairman Dan Larson said as companies start “bailing” by moving out of the state, Connecticut remains “on the verge of going down a very, very slippery slope.”

Stuart said residents who haven’t written a letter the state government “need to do so now.” Hebron’s state legislators are state Rep. Robin Green (R-55) and state Sen. Cathy Osten (D-19). Green can be reached by visiting cthousegop.com/green and clicking on “contact me.” To get in touch with Osten, go to senatedems.ct.gov/osten and click on “email and contact.”

* * *

Just up the street at Gilead Hill School, the Board of Education also discussed state budget concerns at its meeting last Thursday.

Board of Education Chairwoman Erica Bromley said after the meeting talks on the topic were “fairly minimal” considering the state still doesn’t have a budget. But, she said, Board of Finance member Peter Kasper, the board’s liaison to the school board, addressed how the finance board is working to put a communication strategy in place with the understanding funding could be cut to Hebron.

The message ultimately is to make sure the public is aware of and understands what the impact might be if Hebron ends up losing funds, Bromley said.

As a result, Bromley suggested the Board of Education communications committee meet with the boards of selectmen and finance to “discuss a strategy” for the “best way” to communicate with the public so there’s an “understanding about changes that may need to be made” and how those changes could impact the town.

“Uncertainty is a difficult thing for anyone,” said Bromley “but for an entire community, it poses a greater challenge.”

Bromley said Tuesday, the board has not yet started discussions for the multi-board meeting, but she plans to reach out to the board of finance and selectmen to get the conversation started.

* * *

The next Board of Selectmen meeting will be held on Thursday, Oct. 5 at 7:30 p.m. at the Town Office Building, 15 Gilead St. The next Board of Education meeting will be held on Thursday, Oct. 12 at 7 p.m. in the library at Gilead Hill School, 580 Gilead St.

East Hampton Council Approves Three-Year Police Contract

by Elizabeth Regan

The Town Council has unanimously approved a three-year contract with the police union described on both sides as fair.

Councilors approved the contract after a 30-minute executive session at last week’s regular meeting. Members Ted Hintz Jr. and Melissa Engel were absent.

East Hampton Police Union President Hardie Burgin said this week that the sign of a good contract negotiation is when nobody leaves happy.

“I think all in all, everything went fair,” he said.

The contract with the East Hampton Police Union gives police officers a 2 percent raise the first two years and a 2.25 percent raise in year three.

It also reduces the number of years it takes a sergeant to reach the top salary step from eight years to five years. A step-based salary structure determines how fast employees can progress through the pay range based on seniority and experience.

Town Manager Michael Maniscalco this week said the contract puts in place solid fiscal practices for the community while recognizing officers for their dedication and hard work.

“It’s a fair contract for both the officers and the residents of East Hampton,” Maniscalco said.

The contract formalized the union’s entry into the Connecticut 2.0 Partnership Plan for health insurance. They will pay an 8 percent contribution in year one, 9 percent in year two and 10 percent in year three.

A memo from the town’s labor attorney, Nick Grello, said the union agreed to withdraw a grievance claiming the town changed its health insurance provider without the police union’s prior “consent.”

The union had objected to the change in insurance coverage, which went through this spring as part of the town budget process before the police union contract was approved.

The new contract includes changes to the

department’s retirement plan. While members will continue to contribute 5 percent of their earnings to the pension plan in year one, the contribution rises to 5.5 percent in year two and 6 percent in year three.

All union members hired after July 1 of this year will contribute 8 percent of their earnings for each year of the contract.

For new officers, the number of years of employment required for retirement increased from 20 years to 25 years. The number of years necessary to retire for officers hired before July 1 stays the same.

In both cases, officers remain eligible for retirement at age 55 if they’ve worked for 10 years.

The contract excludes private duty wages from the calculation used to determine the pension for new officers.

None of the officers are allowed to work a private duty job in a surrounding town if there is an open patrol shift or private duty job avail-

able and unfilled in East Hampton, according to the terms of the new contract.

Burgin said the contract negotiation process, which was held against the backdrop of an uncertain state budget situation with potentially damaging effects on municipalities, was a long one.

“The key things for us are to make sure we stay properly insured and to maintain retirement benefits,” he said. “Our last big hurdle is trying to stay competitive with our salaries, which in a lot of our neighboring towns are inflating more rapidly than the town of East Hampton wants to compete with.”

Burgin is on light duty after being struck by a motorist while directing traffic a year ago. He said he is getting physical therapy for his injuries as he awaits one more shoulder surgery.

“I’m hoping by next spring I’ll be back on full duty,” he said. “That’s what I’m shooting for.”

Physical Therapy Practice Opens in Belltown

by Elizabeth Regan

Physical Therapy and Sports Medicine has opened its doors as the only practice of its kind in East Hampton.

Todd Cacopardo is the director of the new clinic at 201 West High St., which joins 18 other offices that have sprung up under the Physical Therapy and Sports Medicine name since the company began in 2000.

Cacopardo said East Hampton won out over Glastonbury, Cromwell and Portland as the site of the newest location because there was a need for a physical therapy provider.

"We've got a lot of patients who seem happy there's something close by so they don't have to travel as far as they've been traveling," he said this week.

Originally trained as a diesel mechanic, Cacopardo said his interest in fitness eventually took over.

"I always liked working with my hands," he said. "Both professions allow that."

One of the big differences, however, is that he gets to interact with a wide cross-section of people on a daily basis as a physical therapist.

"You always have someone new coming in the door, and that's fun," he said. "I really enjoy that part of it."

Cacopardo has treated patients from five weeks old to 100 years old. His practice covers all orthopedic conditions as well as some neurological conditions, like concussions, as well as disorders of the inner ear that affect balance.

Patients include those with sports-related injuries, a recent surgery, workers' compensation injuries, osteoarthritis, sprains, fractures

and tendonitis, among others.

Cacopardo received a bachelor's degree in human health science and a master's degree in physical therapy from Quinnipiac University in Hamden. He became a board-certified orthopedic specialist in 2012, completing his doctorate in physical therapy the following year. He worked at Physical Therapy and Sports Medicine in Guilford for ten years before opening the East Hampton facility.

He lives in Portland with his wife and 3-year-old son.

Citing the company's focus on becoming part of the community, Cacopardo said he has already given presentations at the senior center and the public library.

His talk with the seniors revolved around managing low back pain at home.

He described back pain as the most common condition in patients that come in for treatment.

"It's such an easy area to injure and such a challenging area to bounce back from without the right kind of intervention," he told the *Rivereast*.

That intervention can be crucial, according to Cacopardo. He said movement and exercise promotes hormonal, chemical reactions that reduce pain naturally. But getting patients who have hurt for so long to take the first steps can be challenging.

The key is changing mindsets and engaging people in the process, which serves to take the edge off the discomfort that can come with exercise in those with back pain.

"If you can work with that until they've started to gain some strength or aerobic capac-



Todd Cacopardo, of Physical Therapy and Sports Medicine, has treated patients from five weeks old to 100 years old since he began working at the company 10 years ago.

ity, there are many times they are suddenly like 'I actually feel different. I am actually starting to feel better,'" he said.

He said he has focused on equipping his practice with ways to keep people interested. A large screen television, for example, can be tuned to a favorite show while a patient rides a stationary bike in front of it.

The reward is in helping patients feel "significantly better" after they arrive feeling "not so good," he said.

Cacopardo emphasized physical therapy services do not require a prescription or doctor's referral. Most insurance programs – Medicare being the notable exception – will cover those who refer themselves for treatment.

East Hampton Delinquent Taxpayers to Have Property Auctioned

by Elizabeth Regan

East Hampton officials are looking to raise as much as \$1.71 million this fiscal year by holding a public auction of properties belonging to the town's most delinquent taxpayers.

Town Manager Michael Maniscalco last week told members of the Town Council the plan is an effort to offset municipal aid cuts as state leaders continue to wrestle with a significant projected budget deficit.

Maniscalco said he worked with tax attorney Adam Cohen, of Pullman and Comley, to establish criteria for a list of 50 delinquent taxpayers whose properties will go to auction unless their tax bills are paid in full within the next few months.

The process, dubbed a "tax sale" in state statute, allows municipalities to sell properties for the amount of the delinquent taxes.

That means one home on the list, valued at \$291,110 according to the assessor's database, could go for \$22,227 at auction – or even less.

According to state statute, the tax collector can reopen the bidding at a lower amount if the property doesn't initially sell for the amount owed in unpaid taxes.

Statute authorizes local tax collectors to implement the tax sale process.

A Sept. 5 letter was sent by Collector of Revenue Kristy Merrifield via regular mail to 47 taxpayers who have been in debt to the town for at least four years and who owe more than \$6,000.

Merrifield said the tax sale process will kick in after thirty days, when the town attorney will issue a second demand notice to anyone who did not settle their full tax bill.

"As the Collector of Revenue, I would like to see all taxpayers comply with correspondence mailed out and pay their taxes due to the town," Merrifield said this week.

The recipients of the letter did not include those on the list of the top 50 delinquent taxpayers who had already established a payment plan prior to Aug. 30, according to Maniscalco.

He said property belonging to those who do not pay up within 30 days of the second notice will go to a public auction in late November or early December, likely at the Town Hall.

After the auction, the deed signing over the property to the highest bidder sits in the town clerk's office for six months. The existing owner can still keep the property by paying off the debt.

"If they pay off that full amount, the prop-

erty remains the homeowner's and life goes on," Maniscalco said.

If not, the property transfers to the winning bidder.

Maniscalco said it is now too late to work out scheduled payment plans with the 47 taxpayers on the list who have not already done so.

"Either [they] pay in full or it's moving forward in the process," he told council members.

He cautioned councilor Josh Piteo, who expressed concern about potentially leaving families without a home, that the process "cannot be emotional."

Maniscalco said accommodating one family on the list will open up potential lawsuits with the rest of the delinquent taxpayers.

Council member Mark Philhower spoke in favor of the process he said he's been advocating for over the past decade: "It forces people to make the payment, knowing there's a consequence."

He recommended a more aggressive approach that would trigger the tax sale process for taxpayers who haven't paid up after one year.

"I pay every six months; why shouldn't they?" Philhower said.

Top Five Delinquent Taxpayers

Topping the list of those who have owed real estate, personal property and motor vehicle taxes in excess of \$6,000 for more than four years are:

1. \$147,849.66, Biondi Associates: 28 Bevin Boulevard, 32 Barton Hill and 2 Starr Place
2. \$120,201.14, T. and M. Keegan: 245 Old West High St.
3. \$106,589.06, K. and L. Rader: 183 White Birch Rd.

4. \$87,150.26, Mercedes Zee Corp: 13 Summit St.

5. \$76,868.73, Sgoff Enterprises: 100 Main St.

The list of the top 50 delinquent taxpayers as of Aug. 30 was provided to members of the Town Council for discussion at its Sept. 12 meeting. It does not include property owners who are working with the town to pay off their debt.

Andover Passes Blight, Tax Abatement Ordinances

by Lauren Yandow

Town residents packed the town hall community room Tuesday evening to vote on two separate town ordinances during a public hearing – and ultimately both passed.

The first is a home tax abatement ordinance, which gives nonprofit landlords a tax break; the other is an abandoned property blight ordinance, which increases town oversight of blighted property.

The blight ordinance passed by a 55-15 tally. The ordinance sets a standard to prohibit blight in the town for abandoned homes that could pose a threat to town residents and applies to any parcel of land in town with a building or structure on it.

It applies to abandoned buildings that violate state building code, said Town Attorney Dennis O'Brien. The ordinance won't affect the "average person," he said, because it deals with buildings that are "problematic" and could potentially attract "squatters."

Abandoned premises, buildings that are temporarily unoccupied, structures with exterior openings and interior openings accessible to unauthorized persons, and places decaying beyond repair that present a hazard to the public all fall under the ordinance.

Currently, town zoning enforcement officer John Valente is authorized to define, prohibit and provide for abatement and remedy of blight

on any abandoned premises.

O'Brien said those whose properties fall under the blight ordinance will be given time to clean up their property and as long as they're making progress Valente will work with them. "There's a period [of time in which] they can fix the problem," he said. As long as the owner is making progress, they can "even ask for an extension," he added.

Up until now, the town has "never really gone after people" for being in clear violation of Connecticut building codes because taxpayer money would need to be utilized to bring those people to court, O'Brien said. But now, with the ordinance in place, the town has the ability to "go after" owners who are in clear violation.

Anyone whose property is deemed to be blighted and not making progress to remedy it, including banks who own foreclosed properties, will be charged \$25 per day.

"I think it's a good thing for the town in the long run," said Anderson. When you have "small pockets in really rough shape" it doesn't necessarily impact the town as a whole but it does affect a whole neighborhood, he said. The ordinance deals with blight issues in a reasonable manner which is "worthwhile for the town."

Before the blight ordinance was voted on,

the tax abatement ordinance came up for a vote. Two more residents were present for that vote, and the proposal passed 68-4.

Prior to the vote, O'Brien gave an overview of the ordinance, which authorizes a tax break on housing owned by a nonprofit entity and used solely for low- or moderate-income residents.

"When somebody gets a break on their taxes, somebody else has to pay for it," said O'Brien. So "you have to follow the law" and the ordinance aligns with state statute, he added.

Under state statute, towns are allowed to institute tax abatement with the goal of reducing rent and improving the quality of low-income housing. With the ordinance in place, property owners must prove they meet state requirements in order to qualify.

In town, Hop River Homes is currently the only facility that qualifies for the tax abatement. During public discussion, a few residents stated their concerns over whether the ordinance would open the door for other facilities to apply for tax abatement, but O'Brien was quick to respond. While Hop River Homes is the sole facility that qualifies now, he said, the ordinance only allows for future nonprofit entities to qualify, as long as they're used solely for low- or moderate-income residents.

Supporting Hop River Homes is a "good thing," said Planning and Zoning Chairman Eric

Anderson. Especially, he added, since over the next 10 years the town's population of 65 and over will likely "double" – and Andover needs to be thinking ahead.

The tax abatement is intended to help the people who live there, said O'Brien. Benefits ultimately should "go to the tenants and not the owners," he added.

For example, O'Brien said, the landlord may use the tax break to help offset a possible increase in rent, or the money may go towards adding or maintaining any amenities at the facility, such as a Laundromat.

With the ordinance in place, the responsibility to approve or deny an application for tax abatement is delegated to the five members of the Board of Selectmen.

Going forward, Hop River Homes will need to apply for the abatement and present documentation to the board as proof the senior housing facility meets state requirements. If approved, a contract will be signed between Hop River Homes and the town. The number of years the tax abatement would be put in place would be negotiated during that contractual agreement.

Both ordinances take effect within 21 days of legal notices for each being published in the *Rivereast*; the notices appear in this week's issue.

\$1,000 Donation Fortifies Andover Senior Lunch Program

by Lauren Yandow

In July, town resident Gerry Wright, 69, donated \$1,000 to the Senior Luncheon Program, which offers lunch at a \$5 fee for seniors and disabled residents.

The donation is a "great benefit" to the seniors who participate in the program, said Senior Center Coordinator Cathy Palazzi.

"We're going to be able to continue the program, stay within our budget and it's going to help us a great deal," she added.

The story of the donation first started last spring. Wright, a 20-year Army veteran who served in Vietnam, a current Andover Fire Commissioner, and former John Deere tractor collector, purchased a John Deere for an undisclosed amount from Palazzi's father, Laurence Hall.

Being a toy enthusiast himself, it was "such a joy" for her father to sell the tractor to an equally enthusiastic collector, said Palazzi. Wright worked to refurbish the tractor and last summer drove it down Lake Road to the Andover Farmers Market on "Oldies Car Day." Not long after, due to some health limitations, Wright could no longer physically hand-start the tractor, so he decided to sell it.

After "waiting and waiting," Wright said the right buyer – Eric Sanders, from Hebron – came along. Wright said he told Sanders, "Here's the deal, you give me what I'm asking and I'm going to donate \$1,000 of it to the Senior Lunch Program."

And in July, Wright did just that when he

presented Palazzi with a \$1,000 check made out to the program.

The senior luncheon program needs \$1,000 to start up each year, said Palazzi. It runs every Friday from September through June, with the exception of holidays and special event.

This past March, Palazzi said she presented the 2017-18 senior budget to the Board of Selectmen. During her presentation, she asked the board to add a \$1,000 line item to the budget in order to fund the Senior Luncheon Program. Palazzi said while the board told her she couldn't increase the senior center's \$9,694 budget – which doesn't include senior transportation – she could rework the funds from other line items to create the specific luncheon fund. So she did.

For the very first year, the senior luncheon program will kick off thanks to a \$1,000 budgeted line item. When those funds are depleted, Palazzi said, the program will begin utilizing their donation account.

As of this week, \$1,509 was in the donation account, including Wright's check. But, Palazzi said, some "awesome, awesome young men and women" will soon increase that amount: Last Thursday, she received notice the fire department will donate \$500 to the program.

Between 30 and 55 town seniors and disabled residents participate in the weekly \$5 luncheon. The \$5 cost offsets food vendor fees, Palazzi said. For example, if a vendor charges \$8 per meal, \$3 would come from the budgeted line account. That does not include items such as

paper goods and plastic utensils. Palazzi and her husband, Michael, provide those items with funds from their own pockets.

Due to state requirements, two seniors currently meet guidelines to receive their lunch free since they can't afford it, said Palazzi.

Each luncheon has an informative guest speaker, who in exchange for their time also receives a free meal. Wright will be the guest speaker when the program starts back up on Sept. 29. When asked what he plans to talk about, he said he plans to "go off the cuff" but it looking forward to it.

Palazzi said it's important for people to realize that eventually we all become seniors, and growing into those elderly years is sometimes perceived as a "stigma."

"What happens a lot of times is our family forgets us," said Wright. "Our kids forget who we are and they don't pick us up and take us to a luncheon, or a movie, or fishing," he added. Wright said he's instilling the importance of family in his own daughter, Devin, so she doesn't "forget" him as he gets older.

As for the program, Palazzi said the seniors are "happy and excited" about the upcoming luncheon. She expressed thanks to First Selectman Bob Burbank, who has helped make the budget for the program happen and to all the people who donate and volunteer their time.

The luncheon program kicks off on Friday, Sept. 29, at the Old Firehouse on Center Street.

Donations to the Senior Luncheon Program in the form of a check can be made out to the



Andover resident Gerry Wright hands Senior Center Coordinator Cathy Palazzi a \$1,000 donation for the Senior Luncheon Program.

Town of Andover, 17 School Rd., with a note "for senior luncheon" in the memo; donations can be made in the form of paper goods as well by calling Cathy Palazzi at 860-916-6122.

Portland Police News

9/10: Joseph Moran, 21, of 77 Crescent St., Middletown, was charged with operating under suspension and speeding, Portland Police said.

9/15: Dianne Hart, 52, of 37 Monroe St., Milford, was charged with operating under the influence, police said.

Marlborough Police News

9/12: State Police said My N. Huynh, 52, of 17 Giddings St., Hartford, was arrested and charged with speeding and operating a motor vehicle under the influence of drugs/alcohol.

East Hampton Police News

9/7: Aaron Cost, 41, of 24 Norton Ave., Guilford, was taken into custody pursuant to an outstanding warrant for his arrest and was charged with second-degree failure to appear, East Hampton Police said.

9/10: Shane Brandon Given, 32, of 165 Leesville Rd., Moodus, was taken into custody pursuant to two outstanding warrants for his arrest and charged with two separate counts of second-degree failure to appear, police said.

Also, from Sept. 4-10, officers responded to 12 medical calls, three motor vehicle crashes and six alarms, and made 14 traffic stops.

Colchester Police News

9/15: Colchester Police said Michael Fiondella, 36, of 7 Windham Ave., was arrested and charged with second-degree criminal trespass, third-degree criminal mischief, sixth-degree larceny, and interfering with an officer: non-assaultive.

9/15: Colchester Police said Arthur Dion, 61, of 82 Newberry Rd., East Haddam, was arrested and charged with operating a motor vehicle under the influence of drugs/alcohol and failure to drive at a reasonable distance.

Obituaries

East Hampton

Mitzi Breece

Mitzi (Knislis) Breece, 76, of Pinellas Park, Fla., formerly of East Hampton, passed away surrounded by her loving family Thursday, Sept. 14. Mitzi was born in Riga, Latvia on July 15, 1941. In 1950, her family migrated to Collinsville, with the help of Collinsville Lutheran Church.



Mitzi was employed as a certified underwriter at Middlesex Mutual Insurance Company for 35 years. She retired in 2003 and spent most of her time residing in Florida. She was the president of the Mainlands Unit 3 "social club" and was an active member of the Anglican Church. She loved flowers, gardening, cooking, and most of all spending time with her grandchildren.

Mitzi is survived by her beloved husband of 51 years, Warren W. Breece Sr; her loving son, Warren W. Breece Jr. and his wife Jaclyn of Portland; her much-adored grandchildren Olivia, Taylor and Matthew of Portland. She is also survived by her sister, Velta Holt of Vernon; her brother, Juris Knislis and his wife Patricia of Wethersfield. Mitzi is also survived by several neices and nephews.

She is predeceased by her parents, Karlis and Vilma Knislis; her longtime brother-in-law, Alton Holt; her sister-in-law, Linda Breece Smith; and her father and mother in-law, Everett and Helen Breece.

Friends called at Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton, Monday, Sept. 18. Burial will be private at the convenience of the family in Union Hill Cemetery in Middle Haddam.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to the charity of the donor's choice.

To leave online condolences, visit spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

Portland

Thomas Brookes

Thomas Brookes, 91, of Portland, husband of Jean (Michelson) Brookes, passed away Tuesday, Sept. 12, in Hartford. Born in Middletown May 23, 1926, he was the son of the late Whitney and Sybil (May) Brookes.

Thomas had been a resident of Higganum most of his life, before moving to Portland seven years ago. A veteran of World War II, he served in the U.S. Navy. He was a member of the Higganum Congregational Church, Granite Lodge 119, Middletown Power Squadron, and was a Life Member of the Middletown Elks Lodge 771.

Besides his wife, he is survived by his loving family: two sons, Michael Brookes of Clinton, N.J., and Thomas Brookes of Troy, Vt.; a daughter, Susan Barksdale of Portland; a brother, Whitney Brookes of Haddam; two sisters, Mary Alice Matulevich of Haddam and Dorothy Anderson of Chandler, Ariz.; four grandchildren, Kevin Brookes, Sara Brookes, Timothy Barksdale, Justin Barksdale; two sons-in-law, Maurice Barksdale and Edwin Johnson; a daughter-in-law Elizabeth Brookes; as well as several nieces and nephews.

He was predeceased by a brother, William Brookes, and a sister, Joan Marica.

Donations may be made to The First Congregational Church of Portland or the charity of your choice.

Funeral services and burial will be private. Funeral arrangements are by Portland Memorial Funeral Home, 231 Main St., Portland.

Portland

Margaret E. Halstead

Margaret E. "Peg" (Haas) Halstead, 98, of Portland, passed away peacefully Friday, Sept. 15, at the home of her daughter. Born Nov. 14, 1918, in Middletown, she was daughter of the late John and Catherine (Reagan) Haas.



Peg graduated from Woodrow Wilson High School in 1935. She went to work at Travelers Insurance Co., then Jarvis Co., where she met her husband Lou of 42 years. Peg and Lou enjoyed many happy years together boating on the Connecticut River on the "Peggy Lou", their special spots being Hamburg Cove, Calves Island and South Cove. Peg's passion for boating and fishing continued well into her 90s with her daughter Cathy and her husband John.

At age 50, while raising her three children, Peg took a position at Wesleyan University in the Olin Library, where she truly loved her job and made many life-long friendships. Her most treasured time began in 1984 when she retired to take care of her first grandson, as well as two more grandsons in 1989 and 1995. She attended all of her grandsons' sporting events throughout their school years; she was their biggest fan. Peg spent 24 years caring for her grandsons by driving them to and from school, never missing a day.

She leaves to cherish her memory by her loving family, two daughters, Cathy Graham and her husband John, Carol Revicki and husband Peter; three grandsons, Jesse and his wife Meredith, Travis and Cody Revicki. She was predeceased by her husband Louis, and her son James Halstead and her sister Betty Whalen.

The family would like to express their sincere appreciation and gratitude to Joyce Gould for her compassionate and gentle manner for the past eight months as Peg's caregiver. A special thanks to Emily and Dorothy of Middlesex Hospice for the wonderful care they provided.

In keeping with her wishes, there will be no calling hours and the burial will be private at the family's convenience.

Charitable contributions can be made in memory of Peg to "Troopons," a program that enhances the well-being of overseas and domestic military families. Checks can be made out to Carlotta Lord, c/o Portland Waverly Senior Center, 7 Waverly Ave., Portland, CT 06480 or to Middlesex Hospice, 28 Crescent St., Middletown, CT 06457.

Portland

Richard Bell Memorial Celebration

The family of Richard C. Bell Jr., formerly of Portland, is having a private burial service the morning of Sunday, Oct. 8, at Trinity Cemetery.

The family would like to invite anyone who knew and loved Rich to come to a Memorial Celebration of Richy's Life to share some memories, tears and laughter. There will be a light brunch menu provided at Quarry Ridge Golf Course, 9 Rose Hill Rd., Portland, from noon-3 p.m.

If you have any pictures of Rich that you would like to share, please send them to Jennifer Bell through Facebook Messenger or via email to hucklebellie@aol.com.

Portland

Jean Flood

Jean Flood, 87, of Portland, died Tuesday, Sept. 12, at Middlesex Hospital after a brief illness, surrounded by family. She was the daughter of the late William Flood and Lillian (Greene) Flood.



A lifelong resident of Portland, Jean was employed as an administrative assistant to the director of the psychology department at Connecticut Valley Hospital for 41 years. She was fiercely independent, living on her own until the end, as her loving and caring nature wouldn't allow her to "be a bother" to anyone. In addition to serving in the St. Mary's Altar Guild, Jean enjoyed traveling, shows at the Goodspeed Opera and TheaterWorks, playing bingo, rooting for the UConn women's basketball team, and dining out with relatives and friends.

She is survived by her brother William and his wife Arlene; her nephew Kevin Flood and his partner Diane Willcutts; her niece and godchild Marie Massaro and grandnieces Reia and Jillian Massaro; her nephew Bill Flood; and niece Sheila Fenton and her husband John. She also leaves two special and loving friends Donald and Lynne (Rudolph) Farrell, her beloved cousin Mary, and many other cherished friends and relatives.

There were no calling hours. A memorial Mass was held Saturday, Sept. 16, at St. Mary Church, Portland. Burial will be at a later date in St. Mary's Cemetery, Portland. Donations may be made to St. Mary Church annual fund, 51 Freestone Ave., Portland, CT 06480, or to a charity of the donor's choice.

Portland Memorial Funeral Home, 231 Main St., Portland is in charge of arrangements.