

RIVEREAST

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New Chief for Belltown... There's a new top cop in East Hampton. Sherrill Woessner pinned the chief's badge on her husband, Dennis Woessner, during a swearing-in ceremony at the East Hampton High School Tuesday. See story on page 10.

How to Keep Yourself Safe

by Allison Lazur

A community forum held in Marlborough Tuesday featured two local police officers who discussed criminal activity in town – and how people can keep themselves safe.

Resident State Trooper Jeff Dunshee and Officer Jay Kehoe also highlighted their roles in the town. Dunshee, who grew up in town, next month marks his eighth year as Marlborough's resident state trooper, whereas Kehoe has spent 15 years as the town's part-time officer, and was recently moved to a full-time role.

"Between the two of us, you'd be hard pressed to find two people who are more invested in the town of Marlborough," said Dunshee.

Dunshee explained that without a resident trooper, the town would be left with only a response trooper from Troop K.

"The town administrators have prioritized policing by signing on with the resident state trooper program," said Dunshee.

He said one of the most common calls were alarms – both residential and commercial. While Kehoe said less than 2 percent of those calls turn out to actually be burglaries, the majority of the presentation was dedicated to how residents can best protect their homes.

"I focus on burglaries because if you've ever had it happen, it's probably one of the most invasive things that can happen to you," said

Dunshee. "Your home is definitely your castle – it's your place of rest in this crazy world – and to have someone invade it is a major violation of your personal security."

Dunshee pointed out that 50 percent of burglaries are forced entry, but nearly 98 percent of all burglars target the master bedroom first. He advised keeping jewelry in unorthodox places like a peanut jar in the kitchen pantry, instead of in the master bedroom.

"If you were to take any kind of security steps, you want to focus that effort towards your home," said Dunshee. "[The] number one goal is to prevent that person from even wanting to target your house and that starts right at the entrance of your house."

Both Kehoe and Dunshee encouraged residents to invest in technology, specifically a Ring video doorbell or Nest Cam system. Both devices link directly to a smartphone and could be considered a type of "digital neighborhood watch," according to Dunshee.

With both devices, video clips – which are displayed on your phone and can also be saved to the cloud – document who rings your doorbell or even visits your property. These clips are then able to be shared with others in the neighborhood, or even with Dunshee directly who can in turn share them with Troop K.

Kehoe added that the number-one deterrent

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Spreading the Word About Agent Orange

by Sloan Brewster

Vietnam veterans and Andover residents Gerry Wright and Ed Fortin are riding their motorcycles on a 10,000-mile quest for 20,000 signatures on a petition to get treatment and disability for veterans exposed to Agent Orange, but whose ailments have been all but ignored.

Agent Orange is a herbicide/defoliant that contains the contaminant Dioxin and was sprayed over Vietnam by the U.S. military.

"They sprayed it to get rid of the canopy to see [enemy combatants] and to get rid of the food supply," said Wright, a retired U.S. Army veteran who spent two tours in Vietnam and was on active duty during Operation Desert Storm.

The defoliant killed food including bananas, coconuts and rice and took out wildlife, including monkeys, Wright said.

"That's what they were trying to do: starve them out," he said.

Many Vietnam veterans, including Wright and Fortin, ended up with health issues and diseases connected to the herbicide, he said. Those with three specific ailments have faced challenges in getting disability coverage and treatment.

In order to receive treatment or be put on partial disability for any of the three ailments — which include skin problems that cause le-

sions, rashes or blistering and nerve disorders – the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) requires that veterans had registered their exposure within one year of separation from the war, Wright said.

Wright, who sprayed the contaminant, did not register his exposure within a year, and said he did not learn he was required to do so until eight years after his tours ended.

"When I was discharged from Fort Bragg in 1971, nobody asked if you sprayed or were exposed to Dioxin," he said. "I didn't hear about this until 1979."

In 1980, Wright developed a severe and painful rash, he said. Despite having statements from his commanding officer indicating he was treated for a rash at the time of his exposure, he was refused treatment and disability coverage.

Later, Wright was diagnosed with other conditions, including a heart condition, connected with Agent Orange – conditions that do not require the registration to get treatment. Because of those conditions, he was granted 100 percent disability and ultimately treated for the skin condition – but he never forgot the refusal for treatment he received all those years ago, or his fellow veterans who remain without medication for those three diseases.

According to Wright, 2.2 million Vietnam

See Agent Orange page 2



Andover residents and Vietnam War veterans Ed Fortin (left) and Gerry Wright (right) are set to hit the road on a nationwide tour to spread the word about Agent Orange – a chemical used during the war that has led to health issues in people who were exposed to it.

Keep Yourself Safe cont. from Front Page

for burglars is a dog, and encouraged residents to also light up their homes instead of their yards as additional defense.

“Light up what you want to protect,” said Kehoe. He also said that residents can schedule a crime prevention survey of their house.

Kehoe explained that he would take a walk of the house and property and make suggestions on what to do to make the home less desirable to someone that wants to break in.

When it comes down to actually locating the criminal post-burglary, “we have to keep evolving to figure out how we can most effectively investigate,” said Dunshee. He added that burglaries are often difficult to investigate because some of the homes in Marlborough are set back from the street, surrounded by trees, which keeps a burglar’s identity hidden.

Dunshee also said most burglars wear gloves to diminish the possibility of leaving DNA at the scene.

“We are aggressively investigating offenders through working with the neighborhoods and court systems,” said Dunshee. He recognized a statewide pawn database that tracks every pawn transaction in Connecticut and can be searched by name or description of the stolen item.

The officers also discussed complaints – such as breach of peace and parking – involving Blish Memorial Park.

Dunshee said that when he became the town’s resident state trooper in 2011 there was little to no enforcement of the parking rule, which states proof-of-residence stickers must be displayed on cars at all times. Since then, 2016 saw a whopping increase of warnings and tickets issued – totaling 63 – up from the 2010 figure of eight.

“Since we’ve been doing enforcement down there, the complaints have stopped,” said Dunshee.

He also added that if a resident is presented with a situation where their out-of-town babysitter wants to bring the resident’s children

to the park, or a guest wants to visit, he advised having the non-resident place a note in the windshield of their car stating the address where he or she is staying and the reason for visiting the park.

A parking ticket is \$75 with \$35 returned to the town.

But the most common complaint police receive from residents, officers revealed, is traffic and speed enforcement.

Dunshee said a new portable electronic speed sign was just purchased and set up last week that will give the police average, low, and high speeds on the road – and also reveal the time of day that speeding is occurring. He also invited residents to experience what new police recruits do and schedule a time to meet with the trooper to watch vehicles and estimate their speeds, followed by clocking the actual speed with a police laser.

Dunshee concluded his presentation by relaying a message from Fire Chief Kevin Asklar, who stressed residents should post a house number that is visible from the street in both directions.

After the presentation, Kehoe allowed residents to experience a virtual reality training program (NSENNA) through a headset and goggles, which offered 360-degree views of virtual situations law enforcement and police may encounter on duty.

These scenarios included domestic disputes, an active shooter in a multi-level building, persuading a potential suicide victim from jumping off a bridge and general shooting practice of fixed and moving targets with a fake gun. All progress is tracked through the computer program, which Kehoe used to change the scenarios and level of difficulty.

Kehoe said additional community forums will be held in May and June, and then resume after the conclusion of the summer in September.

Agent Orange cont. from Front Page

veterans were exposed to Agent Orange and by 2016, approximately 300,000 had died from illnesses connected with the contaminant.

In December 2016, after selling Bolton Notch RV Storage, Towing and Recovery, a business he owned in Bolton for 21 years, Wright started to think about doing something about the problem.

“So this has been festering for almost, what, 40 years?” He said. “And since I retired I got looking at all of this and then I was saying how could the VA treat me for this within a year of separation if they didn’t tell me about this?”

Wright showed the *Rivereast* pictures of himself atop a huge tank spraying a hose, which he said contained Agent Orange. When he sprayed the defoliant he and the other soldiers in his unit had no idea what it was, he said. It would cover the area in a thick cloud and stream into the watercourses, and the soldiers would then use and even drink the unknowingly-contaminated water.

A year ago, after looking at information on Agent Orange, he called Congressman Joe Courtney, who, he said, sat down with him and crafted a petition to change the registration policy and get those veterans, who did not register, treatment and partial disability.

“In order to get those three items changed, it has to be through congress,” Wright said. “Congress has to change those inset dates so that we can be treated and collect a disability if we are diagnosed with those three diseases.”

Once he had the petition, Wright began working on getting signatures and planning the cross-country motorcycle trip to garner more.

“My mission is to get as many signatures – civilian and military – on that petition and I figure the best way to do it is on a motorcycle,” he said. “There’s a reason for that, because that draws more attention than a car and more people say, ‘Why in the world would you want to drive 10,000 miles around the country on a motorcycle?’”

Three weeks ago, Fortin, who was diagnosed with prostate cancer connected with Agent Orange, came across a write-up about Wright’s plans, introduced himself and volunteered to join the ride.

“I joined because of the cause and the fact that we were both doing it on motorcycles,” he said. “But the cause is what really drew me more than anything.”

Wright will be riding his 2007 Honda Goldwing trike, pulling a Black trailer and Fortin will be on his Can Am Spyder, which is also a three-wheeler and will have a trailer.

The men, who have a loose route planned, will leave from the XtraMart on Route 6 next Wednesday, May 2, at 8 a.m. sharp. They will arrive at 7:30 a.m. to greet and bid farewell to anyone wishing to see them off.

From there, their next stop will be the truck stop on the Meriden-Waterbury Turnpike in Southington, where members of the American Legion Riders will meet them and escort them to the New York border. The Riders’ New York chapter is the supposed to escort the men from there to Pennsylvania.

As their route continues, there will be additional stops where motorcycle riders will meet and escort them to the next stop.

With trailers in tow, they will be carrying overnight gear and other necessities and will take in the open night sky in sleeping bags and cots when there is not a motel available or a place to sleep offered by a friend of a friend.

“We’ll do motels as much as we can financially afford to, but if we have to sleep on the ground we will,” Fortin said.

The plan is to venture all the way to Key West and then hit Washington, D.C., in October, where they will bring the petition to the secretary of the VA and then go before Congress.

While on the journey, Wright also plans to film interviews with veterans with Agent Orange diseases using a camera he will be wearing on his helmet.

Anyone who wants to help with the petition can email Wright at happyhauler@yahoo.com and he’ll send one.

Anyone wishing to donate to Wright and Fortin’s expenses can send a personal check to Gerry Wright or Ed Fortin to P.O. Box 274, Andover, CT

To follow the trip, search for “Sprayed & Betrayed AO” on Facebook.

Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

Regular readers know I’m a bit of a baseball fan. (Just a bit.) So I was pretty pleased this week when a notice about the upcoming Bacon Academy Founder’s Day celebration in Colchester made its way into my email.

Each May, the Bacon Academy Board of Trustees throws a celebration to commemorate the school’s founder, Pierpont Bacon. For this year’s event, taking place May 16, the trustees are honoring two men educated at Bacon who each have pretty significant ties to baseball: Morgan G. Bulkeley and Ron Wotus.

Bulkeley was born in 1837 and was educated at Bacon before his family moved to Hartford. He went on to serve in the Civil War and, after the death of his father, returned to Hartford where, in 1874, formed one of baseball’s first teams, the Hartford Dark Blues. The Dark Blues played in what was then known as the National Association of Professional Base Ball Players, which two years later would change its name to the much-simpler National League. Bulkeley served as the league’s first president. Bulkeley’s stint as president of the NL lasted only a year, and the Dark Blues were disbanded after the 1877 season. Still, Bulkeley was honored for his contributions to the game some 60 years later when – 15 years after his death – he was elected to the National Baseball Hall of Fame in 1837.

Oh...yes.....Bulkeley also did some important non-baseball things. He was mayor of Hartford from 1880-1888, and was Connecticut’s governor from 1889-1893. He went on to serve one term in the U.S. Senate, from 1905-1911.

So Bulkeley was not just an important figure in baseball history, but in Connecticut’s history as well. And if that name sounds familiar – the Bulkeley Bridge in Hartford is named after him.

Wotus graduated Bacon just a tad more recently, in 1979. He was a star athlete during his time at Bacon, and lettered in three sports for all four years. After graduating, he was drafted by the Pittsburgh Pirates. His time in the majors was short, appearing in 32 games between the ’83 and ’84 seasons. Where Wotus really made his mark was coaching.

After retiring as a player in 1989, Wotus served as a manager for the San Francisco Giants’ minor league teams from 1991-97. During that time, he was named California League Manager of the Year in 1991, and Pacific Coast League Manager of the Year in 1997.

Wotus was promoted to the big-league club in 1998, serving as the third base coach. The following season he became the Giants’ bench coach, and remained in that role through the end of the 2017 season – an amazing run considering the turnover of big-league coaching and managerial staffs. For the 2018 season, Wotus is back to being the third-base coach.

During his time as a coach with the team, the Giants have won a World Series three times – in 2010, 2012 and 2014. I interviewed him for the *Rivereast* after the 2012 win, and he was of course pretty ecstatic at having helped coach another team to a world title. It was a very pleasant conversation – he seemed like a heck of a nice guy – and I was happy for him. I know he’d like to manage in the bigs one day, and I hope he gets that chance.

While game action will keep Wotus away

from Colchester on May 16 – the Giants will be home in San Francisco that day, playing the Reds – some of his family plan to attend the ceremony. Wotus himself will attend a presentation at Bacon Academy after the season ends.

If you want to check out the ceremony and celebrate some Colchester history, the event starts at 11 a.m. in the ancient cemetery behind the original Bacon Academy. Following the ceremony, refreshments will be served at Colchester Federated Church. For more information, call Dolores Sawchuk at 860-537-2751.

* * *

While tax season may be over, scam season unfortunately never ends – and the East Hampton Police Department this week alerted me to a nasty IRS scam that seems to be making its way through East Hampton again.

The EHPD said it has received reports from residents that an automated phone system has been leaving messages telling people to call a phone number with an out-of-state area code that alleges to be the IRS. The recorded message sounds official, police said, and states that the person at the residence owes back taxes.

But, to quote an old 1940s radio show, don’t you believe it! The EHPD said that if there really is an issue with your federal taxes, you’d first receive a letter or notice in the mail from the IRS. Also, police said, real IRS employees have badge numbers. If you happen to answer the phone and it’s one of these scam artists on the other end, ask the caller for their badge number, and then call 800-829-1040 to confirm it.

The situation can get scary. Police said people may be told they owe money to the IRS and that, if they don’t cooperate, they may be arrested or even deported. In many cases, police said, the caller becomes aggressive and insulting.

If you get a phone call from someone claiming to be from the IRS, police said that, if you know you owe taxes or think you do, hang up and call the IRS at 800-829-1040. That’s the real IRS, and they can help you with a payment issue – if there even is one.

If you know for a fact you don’t owe taxes, or have no reason to think that you owe any, police said you should hang up and report the incident to the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration at 800-366-4484.

Also, police said, if you’ve been targeted by this scam, you should contact the Federal Trade Commission using the “FTC Complaint Assistant” at ftc.gov. Add “IRS Telephone Scam” to the comments of your complaint.

Be on the lookout for strange emails as well. According to police, the IRS does not initiate contact with taxpayers by email to request personal or financial information. This includes any type of electronic communication, such as text messages and social media channels. The IRS also does not ask for PINs, passwords or similar confidential information for credit cards, bank or other financial accounts. Recipients should not open any attachments or click on any links contained in the message, police said; instead, forward the email to phishing@irs.gov.

More information on how to report phishing scams involving the IRS is available on the genuine IRS website, irs.gov.

* * *

See you next week.

\$24.63 Million Budget Sent to Referendum in Marlborough

by Allison Lazur

The Board of Finance presented the town's proposed 2018-19 budget at a public hearing Monday night and was met with little resistance from the estimated 60 residents in attendance.

The proposed spending package totals \$24.63 million, a 2.14 percent increase from current year spending. The proposed town budget of \$4.89 million, a .23 percent decrease from the current year, reflected a \$155,000 cut to capital – a decision that was made by the Board of Selectmen after a request from the finance board, weeks prior. Meanwhile the Board of Education's proposed budget of \$7.29 million, a .06 percent decrease, was the result of a \$132,000 cut.

Whether the cuts will come from the school's operation or capital budget had yet to be determined and was scheduled to be discussed last night – after press time – at the school board's meeting.

Alternate Board of Finance member Liz Gorgoglione did articulate her hesitation in agreeing to cut such a large amount from the Board of Education budget after the school was met with additional responsibilities.

"The only line items they increased were

capital and maintenance, which they understandably had to do because that's now their responsibility. What we cut was that and more," said Gorgoglione. "On one hand, we are telling them they have to take care of the school and on the other hand we are taking that money away."

Gorgoglione and fellow board member Ken Hjulstrom each pushed for the board to use a larger portion of the town's \$663,634 surplus – leftover funds from the 2016-17 budget – to offset increases in the town and school budgets.

The rest of the board disagreed, however, meaning \$100,000 of the surplus will be used to offset the tax increase for residents, leaving the increase at 2.99 percent.

RHAM's operating and capital budget totaled \$9.42 million – an increase of 4.87 percent and a figure that the town of Marlborough cannot change. The only choice the residents of Marlborough have in the matter is whether to vote 'yes' or 'no' to the proposed RHAM amount at RHAM's May 8 referendum.

* * *

Of the eight public comments that were

made, more than half were thanking the finance board for its work, as all acknowledged the difficulties faced in creating a working town budget.

Sheila Guzman was one of the few residents who expressed concern for how the school was appropriating its portion of the money. Specifically, she called the school administration "very top-heavy."

Noting that the student population at Marlborough Elementary has dropped in recent years, Guzman said she and her husband – a school superintendent for nearly 40 years – "wonder why a school so small, even though it's so unique, [is] spending so much money for full-time positions."

Board of Finance Chairman Douglas Knowlton expressed that the Board of Finance does not control school staffing decisions and instead encouraged Guzman to attend regular school board meetings to voice her concerns.

This is the first year the town will have a referendum, as well as absentee ballots available for those who are unable to vote in person. The finance and selectmen boards encourage resi-

dents to educate themselves on the new voting process and to ask any questions that may arise at the polls.

The finance board engaged in extensive discussion involving the clarity of the ballot question concerning the budget. To avoid any confusion at the polls, Knowlton told the *RiverEast* in an email, the budget question will be written as follows: "Shall the budget of \$24,625,494 for the town of Marlborough for the fiscal year July 1, 2018 to June 20, 2019, as recommended by the Board of Finance be approved? (Please note: This amount includes Marlborough's share of the RHAM Regional School Budget, Town Operations, Capital Improvement and Local BOE Budgets.)"

The RHAM spending questions will be on the same ballot.

The referendum is scheduled for Tuesday, May 8, from 6 a.m.-8 p.m., in the community room at Marlborough Elementary. If the Marlborough budget passes, the Board of Finance will then potentially set the mill rate at its May 9 meeting, starting at 7 p.m. in Town Hall.

AHM Mentoring Program Leads to Relationships

by Sloan Brewster

Marilyn Ulion has one hard-and-fast rule for her mentoring sessions – start and end them with hugs.

"I kind of tap into her interests and always begin and end with a hug," Ulion said of sessions with Angela Cooley, a sophomore at RHAM High School.

Ulion, a retired teacher with five children and 12 grandchildren, was connected with Cooley – who was a second-grader at Gilead Hill School when they met – through AHM Youth and Family Services' Lanterns Mentoring Program, a school-based mentoring program.

"I distinctly remember the first visit, I'm approaching the school," Ulion said. "I thought she was going to be very shy and indeed she was very open."

So open the pair hit it off and 10 years later are still enjoying regular sessions.

Cooley said she has gotten a lot out of the sessions.

"I think it's a really positive thing and it's helped me a lot, especially just to have another adult care," she said. "She's given me a lot of advice on how to appreciate things appropriately or positively."

The duo has spent countless hours chatting, working on homework and doing various arts and crafts projects.

"Through the years, I made a lot of jewelry with [Ulion]," Cooley said. "We've knit before."

On their first meeting, Ulion, a big arts and crafts buff, with "a huge repertoire of projects" brought projects to work on with Cooley. She even had notes with introductory questions. It turned out it wasn't necessary for her to look at the notes.

"We just kind of didn't need any of that," she said. "It was a very comfortable beginning."

As Cooley grew, the pair played cards and

board games together and their relationship grew.

"We're always chatting about things," Ulion said.

Their discussions run the gamut from Cooley's grades to things that are going on in school to stuff that's bothering her to basketball games and recitals she has done.

"She loves to dance," Ulion said. "On the third visit in she showed me her dance moves."

The meetings are fun and filled with laughter, and as Cooley has grown older, she has become more and more comfortable in the sessions and has spoken more freely, Ulion said.

"It's just always been fun, it's always been something humorous that goes on," she said. "It's just a really comfortable feeling and I think that we've basically become good friends."

Over the years, the crafts the woman and girl have done have also changed and expanded.

"One year we made little tiny [paper] boxes that she could use [as gifts] for her teachers," Ulion said.

Now that Cooley is a busy high school student, the meetings are shorter but they are still fun, Ulion said. They have also met up at AHM suppers and gatherings, along with other mentors and mentees in the program and sometimes Ulion hits Cooley's basketball games and dance recitals.

It's been a 10-year relationship so far, and Ulion said she wants to take it even further. She said she she's going to keep up the relationship after Cooley goes to college, though she isn't sure how just yet.

"We'll just have to figure that out; I have college grandchildren in other states," she said. "We'll figure that out as we go but we're out for the record, Angela and I."

Laurie Larsen, AHM mentoring coordinator,

said it's not uncommon for mentors and mentees to remain in contact after the mentee has graduated from high school and said mentors also attend important occasions.

"I love it when the mentor can go to graduation," she said. "That's how it's structured, that the mentors follow the kids through school."

Cooley said she looks forward to the meetings and conversations and hearing a different point of view about issues or topics about which she is struggling.

"I think the program is just a really good positive thing," she said. "It gives another role model and mentor for kids that may need someone to care for them in life."

The program, which AHM has been running for 18 years, is in need of volunteers, Larsen said.

Larsen said she gets referrals from school administrators or AHM social workers for children in need of mentors, she said. There are many reasons they may need a stable adult to spend time with them.

"They need more time [to talk], some one-on-one attention, just an adult friend to model conversation, to have someone they can talk to about if they're having friend trouble, some of these children are have trouble in school," she said. "Children are so different and their needs are so different."

Once she gets the names of children who need mentors, she tries to find adults who are a good fit for them.

"I try to match them by interests and personalities," Larsen said. "It's kind of like match making."

Once the matchmaking is done, the two meet for an hour each week in the school the child attends. For younger kids, the meetings take place at recess, while middle and high school

kids meet their mentors after school or during free periods.

Mentoring programs help kids stay in school, Larsen said. Meeting with stable adults builds their confidence and their beliefs in what they can do with their future.

"Research has shown that even this one hour a week makes a huge difference in children's lives," she said. "It's a big preventative from going off track, staying in school is a big one, a lot of these young people are at risk once they get to high school of not staying in and the mentoring program has made them realize the importance of staying in and what it does for their future."

The program has a big need for male volunteers, said Michelle Hamilton, AHM executive director.

"We don't have a lot of male mentors," she said.

Possible mentors are screened and, if approved, trained for the program.

"The people that are in this program are so motivated to help these kids, it's so heartwarming to see," Larsen said. "They never expect to get something back."

Ulion concurs.

"It's just comforting to me to know that I'm just one more person in Angela's world and that she's not being judged," she said. "I just think that I get as much out of it as Angela that I hope she does."

The program, which has helped approximately 300 children from the towns of Andover, Hebron, and Marlborough, has about 25 mentors at this time.

Anyone interested in learning more about mentoring opportunities, contact Laurie Larsen, AHM Lanterns Mentoring Coordinator, at 860-228-0871 or lauriel@ahmyouth.org.

Suggested Hub Tweaks Cause Consternation in East Hampton

by Elizabeth Regan

Superintendent of Schools Paul K. Smith has requested slight modifications to the Board of Education space in the new municipal hub, much to the chagrin of some members of the committee overseeing the project.

The \$18.98 million project on the eastern end of Route 66, which was approved by voters in November and is on schedule to break ground by early September, will include all departments in the current town hall and the Middletown Avenue annex, as well as the police department and the Board of Education offices.

According to audio from the Town Facilities Building Committee's April 5 meeting, Smith said he is looking for a more flexible layout of the currently allocated space in order to address storage and privacy issues.

The resulting shuffling would likely displace two central office employees, according to Smith. He said they would move to a suite of offices in Memorial School to join positions overseeing technology and food services.

While he said this week the specific positions chosen to relocate to Memorial School could change before the new town hall complex is move-in ready, he identified Facilities Director Don Harwood and administrative assistant Linda Miner as possible choices at this time.

The entire complex spans 33,400 square feet. According to Amenta Emma Senior Associate Chris Legiadre, the first floor Board of Education offices cover 1,790 square feet.

Building committee Chairman Glenn Gollenberg said the original design was based on interviews with Smith and district officials about how much space they needed in the new building.

Smith attended the meeting with schools business manager Karen Asetta, curriculum director Mary Clark and Board of Education member Nancy Oakley.

Building committee members had first discussed the issue – and raised concerns – at a meeting the previous week.

Gollenberg told Smith the committee is worried about letting the “process get derailed” by a lot of changes. But he said the requested revisions “are not going to cost money on the construction side, so that’s a real positive.”

Committee member Jeff Foran was the most

forceful critic of Smith’s revised request.

“I’ll tell you I’m really upset with this, as you’re starting to gather, because you signed off on a plan and all of a sudden, two months later, it’s not good enough; you want to change it around,” he said loudly and directly to Smith.

Other members wondered what would prevent more departments from coming in and asking for revisions.

Member Ray Moore put it this way: “We’re going to end up with changes here and changes there, and every change is a buck.”

Rebecca Tinelle-Sawyer expressed concern about relocating staff originally slated for the complex.

“We’re designing a new building and it doesn’t accommodate your entire staff. That makes us look bad, so we want to know the reasoning,” she said.

Smith’s proposed changes, while keeping the same square footage, would rework the layout to accommodate more filing cabinets and would turn an office into a meeting room for up to six people.

Smith told members he originally underestimated the amount of space needed for approximately 30 cabinets containing certain files for current and former teachers and special education students that must be retained for various reasons.

When committee members questioned whether it was necessary to maintain so many records and if there was opportunity to store some of them digitally, Smith said the district can look into “thinning out” the stacks.

He described the proposed meeting room as “unassigned private space” for sensitive issues as they arise, such as personnel, disciplinary, and legal concerns.

While schematic designs include a second-floor conference room with space for 20 people available to the Board of Education, Smith said a small meeting room in the department’s own wing on the first floor adds efficiency and privacy.

Foran, who described his own communication style as “short and sweet,” objected in no uncertain terms to Smith’s explanation of the situation.

“So to cut to the chase,” Foran said. “You

want two conference rooms.”

Smith said, “basically, yes.”

Foran also questioned Smith’s authority to ask for the revisions. He gruffly asked if the Board of Education was comfortable with moving two employees into another building.

When Smith started to say that school board member Nancy Oakley had joined administrators at a recent meeting with the architects, Foran loudly interrupted.

“That’s not what I asked,” he said. “I said the Board of Education. She’s one person. I asked is the Board of Education aware of this and are they comfortable with it?”

Smith said yes.

“Are you willing to give that to us in writing?” Foran asked.

Oakley spoke up to vouch for the decision-making ability vested in Smith by the Board of Education. Smith then agreed to bring the revised schematics to the school board as soon as the project architect incorporated the requested changes, adding that he would provide meeting minutes as documentation of the school board’s approval.

After Smith, Oakley, Asetta and Clark left the meeting, members continued to discuss the issue briefly before continuing with the rest of the meeting agenda.

Lisa Motto, who acts as the town’s project manager with her husband, told building committee members she didn’t believe the school board was aware that Smith’s revised changes involved leaving two district employees out of the new location.

“I think we’re covered, but you guys just need to know that the Board of Education members don’t know,” Lisa Motto said.

Smith said this week the school board is aware of his requested changes.

“My board, in communication from me and in public meetings, have heard that not all 11 people may go into the new space. It may be nine, but that would not be a distraction to how we function,” Smith said.

School Board Chairman Chris Goff this week maintained the Board of Education is confident in delegating decision-making authority to Smith.

“I think we have a lot of faith in Paul, and

for the building committee to ask specific board members or the board to make decisions about people is inappropriate. That’s something Paul should be doing and is doing,” Goff said.

Goff said he heard from multiple people who attended the building committee to represent the school system that Smith was treated “very poorly” by the committee.

He said it is part of larger communication problems that have been evident since the project’s inception.

Goff said the original concept for the floor plan was drafted by architects without an actual visit to the current Board of Education building “to see who does what, and where.”

Goff said both he and Smith requested a copy of the draft plans from Town Manager Michael Maniscalco before the question went to voters in November, but they did not receive the documents.

“Prior to referendum, we never saw the actual floor plan of where we were going to see if it was adequate,” Goff said. “It was almost like a blind ‘let’s support this project,’ even though we didn’t know if it was going to fit.”

Goff said he plans to contact Gollenberg to discuss what he described as the ongoing communication issues.

When Gollenberg was asked by the *Rivereast* about the aggressive nature of Foran’s questioning of the superintendent of schools, he said Foran was just “speaking forcefully.”

“It was fine,” Gollenberg said. “It was one committee member’s opinion, and wanting to make sure the superintendent understood he wasn’t happy with going backward and having to change something previously approved.”

Gollenberg said no other departments have come to the committee with concerns about the space allotted to them.

“There’s no indications from any other departments that would cause us to think anybody is anything but satisfied with the plans as they’ve been presented to them,” Gollenberg said.

Smith reiterated this week the school board will formally discuss and endorse the new plans once the architect submits the revised schematics. The designs had not been released by press time.

New East Hampton Police Chief Sworn In

by Elizabeth Regan

There’s a new top cop in town.

East Hampton Police Department Chief Dennis Woessner was sworn in Tuesday at the high school in front of almost 100 people, including roughly three dozen fellow officers from departments across the region.

He was selected from a pool of 35 candidates in a process that took four months from start to finish.

Woessner rose to the rank of captain with the Glastonbury Police Department during his 30 years with the force.

Members of the Town Council looked on as Sherrill Woessner pinned the new badge on her husband’s uniform as they stood beneath the American flag in the T-Bell seminar room.

Many of the supportive law enforcement officers came from Glastonbury. Officials in attendance included that department’s former chief, David Caron, and its new chief, Marshall Porter, who assumed the role in November.

Town Manager Michael Maniscalco nodded to the uniformed contingent lining the back wall when he described the room as one of the safest in East Hampton.

Maniscalco also pointed to numerous town hall staff members who could be identified by the matching East Hampton 250th anniversary fleece sweatshirts they wore.

Listing efficiency and effectiveness as two hallmarks of any East Hampton town employee, he said even more is demanded of the police

chief.

“We expect transparency and we expect compassion,” Maniscalco said.

Town Council Chairwoman Melissa Engel welcomed Woessner with the acknowledgement that he has “very big shoes” to fill.

Former Chief Sean Cox, who was a 21-year veteran of the Connecticut State Police before coming to East Hampton in 2013, resigned late last year to take a position with General Dynamics Electric Boat in Groton.

“Chief Cox did an awesome job for us,” Engel told Woessner, “and, you know, we have a dog that you have to be very nice to. We like the dog.”

Police canine Ardo joined the force in 2016.

Engel also thanked interim Chief Thomas Davoren, a former commanding officer of the state police, for filling in over the past few months.

“As I told [Davoren] out in the hall, if he wasn’t so set on retirement, we would’ve kept him,” Engel said.

She threw in a quick addendum for Woessner: “You know, before we got you, of course.”

Several relatively low-key years have elapsed since a tumultuous period that began in 2010 when Engel was council chairwoman. That’s when then-Town Manager Jeffrey O’Keefe made the controversial decision to eliminate the police chief position, essentially firing then-Chief Matthew Reimondo and promoting then-Sgt. Michael Green to a newly-created lieutenant

position.

The council approved the decision to eliminate the position, but Reimondo was reinstated months later after a citizen petition led to a town-wide referendum that was approved by a wide margin. Reimondo held that position – though not without continued criticism from some town officials, police officers and residents – until he took an early retirement package in 2013 and was eventually replaced by Cox.

Woessner described himself as committed to building a relationship with the community through teamwork.

“I believe in transparency,” he told the crowd. “I believe in honesty.”

He said he’s had nothing but positive interactions with town staff members and officers with the East Hampton Police Department since he began interviewing for the position.

The impression was sealed when he first reported for duty to find crime scene tape on the town manager’s door, he said. Maniscalco had been on vacation the week prior.

“I didn’t know if this was a good thing or a bad thing,” Woessner said of the yellow tape. “Then they [staff members] opened it up and they had Saran-wrapped his entire office. I’m like, this is a good place to work.”

He went back to the idea of a community approach before ending his speech to a standing ovation.

“I don’t take this position lightly,” he said.



East Hampton Police Chief Dennis Woessner addressed a crowd of almost 100 people during his swearing-in ceremony at the high school on Tuesday.

“I promise I will do the best job I possibly can. But it is a team effort.”

Questions Remain on Portland's Brownstone Avenue Pipeline

by Elizabeth Regan

The Board of Selectmen voted Tuesday to extend by three weeks the due diligence period on the purchase agreement for 5.28 acres of contaminated property on Brownstone Avenue amid unresolved questions about a pipeline running under the site.

First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield said the board is expecting a proposal from the property owner's environmental engineer with specifics about how the pipeline will be "cleaned up."

Selectmen voted 4-0 Tuesday to extend the due diligence period to May 16. Selectmen Lou Pear, Michael Pelton and Ben Srb were absent.

"Selectmen want to see how the owner will take care of their property appropriately," Bransfield said.

Bransfield signed the purchase agreement on Jan. 25 for \$385,000, with associated fees bringing the total to \$410,000. The sale is contingent on approval by taxpayers at town meeting.

The three-parcel site was a petroleum storage and distribution site operated by Port Oil Company before it was vacated almost a decade ago, leaving five conspicuous oil tanks on

the site. Bransfield said the pipeline was used to carry oil from river barges up to the tank farm.

The property is in estate, with the oil company's owner having passed away years ago.

The purchase agreement originally specified the town has 90 days from the signing to inspect the property and review any existing easements, liens or encumbrances.

A town meeting originally scheduled for February 28 to allow the public to vote on the proposed purchase was postponed after a public hearing yielded questions about who is responsible for removing and/or remediating the pipeline.

A title search submitted a day after the public hearing revealed a 1982 easement between Port Oil Company and Chevron USA Inc., which was in the vicinity of what is now Valley Oil. A temporary easement allowed the construction of the pipeline and a perpetual easement allowed the maintenance, repair and removal of the pipeline. The temporary portion of the easement was lifted in 1983 upon completion of the pipeline.

The easement specifies Port Oil is respon-

sible for removing the pipeline and restoring the land once the easement is no longer necessary.

Bransfield said at the time that the newfound information is an issue "for the seller to explain and rectify, if need be."

She said this week she does not know why the issue wasn't resolved within the original 90-day period. She said the town brought up the pipeline easement to the property owners once the title search was completed in February and followed up with a meeting.

"I fully anticipate I will hear within a short amount of time," she said.

The town has to take ownership of the property before it can access a \$750,000 grant from the state Department of Economic and Community Development to remediate the brownfields site. According to reports from the environmental engineering firm Tighe and Bond, that's how much it will cost to mitigate soil and groundwater contamination on the site.

Possibilities for the site, if purchased by the town, include a waterfront restaurant operated as part of a public/private partnership. An example of a similar model is the Brownstone

Exploration & Discovery Park, which officials say has paid the town \$2.75 million in lease fees since the park opened in 2005.

She said selectmen have discussed the possibility of using town's Open Space and Recreational Acquisition Fund to help pay for the purchase. The fund was established by a local ordinance in 1999 to allocate approximately \$50,000 each year to pay for properties that will be used for preservation, public space, or active recreation.

The fund currently totals \$168,000, according to Bransfield. It was last used to help pay for the Keegan property that will serve as the trailhead for Portland's section of the Air Line Trail.

Bransfield said there's still "a lot of work still to be done" before – and if – the issue goes back to voters for another public hearing and a town meeting.

"Before we get to that point, it's imperative that the seller address the pipeline and how it will be cleaned," she said. "This is something we're going to keep the public fully informed on. It is a public matter and it's up to the voters how they want to proceed."

Reinventing the Hebron Town Green

by Sloan Brewster

Judy Podell wants to reinvent the Town Green and, while she's at it, stimulate some economic growth.

Podell, who departed the Planning & Zoning Commission last November after serving on it for 16 years, hopes to draw people to the center of town through events and activities as part of the Town Center Project, she said in a phone call Monday and at the April 5 Board of Selectmen meeting. It's something she has been working on for about a year.

"We're getting there slowly but surely," she said.

The historic district that runs along Route 66, in the area of the library, old Town Hall and the American Legion, is the official town center, Podell said. The town green, which is in the area too, was vastly reduced beginning in the 1930s, when Route 66 was installed.

"It was very beautiful," she said of the green. "There was no Route 66. That was our green."

The town was incorporated in 1708 and was the 41st town in the state. According to an 1868 map, there were about 30 buildings lining an expansive village green, Podell said. Then, in 1882, most of the center burned down. The following year, the First Congregational Church – now Church of Hope – was rebuilt as were some of the other buildings, bringing the center back to life with offices, shops, churches and a horse auction – all based around the green.

"It was literally the heart of Hebron," she said.

The first road build, in the 1930s, diminished the green, she said. Road improvements from the 1950s to 1966 and again in 1985, further hacked away at it.

The road had a drastic impact on the town, according to Podell. Not only did it reduce the green, but the 1950s road improvement and widening project resulted in the demolition of many of the historic buildings, and the center all but disappeared.

"We understand that [it made the road safer] but it didn't do us any good," she said. "If you ask people, 'Where's the center of Hebron?' There isn't one."

In 1999, the town began mitigation efforts to reclaim and restore the green, Podell said.

According to the 2014 Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD), the Hebron Green District, which consists of approximately 32 acres at and around the intersection of routes 66 and 85, is on the National Register of Historic Places.

Since the 2004 POCD a list of beautification improvements have been completed. They include the installation of a commemorative stone wall; the addition of decorative banners on the colonial light poles in and around the green area; new stone benches; additional landscaping; and the development of a public-private process for establishing permanent easements for public parking in the Hebron Green District.

A plan is also in the works to bring more sidewalks to the area.

The Hebron Center Sidewalk Plan will bring a sidewalk from the intersection of routes 66 and 85 down Route 85, past the Russell Mercier Senior Center down to Hebron Elementary School, where it would cross to Kinney Road and continue past Holy Family Church down to Sunnyside Plaza.

With \$100,000 already appropriated in a three-year funding plan for an engineering study for the sidewalks, the Capital Improvement Plan Committee has requested \$18,000 for the last installment in the 2018-19 annual budget.

The \$830,000 construction will be funded through a LoCIP grant the town has already been awarded, according to the CIP's documentation.

The hope is that the Town Center Project will draw folks to the area and, in turn, build its appeal to businesses.

"We want to make it where people are coming to the center of town," Podell said. "If you have 500 people coming to town for an event or if you have 1,000 people coming to town for an event, businesses will notice that."

She wants people to think of Hebron as a place where they do things.

"The goal of this is to reinvent the heart of Hebron, to make it once again the center of community life, which it's not," Podell said. "We have to do something to bring business here and business doesn't see it as very viable because they see us as a sleepy town."



The center of town has changed a great deal over the years – and resident Judy Podell wants to bring people back to the area that she said was at one point "the heart of Hebron."

In September, the project became an official nonprofit organization, Podell said. Now she's working on raising money and getting more folks to volunteer to pitch in. In the meantime, she already has organized some events.

The first will be a Town Wide Tag Sale on June 2. Folks can set up in the Town Hall parking lot or have their sales at their homes and be included on a map showing where attendees can go to find bargains.

The Lazy Days of Summer will take place Sundays, May 20, June 24, July 15, Aug. 19 and Sept. 16, from 3 to 6 p.m. each day, in the historic center. The fun will include low-tech games and activities, musical performers, croquet and bocce and fun for children such as chalk painting.

"Grab a bite to eat, pick up dinner and spend a couple hours enjoying some music," Podell said.

On July 4, there will be a parade with everyone on wheels – instead of walking or marching.

"Bedraggled kids going on and on, I thought

we shouldn't do that anymore," Podell said of why she chose wheels.

After the parade, there will be food trucks, games and music in the center.

There will be Summer Concerts at Veterans Memorial Park on July 15 and 29 and Aug 12.

Harvest Moon Happening will take place October 20 and will include a fun run and a variety of activities, games and activities.

After the April 5 presentation, Board of Selectman Chairman Daniel Larsen said the project was something the board could support "with sweat equity."

To donate to the project, send a check to The Town Center Project, Post Office Box 153, Hebron, CT 06248, or have 5 percent of Amazon.com purchases donated to the project by selecting it as your charity of choice when checking out.

To volunteer, reach out to Podell through The Town Center Project, Inc. on Facebook, or call her at 860-205-3744.

The project's website is currently under construction.

Andover Finance Board Passes Budget – Sans Funding for Trooper

by Sloan Brewster

The Board of Finance has decided to pass an \$11 million budget – which does not include funding for a resident state trooper – on to voters.

The spending proposal – a 12.84 percent decrease from the current year’s budget – will now go to an annual town budget meeting, which will take place next Thursday, May 3, at 7 p.m. in the Town Hall Community Room. If approved at town meeting it would then head to referendum Tuesday, May 15.

The budget proposal also calls for a mill rate of 34.2, a 5.23 percent mill increase.

At its meeting Wednesday, the board – by a tight 3-3 vote (board member Adrian Mandeville was absent) – did not pass a motion to include \$200,000 in funding for the position, leaving some of the small group in the audience dismayed.

Cathy Pallazzi, resident and senior coordinator, started a petition at the public hearing last week asking for signatures from folks in favor of keeping the funding for the position. Petition in hand, she expressed surprise it was ignored.

“We have a petition,” she said. “We have a lot of signatures.”

Before the vote was taken, resident Debbie

Scanlon spoke in favor of funding the position, telling the board to listen to the voice of the people who spoke in favor of the funding at last week’s public hearing.

At the public hearing, which took place last Wednesday, the decision to exclude the funding was a big discussion point. Speaker after speaker rose and expressed concern and dismay about the proposal, some saying they would be willing to pay the extra taxes to cover the position. One speaker calculated that it would cost him about \$38 for the year and said it was worth it.

Scanlon asked that the funding be put back and said it could be removed at the Town Meeting, if the residents voted to do so.

“I was happy that many people came out and spoke in favor of the resident trooper,” she said. “If the people at the meeting vote to [remove the funding], then it happens.”

After the vote, she commented that the people who signed the petition were not heard and the townspeople had been misrepresented.

“I hope the town budget meeting does not pass your budget to referendum,” she said.

Board of Selectmen member Julia Haverl said it was the finance board’s job to listen to residents.

“If the people show up and ask for something, your job is to put it back in,” she said. “Not to hold a vote and take it out.”

In a phone call Thursday, Board of Finance Chairman Dan Warren responded to what he called an “admonishment” by Haverl.

“I would remind people that Selectman Haverl is only on the Board of Selectmen because of minority representative rules and she did not win votes in the 2016 election so I don’t think it’s necessarily fair to represent herself as representative of the people,” Warren said.

He added that Haverl has no moral authority to admonish the finance board since selectmen submitted their budget only a week before the public hearing, with a 10 percent increase. The finance board’s job is not to rubber-stamp the Board of Selectmen’s budget, he said.

“We’re responsible to present a fiscally responsible budget to the town,” Warren said.

Before the vote, one person from the audience – resident Scott Warren, incidentally Dan Warren’s brother – spoke against paying for the trooper position.

“I’m here on my own, not because my brother is on the Board of Finance,” he said. “I support their decision for the trooper. I feel personally that it’s a good program but the amount of

money that the state is asking us to put forward is a lot.”

Part of the issue with the finding, finance board members have said, is that the state has proposed increasing how much town’s pay for resident state troopers.

Currently, towns are responsible for 85 percent of costs associated with the trooper position and the state pays the rest. The state’s proposal would increase the town’s costs to 100 percent, Warren said.

In addition, the position, which is being held at this time by an interim officer, is a seniority post, meaning the permanent trooper that comes in would have a high salary, something over which the town would have no control.

With the removal of the trooper position, the plan laid out by the finance board is for the town to get coverage from the Troop K, which would respond when there is a need for police in town, Warren said. At this time, the resident trooper is in town only for his eight-hour shift and the rest of the day, Troop K responds as needed.

The finance board also reduced the proposed budget by \$30,000 in health insurance costs and added \$5,000 for dental insurance, a decision based on the most up-to-date information from the town’s insurance broker, Warren said.

Colchester Delays Taking Action on Finalizing Budget

by Allison Lazur

A Board of Finance public hearing on the \$55.26 million 2018-19 proposed budget has been postponed due to ongoing budget negotiations among state lawmakers that could bode well for the town’s financial picture.

After receiving additional revenue estimates from the state — which implied Colchester could be receiving \$1.33 million more in revenue than the town thought it would be getting based on Gov. Dannel P. Malloy’s February budget proposal — the decision was made to postpone the public hearing by about two weeks, to May 16.

According to Board of Finance Chairman Robert Tarlov, these updated figures from the state are projected to be finalized when the legislature adjourns on May 9, and will most likely not vary much from what was revealed last Friday.

“The legislature said they had reached common ground on many things,” said Tarlov. “They were only going to make minor tweaks.”

He added the town should fare “phenomenally better” than it would have under Malloy’s

plan.

According to the *CT Mirror*, both parties recommended increasing the Education Cost Sharing (ECS) grant program by \$85.6 million over the current fiscal year.

The proposed increase in education funding means Colchester could receive additional revenue, further offsetting the tax increase as well as the mill rate. Tarlov said this is good news considering Malloy’s original numbers set residents on track for a 3 percent tax increase for the upcoming year.

The current proposed total budget of \$55.26 million is expected to be finalized for public hearing at a finance board meeting Wednesday, May 2 at 7 p.m. at Town Hall.

This new budget figure reflects a 0.21 percent decrease to the school board budget of \$40.55 million. On the town side, the \$14.71 million spending plan remains flat.

In First Selectman Art Shilosky’s original presentation on April 3, the town budget saw a \$224,488 increase. It was only after the finance board requested Shilosky craft a list of cuts that

he delivered a budget with no increase.

“What we asked Art to do is contrary to what we’ve asked in the past — [which was] don’t touch capital,” said Tarlov.

The proposed reductions—totaling \$225,465—only had a few “true cuts,” said Tarlov.

Among those cuts were \$4,500 in police tasers that were able to instead be purchased in this year’s budget. An additional police speed laser costing \$5,400 was cut since the department already has two, said Tarlov.

The other reductions were actually “a deferral or an alternative use of funds” instead of truly being cut, said Tarlov.

An example of this is the \$39,009 savings in road improvements, which would partially be funded by the “town aid road funds that would’ve been used later, but are instead being used now,” said Tarlov.

Other items on the list that were funded through alternative means included a \$35,000 reduction to the telephone system as well as a decrease of \$32,000 to the phones’ hardware

and software. Both items need to be updated, but will possibly be funded this year through the rainy day fund or equipment reserve fund, if the budget is finalized in its current state.

Tarlov said he had to prioritize where to spend the equipment reserve funds.

“One of our weaknesses is we operate pretty lean and there’s no place to go,” said Tarlov.

Tarlov said the town received a Moody’s Investors Service downgrade eight years ago, but since then has been able to establish a healthy fund balance nearing 12 percent of the total budget—the recommended percentage by Moody’s.

Shilosky said this week he has not had an opportunity to have a full conversation with Tarlov and that none of the numbers were final yet.

Based on this new information from the state, Shilosky said he was not necessarily going to again recommend the requested cuts when the finance board meets again on Wednesday.

The finance board budget public hearing will be held May 16 at 7 p.m. at Town Hall.

Marlborough Man Charged in Fatal July Crash

by Sloan Brewster

A Marlborough man has turned himself in for an accident that resulted in the death of a motorcycle rider last July.

Brodey Coutant, 20, of 11 Dickinson Rd., was arrested April 20 and charged with negligent homicide of a motor vehicle, travelling unreasonably fast and following too closely.

According to the arrest warrant, the accident occurred July 16, 2017, at 12:41 p.m., at 522 Church St. in Amston. Coutant was driving a 2016 Ford Focus that, according to a witness, struck a Harley-Davidson being driven by Benjamin Labonosky, 57, of Colchester.

According to the warrant, the witness saw the motorcycle travelling north in the area of the Twin Lakes Café, where the motorcycle suddenly slowed down. When the bike slowed, a vehicle travelling behind the motorcycle struck it, the warrant states. Labonosky was ejected.

Also, according to the warrant, the operator of the motorcycle, Labonosky was not wearing a helmet at the time of the collision.

The witness, who was driving south on the same road, told police he had to swerve to

avoid running over the operator of the motorcycle.

According to findings of an investigation conducted by state police, Coutant did not notice the motorcycle prior to impact. In a surveillance video from the café, no braking sounds can be heard from his vehicle until after the collision, according to the warrant.

In a written statement, Coutant told police he had seen the motorcycle slow down quickly and was attempting to turn left into a parking lot, the warrant states.

"I tried to slow down as best as I could but was unable to avoid striking the rear of the motorcycle," Coutant said in the statement, according to the warrant.

However, police found Coutant's statement to be inconsistent with the surveillance video, the warrant states.

Labonosky's injuries were fatal and he was pronounced deceased at Hartford Hospital, where he was transported after the crash.

Coutant was released on a written promise to appear, police said, and is scheduled to appear in Rockville Superior Court May 2.

Portland Man Arrested on Drug Charges

Portland Police this week arrested a Rose Hill Road resident on drug charges as part of an ongoing investigation into reported drug activity in the area.

Local officers and members of the Middletown Police Department Narcotics Unit executed a search warrant Monday at 10 a.m. on 183 Rose Hill Rd., according to a press release. The search resulted in the arrest of Steven G. Woynar, 52, of the same address.

Police said they seized approximately 50 grams (1.8 ounces) of powder cocaine, 907

grams (31.99 ounces) of marijuana, packaging material, a weighing scale, and opioid prescription medications.

Woynar was charged with possession of narcotics, possession of more than 4 ounces of marijuana, operating a drug factory, possession of marijuana with intent to sell, storage of narcotics in non-prescription containers and distribution of a controlled substance.

Woynar was processed by Portland police and released on a \$25,000 bond pending a May 1 court date at Middlesex Superior Court.

East Hampton Police News

4/10: Brittany Delaware, 27, of 54 Midwood Farm Rd., was arrested and charged with second-degree failure to appear, East Hampton Police said.

4/11: Marcy White, 49, of 1113 Portland-Cobalt Rd., Portland was arrested and charged with DUI, reckless driving, operating a motor vehicle without a license and operating an unregistered motor vehicle, police said.

4/11: Melissa Swan, 36, of 12 Hayes Rd., was issued a summons for operating a motor vehicle while under suspension, police said.

4/14: Heather Lee, 34, of 36 Victoria Dr., was arrested and charged with DUI, drinking while driving and failure to have lights illumi-

nated, police said.

4/18: William Depietro, 28, of 36 Namonee Trail, was arrested and charged with violation of probation, police said.

4/18: Frederick G. Everett III, 35, of 36 Namonee Tr., was arrested and charged with third-degree assault and disorderly conduct, police said.

4/18: A 15-year-old juvenile of East Hampton was arrested and charged with third-degree sexual assault and second-degree unlawful restraint, police said.

Also, from April 9-15, officers responded to 12 medical calls, five motor vehicle crashes and 12 alarms, and made 26 traffic stops, police said.

Colchester Police News

4/12: State Police said at approximately 2:12 p.m., a resident reported than an unknown vehicle had crashed into his mailbox on Balaban Road.

4/16: State Police said at approximately 4:07 p.m., Melissa D. Mondesir, 19, of 208 Shaw St., New London, was driving a Nissan Altima traveling eastbound in the left lane of Route 2, near exit 21. The vehicle traveled off the right side of the highway, colliding with a tree, said police. The passenger, Marline Mondesir, 48, of 208 Shaw St., New London sustained suspected minor injuries and was transported to Hartford Hospital by Colchester Fire. Police said the vehicle was towed from the scene by

Desmond's Auto.

4/16: Colchester Police said Aurora Houghtaling, 44, of 23 Louis Ln., was arrested and charged with second-degree failure to appear.

4/19: State Police said Javoni O. Reyes, 19, of 302 Fitchville Rd., Bozrah, was arrested and charged with second-degree failure to appear.

4/19: Colchester Police said Terri A. Sears, 43, of 292 Middletown Rd., was arrested and charged with second-degree failure to appear.

4/21: State Police said Charles Mote, 44, of 844 Norwich Ave., was arrested and charged with disorderly conduct, third-degree assault and third-degree strangulation/suffocation.

Portland Police News

4/18: Lewis Nicholas, 24, of 175 Prospect St., Middletown, was charged with second-degree threatening, Portland Police said.

4/21: Sydney Ruiz, 23, of 54 Ude Way, Colchester, was charged with evading responsibility and passing on the right, police said.

Obituaries

East Hampton

Laura Mary Connelly

Laura Mary Connelly (née Whitty) died peacefully in her home with family by her side on April 15, in Glastonbury, after a lengthy battle with Parkinson's disease. She was born in Hartford June 14, 1928, the daughter of the late John Whitty and Alice (Wall) Whitty. She was 89 years old.



A resident of East Hampton for 50 years, Laura had a lifelong career in banking. She worked at various Connecticut Bank and Trust offices and at Citizens Bank in Hebron. She retired in 1993 and spent her time with family and friends, traveling as often as possible. Laura will be forever remembered for her wit and humor, as well as for her kind and compassionate heart.

Laura is survived by her three loved and treasured children who brought so much joy to her life: her son, James Connelly of West Hartford; her daughter and son-in-law, Alison and Guy Smith of Minneapolis, Minn.; and her daughter and her partner, Nancy Connelly and Laura Livingston of Santa Cruz, Calif.; three precious grandchildren, Molly and Dillon Smith and Liam Connelly; two brothers, Tom Whitty and his wife Lucille of Skaneateles, N.Y., and Bob Whitty and his wife Claire of West Yarmouth, Mass.; a sister-in-law, Diane Whitty of New York City; and many dear and special nieces and nephews, all of whom enriched her life tremendously.

In addition to family, Laura leaves many great friends who brought much joy and laughter to her life, as she did to theirs. In 2007, she was predeceased by her brother, Jack Whitty. The family extends immense gratitude to the hospice caregivers who, for nearly two years carried her with comfort, compassion, love and friendship.

A funeral Mass is scheduled for Saturday, May 12, at 11 a.m., at St. Patrick Church in East Hampton, with a reception to immediately follow. All are welcome.

In lieu of flowers, please donate to Masonicare Partners Home Health & Hospice. Condolences may be sent to 1233 Laurel St., Santa Cruz, CA 95060.

To leave online condolences, visit spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

Hebron

D. Lee Rebillard

D. Lee Rebillard, 73, of Lebanon, formerly of Colchester and Hebron, passed away Thursday, April 12, at Hartford Hospital. Born Aug. 11, 1944, in Willimantic, he was the son of the late Jules and Marion (Griffin) Rebillard.



Lee had worked for the Hebron Public Works Department as a maintainer and mechanic for nearly 30 years before his retirement. He was a tractor enthusiast and was active with both antique and modified pulling circuits for many years, winning numerous awards. In his spare time, he was a die-hard and passionate player of the board game Sorry, wearing out a board approximately once every three months and relishing in beating any competitor. Lee also enjoyed taking many a scenic ride through the countryside.

He leaves two daughters and sons-in-law, Annette and Christopher Peterson of Arlington, Va., and Toni-Lynn and Todd Bennett of Colchester; their mother – his former wife and longtime friend, Barbara Hutchins of Colchester; four granddaughters, Meredith and Audrey Peterson of Arlington, Va., and Jules and Lauren Myers of Colchester; four siblings, John and Jules "Butch" Rebillard, both of Colchester; James Steven Rebillard of Lyndon, Vt., and Diane Plante of W. Warwick, R.I.; and numerous extended family and friends.

The family received guests Tuesday, April 17, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. Graveside services were observed Wednesday, April 18, directly at Gilead Cemetery, Route 85, Hebron.

In lieu of flowers, donations in his memory may be made to the Hebron Lions Club, 347 Gilead St., Hebron, CT 06248.

Portland

James Leonard

James "Poppie" Leonard, 91, of Portland, beloved husband of 67 years to Marcella (Tobias) Leonard, died Wednesday, April 18, at Middlesex Hospital, surrounded by his loving family. He was born in Wethersfield, son of the late Frederick and Barbara (Becker) Leonard.



James was raised in Middle Haddam and joined the Army after high school serving as a veteran during World War II. Prior to his retirement from Shepard Steel and Highland Construction, he worked as a self-employed carpenter, building many homes in Portland.

In addition to his wife Marcella, James is survived by his sons, Fred Leonard (Lynne) of East Hartford, James Leonard (Joann) of Portland; daughter, Barbara D'Addio (Rick) of Middletown; a brother, Fred Leonard; sisters, Catherine Albrecht, Gertrude Scully and Mary Hennessey; eight grandchildren, Jennifer, Philip, Breanne, Steven, Timothy, Chris, Joseph, Shelby; and four great-grandchildren, Taylor, Olivia, Brynn and Mason.

He was predeceased by a brother, William Leonard, and a sister, Barbara Weir.

Funeral services were held Tuesday, April 24, at Biega Funeral Home, 3 Silver St., Middletown. Burial, with military honors, was at the State Veterans' Cemetery. Calling hours were held Monday, April 23, and Tuesday morning, April 24, at Biega Funeral Home.

Those who wish may make memorial contributions to CT Humane Society, 701 Russell Rd., Newington, CT 06111.

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

Colchester

Robert Wm. Applebee

Robert Wm. Applebee, "Bob," 64, of Colchester, formerly of Mystic and Chester, passed away peacefully Sunday, April 22.



Born Oct. 3, 1953, in Hartford, he was the son of the late Lawrence and Helen (Chalany) Applebee and brother of Carolyn Applebee Sagen of Colchester and John Applebee (and his wife Bonnie) of East Hampton, whom he leaves to mourn his passing but cherish his memory, along with their families.

Bob had worked for the Town of Chester Public Works Department for a number of years. He was an adventurous soul, who loved the outdoors and traversing the country many times. Bob also enjoyed music, as well as painting and drawing in later years.

The funeral liturgy was celebrated Wednesday, April 25, directly at St. Andrew Church, 128 Norwich Ave., Colchester. The family received guests at the church before the liturgy. He was laid to rest privately with his parents in Resurrection Cemetery, Westbrook.

His family would like to extend their heartfelt thanks and appreciation to the staff of Mystic River Residential Living, where Bob had been truly cared for like family for the past 20+ years; as well as Apple Rehab Colchester and Hospice SECT for ensuring his comfort over these last few months. May God bless you all.

Therefore, in lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Mystic River Residential Care, 14 Godfrey Street, Mystic 06355 or Hospice SECT, 225 Dunham St., Norwich, CT 06360.

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

Colchester

Donald Emory Brown

Donald Emory Brown of Colchester, formerly of Canandaigua, N.Y., passed peacefully Monday, April 9, at the age of 80.

He was predeceased by his wife of 10 years, Dorothy Farley Brown. He is survived by his children, Edward (Catherine) Brown, Cynthia (Bernard) DeStefano, Sally (Tariq) Salam; his grandchildren, Kathryn Assunto, Samuel Brown, Henry Brown, Jack Brown, Sarah Salam, Emma Salam, Anna Salam, Ella Salam, Ava Salam; and great-grandchildren Natalie and Gianna Assunto.

Don Brown earned a bachelor's degree in philosophy at Muskingum College, as a member of Alban House, in 1957-1960. He earned the Master of Divinity from Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, 1960-1962. He served his calling of ministry to others as a pastor in Presbyterian churches in San Francisco, Calif., Topeka, Kan., and Mendon, N.Y.; as a youth pastor in the Methodist Church in Canandaigua, N.Y.; and as pastor of the Methodist church in Vine Valley, N.Y. He also worked in public and social service in Kansas City, Mo., Nashville Tenn., and Atlanta, Ga.

His ministry, counsel, advice and comfort will be sorely missed by all who knew him. His life of service and dedication to others will be inspiration to those who were close to him. His lifelong thirst for learning and faith, and his abiding love for reading and sharing, will be long remembered by his extended family and his many beloved friends. May he rest in peace, in the loving arms of Jesus Christ and in the company of all whom he loved dearly and had passed to eternity before him, and all of us who will one day join him.

There will be a memorial service and a celebration of his life held at Vine Valley United Methodist Church, Middlesex, N.Y., Saturday, May 26, at 11 a.m.

His family requests that donations be made in his name to the American Heart Association.

East Hampton

Jeanne H. Walsh

Jeanne H. Walsh, 79, of Killingworth, formerly of East Hampton, wife of the late Laurence Walsh, died Thursday, April 19, at Hartford Hospital. Born Sept. 28, 1938, she was the daughter of the late Robert and Mary Hawley.

Jeanne had retired from the State of Connecticut, where she had worked in administration. She is survived by her sons, Laurence Walsh Jr. of New Britain, John Walsh of California, Patrick Walsh of Vermont; two brothers, Henry Hawley of Arizona, Robert Hawley of Amston; three sisters, Corinne Ruscica of California, Anita Marren of Newington, Lorraine Hawley of Newington.

She was predeceased by her daughter, Doreen Walsh Bergeron; her brother, Raymond Hawley; and her sister, Theresa Hawley.

Friends may call at Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton, Saturday, April 28, from 9:30-10:30 a.m. A funeral liturgy will be held at 11 a.m. in St. Patrick Church in East Hampton.

To leave online condolences, visit spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

Colchester

Patricia Farrington

Patricia (Michalek) Farrington, 64, passed away on Tuesday, April 10, with her family by her side following a tenacious 17-year battle with breast cancer. She was born in New Jersey on March 15, 1954 to the late Henry & Regina Michalek.



Pat was a fighter to the end, with strength and courage she persevered through all the challenges she faced. Throughout her life she had various careers, her first job was as an X-ray tech, she then married Wayne Farrington and together they moved to Colchester to raise their family. She then worked as a radiation safety specialist at Yale and UConn.

Pat earned her master's degree, and taught health at RHAM High School in Hebron, Hartford schools and lastly, for 14 years, in East Hampton's elementary, junior high and high schools. While teaching in East Hampton she met the love of her life, Nicholas Badalado, together they loved to watch UCONN women's basketball, the San Antonio Spurs, being with loved ones and bocce. She and Nick were the reigning champ at the I.P.I.C. in New Britain.

Pat was very generous and being a "QVC-aholic" aided her in being the best gift-giver. She loved a good cup of tea and was affectionately known as the "Crazy Cat Lady." She was a lover of all animals and enjoyed watching the birds from her back porch.

Pat is survived by her daughter Cristina Bedell and her husband Derek of Middletown and her twins, Derek Farrington and wife Megan of Colchester, and Regina Giudice, with whom she made her home with for the last year, her husband Paul of Colchester, and her grandchildren, Cash, Henry, Beau and Ariana. She also leaves behind her extended Badalado family, with whom she shared many wonderful years.

In addition to her parents she was predeceased by her former husband, Wayne Farrington, and her fiancé, Nicholas Badalado.

Calling hours were held Friday, April 13, at Belmont Funeral Home, 144 S. Main St., Colchester. A funeral was held that afternoon at Westchester Congregational Church, 449 Westchester Rd., Colchester.

In lieu of flowers, donations in Pat's memory may be made to local animal shelters.

Visit belmontfh.com to send condolences.

Colchester

Margaret Lynn Gambon

Margaret Lynn Gambon (Rutka) 66, from Joplin, Mo., formerly of Colchester, entered eternal rest Tuesday, April 17. Born April 16, 1952, she was the daughter to the late Leo and Margaret (Churney) Rutka.



Marge graduated from Notre Dame High School in Norwich and shortly thereafter moved to Jupiter, Fla. She married and raised three children whom survive her: one son, John Gambon of Palm City, Fla.; two daughters, Nicole Kelly (Shane) of Ballwin, Mo., and Amy Helmick (Jeremy) of Aiken, S.C.; and leaves behind eight grandchildren.

She leaves to mourn her passing but cherish her memory four siblings: Thomas Rutka (Patty), Kenneth Rutka, Jean Murphy, Karen Hayllar (David); and several nephews, nieces, her beloved aunt Dorothy Huron and numerous cousins.

In addition to her family Marge leaves behind a childhood friend, Donna (Zawisza) Bogan from East Haddam, also her furry companions, Sophie her dog and Kaluha her cat.

She was a determined woman who persevered through all of life's struggles. She will be dearly missed and never forgotten.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in her memory to the charity of one's choice.

Care of private arrangements has been made and services are at a later date.