

RIVEREAST

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Colchester is Kind... Students from Colchester's Jack Jackter Intermediate School created dozens of inspirational sticky notes as part of a recent community service day at the school. In collaboration with the community group Colchester is Kind, some of the notes can now be seen at Coneheads, 32 Norwich Ave.; people are free to take or leave a note. Lillian Hauserman, age 6, is pictured with the new note wall.

Sober House Coming to Portland?

by Elizabeth Regan

A local Episcopal priest's vision for a Main Street recovery residence is beginning to come into focus – even as it remains unclear from a zoning standpoint if such a house is allowed.

Philip Bjornberg purchased a four-bedroom, 2,021-square-foot home on 0.37 acres in December for \$131,000, according to assessor's records. The 1922 structure is situated at 399 Main St.

He calls it Follow Me Home.

The Trinity Church priest told the *RiverEast* last week his goal is to provide shelter and support for people recovering from drug and alcohol addiction as he works to “wrap them back into community.”

He said he sees Follow Me Home as space for a “virtual family” of up to seven people in various stages of recovery.

“I would not load the house with five to seven really fragile people,” he said. “Maybe get a mix of folks so the stronger ones can carry the weaker ones.”

He pointed to a successful model at the North Stonington-based Stonington Institute, where he serves as a chaplain. The Starlight Military Program serves active duty members and veterans with substance use disorders.

“The guys come in, they're pretty busted,” Bjornberg said. “When they go out, they're pretty strong. And the stronger ones bring the weaker ones under their wing. It's beautiful to watch.”

Bjornberg estimated that a fee of roughly \$500 per month for each Follow Me Home resident would keep the program going. He said he hopes the initiative will grow to encompass other recovery houses under a nonprofit umbrella.

But those are details the big-picture thinker would rather not get bogged down in just yet.

“I don't want to let that stop progress, figur-

ing all that out. I want to keep going,” he said.

The land use department has not yet received any zoning applications or permit applications for 399 Main St., according to staff. But they said they have gotten two complaints so far about the possibility of the Main Street recovery house.

Zoning regulations prohibit any operations that are not explicitly authorized in the list of permitted uses.

There is no provision in the zoning regulations for the short-term rental of rooms in private homes, according to the department.

Group homes operated in town by organizations like Rushford and Gilead Community Services can be authorized through the special permit process under the health care institution provision in the regulations. It allows group homes providing treatment for people with physical disabilities, developmental disabilities, mental health conditions and drug and alcohol addiction.

Regulations also allow owner-occupied bed-and-breakfast facilities for overnight accommodations of up to 30 days.

Facilities for charitable uses may be allowed with a special permit if “not conducted as a business or for profit.”

Bjornberg said he doesn't yet know what specific zoning use designation applies to his project.

“I do believe we can find a cooperative way where everyone gains and none lose,” he said.

'A Lot of Ideas'

Bjornberg, a recovering alcoholic who's been sober since 2003, said that while some in the medical community look at addiction as a brain disorder, he sees it as a “problem in three parts:” body, mind and spirit.

He described his idea for a coeducational
See Sober House page 2

Ballplayer Remembered for Love of the Game

by Elizabeth Regan

They took a knee for Alex.

Roughly 300 Little League players bent down in baseball pants not yet stained by dirt and grass as they gathered for Opening Day on April 28 to remember a former player.

Little League President Jeffery Bischoff spoke from the field.

“Today we honor the memory of Alex Meeker,” Bischoff said. “As I say about all of our current and former players, he was one of us, part of the East Hampton Little League family. Alex's life was taken far too soon from cancer. Although he passed away a few months ago, he is here with us now, I truly believe that, watching down on all of this.”

Alex died of osteosarcoma on Jan. 15, after a three-year fight.

This year, Opening Day happened to coincide with Alex's birthday. He would have been 22 years old.

Alex's obituary detailed his devotion to the sport, which took him from Little League to the state champion East Hampton High School baseball team in 2011. Among the family members and friends mentioned in the death notice were the names of several baseball coaches who fostered his love of the game.

“My soapbox speech that I have used for many years now is that the goal of our organization is to create good baseball and softball players and great human beings,” Bischoff told the crowd. “I do believe in the power youth sports can have in shaping that. Alex exemplified that spirit and makes us all very proud.”

Alex's mother, Tracy Dominski, said last week that baseball was always her son's favorite sport.

“I think it kept him on the right track, with the right group of kids, and was very positive for him,” she said.

When she threw out the first pitch during the Opening Day ceremony, it went into the glove of Matt Sevigny, Alex's longtime friend and a former East Hampton High School catcher.

Dominski described the ceremony as emotional.

Many of Alex's supporters wore shirts emblazoned with his number, 28, and the words “Team Meeks.” A fundraising effort for the Make-A-Wish Foundation, Team Meeks was established with the goal of making a wish come true for a child with osteosarcoma.

Dominski said her son was diagnosed with cancer at age 18, making him too old to have his own wish granted. But he always saw the organization as an important resource for kids dealing with what he called an incredibly unfair situation.

“He would be so happy when a wish was granted,” Dominski said.

Team Meeks brought in about \$14,000 for the Make-A-Wish Foundation on Opening Day through the sale of items including T-shirts, backpacks and water bottles, according to Dominski. There was also a monster truck on hand to entertain the crowd.

Bischoff said the league was celebrating Alex's selfless desire to help others by incorporating the Make-A-Wish Foundation into the Opening Day event.

“His ability to see that the Make-A-Wish Foundation gives hope and an ability to divert a child's attention to fun, to good, to something different than what they are going through, is why we have invited and raise money for them,” Bischoff said.

The line of Team Meeks participants in purple shirts stretched across the first base line during the ceremony.

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Sober House cont. from Front Page

recovery house that would incorporate daily morning prayer with mentorship, service opportunities, job assistance and community events like potluck Sunday dinners and house concerts.

“I’ve got a lot of ideas, but I need hands and feet to bring them down to earth,” he said.

Bjornberg has been cultivating support from faith, educational and addiction communities. He said the plan is coming together with help from a broad group of people, including Pastor James Woods of the Middletown-based Streetfire Ministries, Donald Watson of Portland’s Grace & Mercy Family Ministries, Wesleyan University students and members of the recovery group he facilitates each Tuesday at Stonehaven in Portland.

He said he’s already hired one of the Stonehaven recovery group members to work on the house’s broken furnace. When the furnace work got derailed due to the man’s struggle with addiction, Bjornberg said it was a challenge to bring him back on board.

Though Bjornberg gave up and called in another contractor to look at the system, he said he ultimately felt compelled to ask the man who started the project to come back and finish it.

“It’s not the path of least resistance,” Bjornberg said. “It’s insane in a lot of ways. It’s a lot of risk.”

It’s all part of the ethos of authentic fellowship that permeates his ideas for the recovery house and his entire ministry, according to Bjornberg.

“I got sober when a guy dropped everything

that was meaningful to him that day and loved me when I was unlovable,” Bjornberg said.

Community Outreach

Bjornberg acknowledged his vision for the group home is likely to receive resistance from the public.

“Sober houses are notorious for having a whole bunch of really bad behavior and guys running them for money,” he said. “This is not that.”

He suggested immediate neighbors could have veto authority over who lives in the house.

He described that conversation as part of an “earnest dialogue” with the wider community to come up with a plan everyone can get behind.

“Community is not just the people who live there,” he said. “It’s the people who live on each side, the people who live on the block, the people who live on this side of the river, the people who live on the other side of the river. It’s all of us,” he said.

And it’s not an “I’m right and you’re wrong” kind of conversation, according to Bjornberg. It’s a question of why and how.

“How can we join forces and make this work, because the Narcan over there is still not going to be enough to keep all those people from killing themselves,” he said.

* * *

Bjornberg has scheduled a May 23 community roundtable discussion for anyone interested in helping to shape the vision for the recovery house. The conversation will begin at 6:30 p.m. at Trinity Church, 345 Main St.



Tracy Dominski threw out the first pitch at Belltown Little League Opening Day in honor of her son, Alex Meeker, who died of osteosarcoma earlier this year at the age of 21.

Ballplayer cont. from Front Page

“It was profound,” Dominski said.

Alex made sure to attend the Little League opener even after aging out of the program, according to his mother. She said he would’ve been

there this year, too.

“Alex was just such a wonderful kid, and he loved baseball,” she said. “I’m sure he’s looking down at us and smiling.”

Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

It was a seasonably cool mid-fall night on Nov. 1, 2015. Mystic’s own Matt Harvey had just completed pitching eight shutout innings against the Kansas City Royals in game five of the World Series.

As the Mets came to the plate in the bottom of the eighth, I sat there in the promenade section of Citi Field in awe, listening as the stadium practically shook with chants from the crowd: “Har-vey! Har-vey! Har-vey!” As Matt scrambled to the pitcher’s mound to start the ninth, cheers erupted from the crowd.

It was an amazing high – which made his fall to earth crash all the louder. Last week, a little more than two and a half years since that November night, two and a half years of injuries and surgeries and disciplinary actions and plenty of hurt feelings on both sides, the Mets designated Harvey for assignment.

That’s baseball-ese for “you don’t have to go home, but you can’t stay here.” Simply put, the Mets had decided they’d had enough of the man who was once known as The Dark Knight, who was going to save the Mets from a string of losing seasons and help carry them to dizzying new heights. As Tom Seaver was in the ‘60s, and Dwight Gooden was in the ‘80s, that’s what Matt Harvey was going to be in the 2010s.

For a time, it looked like things were going to work out exactly that way. Harvey burst onto the scene in the latter half of 2012 with excitement. He dominated from the start – he struck out 11 batters in his big-league debut – and continued this into the 2013 season. He had an extremely successful first half, even flirting with no-hitters on three separate occasions, and parlayed that success into starting the 2013 All-Star game – a tremendous accomplishment for someone who hadn’t even spent a full year in the majors.

It all came to a screeching halt in late August of that year, when Harvey was diagnosed with a partially-torn ulnar collateral ligament in his right elbow. He had Tommy John surgery that October, and missed all of the 2014 season.

His return in 2015 only seemed to cement his superstar status. While most pitchers are a little off their first season back from Tommy John, Harvey was shockingly on point. He pitched six shutout innings, striking out nine, in his first start of the season – and it was off to the races from there. He finished the season 13-8 with a sparkling 2.73 ERA. He also pitched, as I mentioned up top, into the ninth inning of the fifth game of that year’s World Series. It was the most innings pitched *ever* for a pitcher his first season back from Tommy John.

In many ways, when Harvey took the mound that ninth inning, it was the beginning of the end. What I didn’t know at the time – and couldn’t have known, from my spot in the upper deck – was that manager Terry Collins had fully intended to take Harvey out after the eighth. Harvey had taken the team where he needed to, they had a 2-0 lead, and it was time to sit back and let the closer wrap things up.

Harvey was having none of this. In the dug-out, Harvey yelled at Collins, refusing to come out of the game, demanding to pitch the ninth and finish what he started. Collins – in a moment he later described as letting his heart overrule his head – relented, and let Harvey start the ninth. Harvey walked the lead-off man, who went on to score when the very next batter hit a double. This made the game 2-1. Harvey was taken out of the game, but the runner he left standing on second would, a couple of outs later, come around to score the tying run. The game went into extra innings, and the Mets would eventually lose – making the Kansas City Royals World Series champions.

That Harvey would yell at his manager in

front of his own teammates and demand the baseball for the ninth was a show of hubris that, frankly, wasn’t all that surprising. Harvey’s swagger by that point was almost legendary – indeed, it’s part of what endeared him to a lot of fans. He was Matt Harvey, The Dark Knight, one of the brightest lights in a city that was full of them. He had endorsement deals galore, was on late-night talk shows, drove luxury cars – even posed for a national magazine wearing nothing but a bathrobe. So him showing up his manager to get an extra inning wasn’t a shock.

But here’s the thing about swagger: you need to walk the walk when you talk that talk. Harvey didn’t, and, with the game and the series lost, what would’ve been the stuff of legend instead looked like an immature power play.

Harvey returned to the Mets to start the 2016 season a weakened man – at least physically. All the innings logged the previous season appeared to take their toll, as Harvey pitched to a dreadful 4-10 record, with an ERA of close to 5, before shutting it down to have another surgery – this time to correct something known as thoracic outlet syndrome.

Harvey again made a comeback in 2017, and again scuffled, sporting a 5.25 ERA before having yet another surgery, this time to repair a stress fracture in his shoulder. He returned at the end of the season, and pitched poorly.

He again pitched poorly to start the current season, and after four starts the Mets – sporting a new manager and new pitching coach – decided to move him to the bullpen. Harvey was tremendously unhappy about this, and made no secret of it. Pitching in relief turned out to be no better for him, and last week the Mets asked Harvey to go down to the minor leagues to work on his craft. He refused – so the Mets made the shocking move of cutting ties with him. His time as an employee of the New York Mets officially ended this past Tuesday, when the Cincinnati Reds traded for him.

That Harvey is no longer a Met makes me sad. When Harvey jumped onto the scene in 2012, he provided a sense of hope, a sense of electricity and excitement, that had been missing on the Mets for a while. His starts were can’t-miss television. He was a star, and he embraced the role thoroughly.

Still, I realize the end of this relationship may be the best thing for both parties. As I said, Harvey thoroughly embraced the New York City lifestyle – to his detriment sometimes. He wound up becoming a fixture on the gossip pages of the New York tabloids, and was even suspended for three games last year after he simply didn’t show up to the stadium for a game; he was rumored to have been out late partying the night before.

The thing about baseball – and sports in general – is that what’s laughed off when a player is doing well is seen much more negatively when a player is not. Pitching-wise, Harvey was not the same guy from the start of the 2016 season onward. But he still acted as if he were. So Harvey became, in the Mets’ eyes, a distraction, and not worth having around anymore.

Though it may not sound like it, I genuinely like Matt Harvey. I think the fame, and the bright lights, went to his head a bit. He needs to reinvent himself – and I think being in a smaller market like Cincinnati is a good place to do it. At this point, New York carries a lot of baggage; it will be nice for Harvey to have a fresh start.

So, I wish good luck to Matt Harvey. He may never again be on top of the world like he was that November night in 2015, but I believe greatness still awaits him. Both as a pitcher and, more importantly, as a man.

* * *

See you next week.

Andover Finance Board Reinstates State Trooper

by Sloan Brewster

The finance board held a rare Saturday meeting to rework budget numbers after voters at the annual town meeting on May 3 balked at sending the proposed \$11 million budget to referendum because it was too low.

The vote to approve the budget proposal failed 88 to 21.

A majority of those who spoke prior to the town meeting vote wanted the resident state trooper position, which was removed during this year's budget planning process, reinstated into the spending plan.

In addition to putting the resident state trooper back into the budget proposal, the finance board at its Saturday meeting took the unusual step of instilling punitive measures against the Board of Selectmen. That's when they cut the first selectman's \$2,500 salary and selectmen's \$1,100 salaries by 10 percent, according to Chairman Daniel Warren.

Warren said the punishment is a response to the lateness of the selectmen's budget, which the finance board received weeks after it was due, and had only a week to review and tweak it before the budget public hearing.

Warren said finance board members added \$187,000 for the resident state trooper position, increased capital spending from \$40,000 to \$170,000 and added \$198 for a raise for an administrative assistant.

The tweaked numbers bring the budget proposal to \$11.31 million. Even after putting those items back into the spending plan as a result of the failed town meeting, the proposed budget remains \$418,129, or 7.31 percent, lower than the current budget.

The mill rate associated with the proposal comes in at 35.45 mills, an increase of 2.95 mills, or 9.06 percent, over the current mill rate.

Residents Rally for Trooper

Last week's annual meeting was so crowded that the Community Room in Town Hall reached capacity and the meeting was moved next door to the gym at Andover Elementary School.

With only 21 of the 109 people in attendance voting to send the budget to referendum, another town meeting was set to be held last night after press time to give voters the chance to weigh in on the latest numbers.

Town charter dictates that if residents do not agree to send the proposal to referendum, the finance board will do more tweaking and another meeting will take place next Thursday; the cycle will continue each week until a budget is approved.

Before the floor was opened to resident speakers, Moderator Wally Barton reminded folks that while things could be removed, nothing

could be added. The only recourse for adding more funds would be to knock the budget down, he said.

"Yes means a referendum," he said. "If you say no, that means you're not accepting the budget and it goes back to the Board of Finance and we'll meet here or at town hall in seven days."

Speakers raising concerns about the lack of funding for a resident trooper were the latest in a public outcry was also heard at a public hearing on April 18 and at a Board of Finance meeting on April 25.

"I feel that the people who came to the public hearing and spoke in favor of the resident state trooper program were totally ignored," resident Debbie Scanlon said. "We need to fail this budget ... Vote it down and ask them to put the program back in."

Board of Finance member Adrian Mandeville responded to comments that the board ignored the people.

"It's not that we ignored you," he said. "Thirty people showed up at a meeting; that's not representative of the town."

Mandeville went on to say that the finance board hears from residents in other ways, including through emails and on Facebook.

Residents also raised concerns about the salary for a new full time treasurer included in the \$98,000 line item for that department.

"The reason we had to go to a fulltime treasurer this year was because our books were a mess," Burbank told voters. "We had to bring the books to order, otherwise we would have been financially in trouble."

In January, the selectmen and finance board, at a joint meeting, agreed to hire a treasurer for a salary up to \$60,000.

Punitive Measures

Warren said the idea of taking punitive measures against the selectmen for their tardy budget proposal came from a member of the public at a recent meeting, he said.

"We're not happy," Warren said. "This has been two years in a row where the Board of Selectmen budget has been late."

In addition, the selectmen's budget came in at a nearly 10 percent hike over the current year and showed no attempt to mitigate cuts in state aid to the town, he said.

"We're frustrated at the way they're doing business," Warren said.

First Selectman Robert Burbank said selectmen reviewed and approved the budget, then passed it along to the finance board after it was presented to them by the town administrator, though he added that he was not passing any blame.



A plea to keep the Andover resident state trooper hangs from a sign on the corner of School Road and Route 316.

Town Administrator Joseph Higgins said he gave his proposed budget to selectmen in February.

Warren said the finance board received the selectmen's budget proposal a week before the April 18 public hearing.

Burbank questioned the idea of punishing selectmen and said they were doing their jobs diligently.

"I think it's a little ridiculous that (we're punished because) we don't conform to (Dan Warren's) ideas, and personally I don't think some of the items that he brought forward, for example capital, were ever approved by selectmen," Burbank said.

Burbank was referring to capital funding for improvements to the track at the Riverside Drive Recreational Field (also known as Long Hill Fields), "which is brand new," and funding for bathrooms and a concession center at the recreational field.

"We need capital items in this town such, as a rotor for Public Works, so that we can safely take care of our roads," Burbank said. "I'm very concerned about the budget."

According to Warren, the capital budget includes \$20,000 for asphalt paving of the track around the recreational field to prevent wash-out during flooding and \$100,000 for bathrooms and concession facility at the Riverside Drive Recreational Field. It also includes \$10,000 in capital for the next revaluation, \$5,000 for the Plan of Conservation and Development, \$10,000 to repair the Old Town Hall roof, \$10,000 for a storage shed for the Fire Depart-

ment and \$15,000 for repairs and upgrades to the Andover Elementary School gymnasium.

"The Board of Finance felt that since we were not proceeding with an austerity budget (a budget with severe cuts), we would include investments in tangible infrastructure that improve the quality of life in Andover and make it a more desirable place to live," Warren said.

In response to Warren's comments that the selectmen's budget was too high and did not account for losses in state revenue, the first selectmen said selectmen reviewed the budget and approved increases they believed were justified.

"The state budget is so up in the air," he said. "It's almost impossible for the Board of Selectmen to include the cuts in the governor's proposed budget."

Additionally, Burbank said, the onus for reductions should be on education boards. The Andover Board of Education did a good job in that regard, he said; RHAM, not so much.

Andover Board of Education's \$4.19 million budget request represents a 1.89 percent decrease from the current year.

RHAM's \$29.31 million budget for all three towns in the region, which was approved at Tuesday's referendum, includes the elimination of 11.6 positions and represents an increase of 1.76 percent, or \$500,530, over the current year's budget. Andover is responsible for \$4.47 million of RHAM's operating budget.

"This is one of the largest increases we've seen (from RHAM) in years," Burbank said. "They should look at the ECS cuts more than us."

Marlborough Voters Approve \$24.63M Budget

by Allison Lazur

After years of deciding the matter at town meetings, Marlborough held its first-ever budget referendum Tuesday – and while turnout wasn't exactly overwhelming, the message sent was clear.

The \$24.63 million budget for the 2018-19 fiscal year passed by a 388-176 vote. The budget features a 2.34 percent increase over current year spending and was met with little resistance from residents at the public hearing and town meeting that preceded the referendum.

The budget included general government, capital and local school board spending, as well as Marlborough's portion of the RHAM budget.

Of the total 4,223 registered voters in town, only about 13 percent cast ballots Tuesday.

The town meeting held Monday – basically as a formality to send the budget to referendum – was sparsely attended, and was described by First Selectman Amy Traversa as "the quickest, easiest town meeting we've ever had."

The town operations budget contributed \$4.89 million to the total spending package, an overall decrease of 0.23 percent, while the town capital budget totaling \$937,643 saw a 28.94 percent increase.

After eliminating its entire capital budget, the Board of Education was left with an operations budget of \$7.29 million, or a 0.06 percent decrease.

Although school board chairman Ruth Kelly said she was "very pleased" to see that the bud-

get passed, she expressed her disappointment with having to slash the school's capital budget; funding for capital projects was removed entirely from the school budget, in order to satisfy a Board of Finance-mandated \$132,000 cut to education spending.

"I wasn't pleased to make the cut [to capital], but it's the prerogative of the Board of Finance," Kelly said. "We aren't going to get to the capital projects, but next year we will be back at it."

Finance board member Ken Hjulstrom, who through the entire budget process has been adamant about finding a solution to keep the school from taking such a hit, stood by that sentiment.

"I'm not shocked that it passed, but obviously I would've liked to have another round at it," he said. Hjulstrom criticized this as "another year of ignoring the school."

The budget passed Tuesday also includes Marlborough's portion of the RHAM schools budget. This amounts to \$9.42 million – a 4.87 percent increase from Marlborough's current contribution to RHAM. (The overall RHAM budget, also voted on at referendum Tuesday, passed in all three towns; a related story appears on page 32.)

The Marlborough budget will leave residents with a 2.99 percent tax increase and a mill rate of 36.52, up 1.06 mills from the current year.

One mill is equivalent to \$1 in tax per \$1,000 of assessed property, meaning a 36.52 mill rate would result in a resident paying \$9,130 in taxes on a home assessed at \$250,000.

The town's so-called "rainy day fund," or the undesignated fund balance, was a hot topic throughout the development of the budget. It increased by \$563,634, after an audit of the 2016-17 budget revealed a \$663,634 surplus. The remaining \$100,000 from the surplus was used to offset the tax increase for residents.

The finance board pushed for a majority of the surplus to be utilized to increase the rainy day fund after a downgrade by Moody Investors Service last December.

The report stated Marlborough has "a stable but limited financial position that could be challenged by state fiscal and economic pressures."

Traversa also supported the decision to only utilize a portion of the surplus.

"I think we took a balanced approach this year," Traversa said. "The town was cut, the school was cut and we took some of the money from the surplus and put a chunk of money away to the rainy day fund."

Finance board chairman Douglas Knowlton expressed his relief with the budget results.

"It's a good thing we don't have to do it again," he said. "We have a budget and now we get to move forward."

While Marlborough is able to move forward with the town budget, the state budget—which passed Wednesday night—could potentially impact the town's revenue.

According to the news website *The CT Mirror*, the new state budget provides an additional \$70.5 million in municipal aid to towns.



Marlborough held its first-ever budget referendum Tuesday – and the ayes overwhelmingly had it.

If Marlborough were to receive additional revenue, the decision on how to spend – or not spend – the money would be put before the finance board, Knowlton said.

Hebron's Shea Perseveres Through Mysterious Illness

by Sloan Brewster

Despite living through a mysterious illness, Katie Shea kept it together.

The Hebron resident and RHAM High School senior was honored with the Bob Casey Courage Award by the Connecticut Sports Writers' Alliance and attended the Gold Key Dinner on April 29 at the Aqua Turf in Southington.

In 2016, after suffering bouts of confusion, Katie, who was a junior at the time, was diagnosed with autoimmune encephalitis, an autoimmune disorder affecting the brain.

The diagnosis did not come easy. The only symptom Katie experienced was confusion – though she didn't even recognize she was confused, she said.

"I didn't know I was sick, I didn't know there was anything wrong with me and so it wasn't frightening for me, it was frightening for my parents," she said. "I guess I was saying or doing things that were abnormal."

It was her parents that caught wind of the problem.

"That was the whole problem with her illness, in that she did not know that she was thinking unclearly and that she was confused," her mom Kathy Shea said. "She thought she was fine."

Despite thinking all was well, Katie was confused about everyday things that she had been doing all her life, her mother said.

"She forgot the simple things like how to take a shower or how to do a load of laundry," Kathy said. "Little things like that, [things] she always did."

In addition, subjects such as math became difficult for the honors and Advanced Placement (AP) student.

"Critical thinking like math was never hard for her before," Kathy said. "She would [also] send messages to her friends that didn't make any sense."

It all started in June 2016, after the U.S. Jun-

ior National Tournament in Orlando, Katie said. During the tournament, she was sick with a sinus infection and her allergies were flaring up, and she was on meds for both – which she said doctors feel may have led to the problem.

When she came home, she began displaying confusion and, according to Kathy was not thinking or talking correctly. She was admitted to the hospital a few days later.

Physicians ran many different tests, such as all the tests for Lyme disease.

"Everything kept coming back negative," Katie said.

While she was in the hospital, her symptoms seemed to clear, Kathy said.

"We thought everything was finished," the girl's mother said. "Then a few weeks later, all of a sudden she couldn't figure out how to play a game."

Back in the hospital, Katie underwent even more tests. Again with no answers, she was sent home – only to land in the hospital a third time.

"I spent the majority of my summer in the hospital," she said.

This time, among the myriad of things physicians looked at was the possibility she had mononucleosis. For a short time, this almost seemed like it was the answer. Only it wasn't.

"My mono test came back positive in the beginning; I told them they were wrong," Katie said. "I wasn't sleeping so it's kind of the opposite of mono."

During her weeks at the hospital, Katie said sleep was elusive.

When staff at Connecticut Children's Medical Center realized they could not handle her case, Katie was transferred to Boston Children's Hospital, where neurologist Mark Gorman took over, she said.

In Boston, Katie was put through many of the same tests she had already undergone in Connecticut. All told, she said, she had at least two painful spinal taps, a full-body three-hour

MRI, during which she could not move, two or three brain MRIs and tons of bloodwork.

There was still no answer, Katie said.

"Actually pretty much all my tests came back negative and that's why they came and said this is it – autoimmune encephalitis and autoimmune encephalopathy. Basically, that was their explanation for my confusion," she said. "It's not something they see very often."

The illness was one of a long list of possibilities, and was only deemed the cause of Katie's trouble when everything else failed to be proven, Katie said.

Katie was prescribed intravenous steroids to treat the illness – but she's not convinced that's what did the trick.

"I guess this is the last thing on the list," Katie said. "[The doctors] like to think that that's what made me better; it could very well be that it just took time to get out of my system."

While she was sick, Katie struggled with schoolwork and was pulled out of some of her AP classes, she said. While she was back in school in fall 2016, her grades were not where they should be until the following February.

This year, Katie – who stressed she is "perfect now" – is back in all the challenging AP classes.

There was also a physical toll from being in the hospital for so long and from the steroids, and she was not allowed to play volleyball while she was sick. Once the neurologist cleared her, she was back in the game and played in all the tournaments and the title game in 2016.

According to the press release for her award, she triumphantly returned to the volleyball court late in her junior season, and has since been a key contributor to the Sachems' success in winning back-to-back Class L state championships.

The Courage Award, according to the press release, is named in honor of the late Bob Casey, a former *New Haven Register* sportswriter and public relations director for the NHL's Hart-



After living through a mysterious illness, RHAM High School senior Katie Shea was honored last month with the Bob Casey Courage Award by the Connecticut Sports Writers' Alliance and attended the Gold Key Dinner on April 29 at the Aqua Turf in Southington.

ford Whalers, who passed away from cancer in 1994.

Katie said she was surprised by the award and enjoyed the dinner and spending time with her family. Her parents, brother and grandparents joined in the celebration.

"It was pretty cool," she said of the evening. "There were a lot of people there."

\$29.31M Budget Passes in All Three Towns

by Sloan Brewster

RHAM's proposed \$29.31 million 2018-19 budget passed in all three towns comprising the regional school district.

In total 1,901 voters from Hebron, Andover and Marlborough cast votes in the referendum, with 1,212 voting in favor of the budget and 689 in opposition.

The operating budget passed 753-421 in Hebron; 89-74 in Andover; and 370-194 in Marlborough.

The capital improvement plan budget also passed in the three towns – 798-375 in Hebron, 383-181 in Marlborough, and 87-74 in Andover.

The \$29.31 million budget includes the elimination of 11.6 positions, a figure that includes six layoffs as well as retirements and resignations.

According to Schools Superintendent Patricia Law, the staff reductions are due to continuing

declines in enrollment. Law projects enrollment to dip by 83 students, bringing it to 1,424 combined at the middle and high schools.

The spending package is largely composed of a \$29.07 million operating budget request, an increase of 1.92 percent, or \$547,204 over the current year's \$28.81 million budget. The package also includes \$243,286 for capital expenditures, a .16 percent or \$46,674 reduction over the current year.

Overall, the regional school budget comes at an increase of 1.76 percent or \$500,530 over the current year's budget.

Hebron will cover \$15.27 million of the operating budget, Andover will be responsible for \$4.47 million and Marlborough will pay \$9.34 million.

When split between the three member towns, the \$243,286 capital budget translates to a \$37,

369 levy for Andover, with 15.36 percent or 232 students; a \$127,774 levy for Hebron, with 52.52 percent or 793 students; and a \$78,143 levy for Marlborough, with 32.12 percent or 485 students.

For the RHAM school board, a quick passage was a welcome relief. Last year, the 2017-18 budget failed on its first two trips to referendum, before finally passing on a third budget vote in late June.

Board member Joseph O'Connor attributed the quick passage of the budget to transparency, which he said was due to the efforts of Law, who started as RHAM schools superintendent last summer; this was her first budget season with the school system.

"Pat Law did a good job of giving the board a different budget look and easier to follow and

I think she did a good job on that," he said.

The fact that the capital budget was divided out from the rest of the budget, which the board did for the first time last year, was also a plus, O'Connor said. Breaking the capital budget out gives taxpayers a clearer view on where their money is going, he said.

"I think that was a huge success," he said.

O'Connor also pointed out there were more voters in Marlborough than in years past as, for the first time ever, the budget vote was held at the same time as a referendum on the Marlborough town budget.

When the RHAM budget passed last June, after the first two referendums failed, a total of 463 voters showed up. This time, 564 Marlborough voters showed up at the polls.

Hebron Voters Approve \$35.79 Million Budget

by Sloan Brewster

Hebron's \$35.79 million budget passed at referendum.

On Tuesday, 1,170 voters showed up at the polls at Hebron Elementary School to vote on the budget. Of those, 827 voted yes and 343 voted no on the question of whether or not the town's budget should pass. In answer to the question of passing the \$781,171 Capital Improvement Budget, 858 said yes and 313 indicated no.

In reference to approving RHAM's \$29.31 million school budget, 753 said yes and 421 said no. As to RHAM's capital budget, 798 said yes and said 375 no.

There was also a series of advisory questions, including if the town's budget was too high or too low. On that, 580 said it was too high and 336 said it was too low. As to the Hebron Board of Education budget, 546 said it was too high and 424 said it was too low. As far as the RHAM

Board of Education budget, 595 said it was too high and 407 said it was too low.

The \$35.79 government spending plan reflects a decrease of \$940,873, or 2.56 percent, from the current year's expenses. The \$8.91 million general government budget, including debt and capital, is down by \$395,862, or 4.25 percent.

On the education side, the \$11.48 million Hebron Board of Education budget marks a \$102,125, or 0.88 percent, decrease from the current year.

The town's \$14.05 million levy to RHAM is down by 1.48 percent. Debt service for RHAM is \$1.34 million, a drop of \$47,272, or 3.43 percent.

The decrease in the RHAM levy reflects a reduction in the number of Hebron students at the school. Board of Finance Chairman David Veschi said at the April 10 budget public hear-

ing.

The mill rate is estimated to go up to 37.44, which is a .44 mill increase over the current rate of 37 mills. It will be set by the Board of Finance.

After the polls were closed and the tallies counted, officials shook hands and congratulated one another.

Town Manager Andrew Tierney said it was a great budget and he was pleased it had passed.

"I'm going to let the numbers speak for themselves," Tierney said. "The percentage of the yesses and the nos speaks that most people were content."

Board of Selectman Chairman Daniel Larsen said he was grateful to voters.

"Again, I thank the taxpayers for having the faith to pass this budget and the realization that this is a very fair and very prudent budget," Larsen said.

Larsen said the budget passage was evidence that folks understand the current economic situation. He pointed out increasing gas prices and said paychecks are not going up to match the high cost of living.

He also mentioned the state budget.

"Who knows what the state is doing?" he said. "It's still a free for all with the state budget."

Schools Superintendent Timothy Van Tassel said he was also pleased and echoed Tierney's comments that it was a reasonable budget.

"Couldn't be happier," he said. "Couldn't be happier for the community, couldn't be happier for the Board of Education because of the effort they put out this year and, obviously, couldn't be happier for the students. I think the margin in this year's budget (vote) suggests that there's a great deal of confidence in the officials."

\$34.04M Budget Sent to Referendum in Portland

by Elizabeth Regan

Voters at Town Meeting on Monday sent a \$34.04 million proposed budget to referendum.

The machine vote will be held Monday, May 14, from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. in the Portland Middle School Band Room at 93 High Street.

The total spending plan is an increase of \$389,166, or 1.16 percent, over the current budget.

The \$20.68 million proposed education budget is flat compared to the current year. The \$13.36 million general government numbers – including debt and capital expenses – represent an increase of 3.00 percent over the current budget.

The original budget recommendation presented in March by First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield was subsequently reduced \$470,455 by selectmen the next month.

The majority of the selectmen's reduction to Bransfield's budget proposal was the result of a plan created with town financial advisors to mitigate the budget impact on taxpayers by issuing bonds in July of this year instead of May.

The budgeting move will push \$416,400 of debt payments into the following fiscal year – at which time the bonds from other projects would be coming off the books, according to Bransfield.

The debt service expenses stem from a \$10 million bond package approved by voters to construct a Route 17 recreation park and to make infrastructure improvements.

Debt service in the budget proposal being considered comes to a total of \$2.06 million, a

\$41,190 increase over the current year.

Selectmen also cut \$10,000 from the funds allotted for boarding up windows of blighted properties, \$5,000 from the clean energy fund, and \$500 each in contributions to the Middlesex County Substance Abuse Action Council and Middlesex Behavioral Health through the social services budget.

The general government proposal estimates employee benefits costs will be about 8 percent higher in the coming year. The increase is driven by an anticipated increase in health insurance costs through Cigna, which was selected through the competitive bid process last year.

The proposed capital budget, which is up \$278,500 over the current year, funds the third phase of a window project at Brownstone Elementary School, a dump truck body and a new reporting system for the police department.

The education spending plan is the result of efforts to mitigate the effect of increased medical insurance premiums and escalating special education costs, according to officials.

The proposal cut one teaching position each in kindergarten, first grade, third grade and fourth grade. A special education teaching position, a full-time custodian and a full-time library assistant position were eliminated through attrition.

O'Reilly said the elementary school teaching cuts will result in class sizes in the low 20s, with 16-17 students projected for each of the kindergarten classes.

The budget proposal reduces the technology department, athletic department and building budget line items by 10 percent each, while the special education is cut by \$12,000. A plan to purchase an \$18,000 floor scrubber that has been requested for years was scrapped again.

Questions on the Revenue Side

It was announced late Wednesday night that lawmakers passed a state budget restoring most education aid to towns. The change is likely to have a significant impact on the \$1.16 million projected reduction in education funding local officials had been expecting based on projections by Gov. Dannel P. Malloy in February.

Specific municipal aid numbers from the newly approved state budget were not widely available at press time.

According to the news website *The Connecticut Mirror*, the new budget provides \$70.5 million more in 2018-19 for municipal aid than the current budget.

Language in the budget bill forbids Malloy from reducing municipal aid in order to achieve budget savings.

Last year, Malloy cut municipal aid by \$90 million in aid to municipalities after lawmakers left it up to him to find \$880 million in unspecified savings when they passed the state budget in October.

Officials have been estimating a 1.42-mill increase to the current mill rate based on the local budget proposal, which would bring it to 34.40 mills. The increase is almost entirely a result of the steep municipal aid cut the town

thought it would be getting.

A mill is \$1 tax per \$1,000 of assessed property value. Based on a potential mill rate of 34.40, taxes paid on a home assessed at \$200,000 for the 2017-18 fiscal year would be \$6,596. That's an increase of \$284 over the current year.

First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield said at the town meeting that it will be up to the Board of Selectmen to take any unexpected revenue into account when setting a mill rate if the budget passes at referendum next week.

She said selectmen can use the unexpected revenue to reduce the mill rate.

"But it's up to the selectmen how they will set the mill rate. Typically, they would look at that pretty seriously," she said.

On Thursday morning after the state budget was approved, Bransfield said she was "cautiously optimistic" the town would be seeing \$500,000-\$600,000 in increased revenue based on preliminary numbers.

She emphasized she had not yet seen final budget figures.

"We welcome the news of needed revenues being restored to the town," she said. "These revenues help to offset local property taxes for our residents and businesses."

She said selectmen may decide to use some or all of the revenue increase to drive down the mill rate.

Selectmen are required by charter to set the mill rate within a week of budget passage.

St. Clements Founder Helps Family Visit Pope

by Elizabeth Regan

While many of the children whose dreams come true through the Make-A-Wish Foundation end up in Disney World, 10-year-old Brianna Zhanay will have an audience with the pope in Rome.

The trip was made possible by Edward C. Doherty, founder of Saint Clements Castle and the nonprofit Roncalli Institute. The institute, named after Pope John XXIII, was set up to address the health and welfare of elderly people.

Parents Fernando and Mayra Zhanay, of Stratford, brought Brianna to Saint Clements Castle last Wednesday for a wish-granting ceremony. It was attended by staff of Saint Clements Castle, two senior living communities owned by the Roncalli Institute, the Make-A-Wish Foundation, a singing seminarian, and reporters.

Doherty told reporters it was very easy for him to say yes when the Make-A-Wish Foundation came to him with the idea of sending the nonverbal young girl with Down syndrome to meet Pope Francis.

"I've been there to Rome. It's a very awesome place, especially when you go to the Sistine Chapel," Doherty said.

Doherty donated \$10,000 to the Make-a-Wish Foundation, which organized the trip for the Zhanays.

Brianna's father, Fernando Zhanay, said he was nervous to ask for something as extravagant as an audience with the pope when he knew

the most commonly-granted wish is a trip to Disney World. But they tried anyway.

The family's volunteer wish-granter, Patty Frering, told them she'd see what she could do. But she warned them there was a waiting list at least a year long.

"Then one day I came home," Fernando Zhanay recounted. "[Mayra] was crying. She was laughing. She said 'I've got to tell you something.'"

That's when she let him know they'd be leaving for Rome in just one month.

Brianna, Fernando and Mayra will embark on their trip May 20. They will have a papal audience three days later.

Frering wheeled out a three-piece luggage set as a gift for the family during last week's ceremony. There was also a board book with sounds and a stuffed animal for Brianna.

A blessing was given and two hymns – one in English, one in Spanish – were sung by seminarian Alex Barreto of Holy Apostles College and Seminary in Cromwell.

"I never imagined this was going to happen," Mayra Zhanay said to the small crowd. "I do everything for my daughter, and I'm going to continue doing that for her."

The couple's faith was evident in their gratitude and their personal story.

Mayra Zhanay told reporters she's experienced three miracles in her life. The first came on a particularly trying day with 2-month old Brianna. That's when the struggling mother found herself asking "why me?"

Then she felt the hand of God on her shoulder, she said.

"After that, I never asked 'why me,'" she recounted.

Subsequent miracles involved the image of the Virgin Mary in the wax of a candle and the



The Zhanay family of Stratford, including 10-year-old Brianna, mother Mayra and father Fernando, were granted their wish to visit Pope Francis in Rome through the Make-A-Wish Foundation. The trip was made possible by Edward C. Doherty, founder of Saint Clements Castle and the nonprofit Roncalli Institute.

impression of the saint's face on a shroud used to cover a religious statue, she said.

Brianna's adult brother, Peter Zhanay, described the trip to Rome to be blessed by Pope Francis as the "biggest miracle" the family has received.

"There's no one closer to God than the pope," he said.

Brother Gabriel Zhanay said their father has taken Brianna to be blessed by every priest he

can find.

Fernando Zhanay came to the United States from Ecuador when he was 23 years old, according to his sons.

"He's worked very hard his whole life," Gabriel said. "Blessings like this are just amazing because I think all of us go through hardships, and seeing these moments all together is truly wonderful."

Transparency Training Ordered for Colchester BOF

by Allison Lazur

An April ruling by the Freedom of Information Commission (FOIC) left the entire Board of Finance with no choice but to attend FOI training.

An FOI appeal filed May 30, 2017, by resident Deanna Bouchard stemmed from a special finance board meeting she attended that occurred five days earlier. In her appeal, Bouchard stated that members of the Board of Selectmen were also in attendance, “interrupting, intimidating, influencing and guiding members of the Board of Finance” throughout the entire meeting. By doing so, Bouchard argued, the Board of Selectmen “conducted an illegal meeting.”

Bouchard also objected to the way selectman Stan Soby and Board of Finance Chairman Rob Tarlov were included in the meeting. Both men attended the meeting by telephone, with finance board member Tom Kane serving as acting chair.

Bouchard said Kane “failed to properly identify speakers participating via telephone” and that those in attendance were unaware that both Tarlov and Soby were on the phone. She added that residents in attendance “were not able to hear and identify all participants in the proceedings.”

It was this part of Bouchard’s complaint that the FOIC agreed with. It stated in its report that by Kane simply referring to Tarlov and Soby as “Rob” and “Stan,” respectively – as well as, on one occasion, simply “he” – it was not “readily apparent” who the men were.

As a result, the commission required finance board members to attend FOI training, and “strongly encouraged” the selectmen to do so.

Tarlov said this week it wasn’t unusual for the selectmen to attend the finance board meeting – nor was it unusual for one of them to do so via telephone. He explained that the finance board allows the selectmen, as well as the Board of Education the “courtesy” during meetings to comment.

“We [the finance board] figured the more

input the better,” he said. “Stan, who was in Hartford last year during the budget process, was able to provide a lot of additional info on what the state would be doing that would be helpful to the discussion.”

Tarlov told the *Rivereast* he doesn’t believe “FOI training would’ve prevented this issue.”

“No matter how many [FOI training sessions] you’ve been to, they can’t cover everything in that short amount of time,” he said.

Tarlov also noted that he had attended FOI training a year and a half earlier with other finance board members Andrea Migliaccio and Roberta Lepore.

However, the commission dismissed Bouchard’s complaint that the selectmen had conducted an illegal meeting. The commission said that since First Selectman Art Shilosky serves as a non-voting and unofficial member of all the town boards, the selectmen commenting during the meeting did not create a joint, unnoticed meeting.

Bouchard told the *Rivereast* that she “fully supports the FOI commission’s final decision to amend the hearing officer’s report.”

“I believe the final decision took into account the oral arguments presented at the [commission’s] meeting and feel the decision was fair and equitable to all parties,” she said.

Tarlov offered his feelings on being cited for violating the FOI Act.

“I took it as a learning experience to make sure when people are on the phone at a meeting that each person identifies themselves,” he said.

However, he said felt this matter could have been remedied at the local level, without an FOI complaint.

“Sometimes there are better ways to do this that save the taxpayers money and are in the spirit of cooperation,” he said.

In total, the complaints involved with the May 25 meeting filed by Bouchard have cost the town just under \$4,700, according to Tarlov.

Bouchard said she did reach out several times in “finance board meetings, via written correspondence and in several telephone calls to Shilosky, to settle this case at the local level.”

She said “Shilosky’s response was always the same: ‘The town is looking good [in the case] and the attorney is handling everything.’”

Shilosky could not be reached for comment as of press time Thursday.

Bouchard also filed an additional complaint – that was eventually dropped – for the recordings of the May 25 meeting.

In a letter to Bouchard from Executive Assistant to the First Selectman Tricia Dean, Dean states that “there are no audio files submitted to the town” for the May 25 Board of Finance meeting. At that time, Bouchard filed the complaint.

It was discovered by Bouchard shortly after that the recording existed on the phone of Migliaccio – who was serving as acting clerk at that time for the finance board. Bouchard said she knew a recording existed, which is why she filed the complaint.

There were issues with extracting the recording from Migliaccio’s phone, which resulted in a delay in availability of the file to the public.

Bouchard was able to instead obtain a recording of the meeting from YouTube – recorded by a resident – before the official files became available.

Furthermore, Bouchard said she was away at the time of the Sept. 8 hearing for this specific complaint, so she did not appear; as a result the complaint was dismissed by the FOIC.

In the hearing officer’s report from September, it states that Bouchard “failed to notify the commission that the hearing was not necessary.”

Bouchard is adamant that this entire process contributes to a larger issue: open and transparent government.

“It is my belief that the actions of Chairman Tarlov, First Selectman Shilosky and the Board

of Selectmen were driven by politics,” she said.

Bouchard noted her role as the chairman of the Colchester Independent Party, stating that the party’s “commitment to holding government officials accountable is a tenet of our political philosophy; one that is not shared by some of our current elected officials.”

Tarlov said he thinks the finance board “has been active in transparency” adding that “we fought hard for the OpenGov” software.

A contract between the town and OpenGov was signed in April. The software provides citizens with easy access to the town’s financial data and records, but also helps town officials “save hundreds of hours” processing information requests, while still complying with transparency mandates, according to its website.

Under the accusations that the finance board is failing to be transparent, Tarlov offered his thoughts.

“As an unpaid volunteer that gets nothing out of this other than the satisfaction of contributing, I don’t know what else any of us have to gain,” he said.

Bouchard stood by her accusations, revealing to the *Rivereast* that she strongly believes both Shilosky and Tarlov “made a conscious decision not to settle this matter, instead turning it over to the town attorney confident that they would prevail in the case; but, they lost,” she said. “The people won.”

Because the ruling states the finance board must attend FOI training, Tarlov said the session has been scheduled for June 14 at Town Hall.

According to FOI spokesman Tom Hennick, members of the finance board do not have to complete the FOI training by a certain deadline, but he said any member who does not attend could be found in violation of the ruling.

“They are ordered to do it and set it up, but we can’t drag them to it,” Hennick said. “It would look horrible if they didn’t attend.”

OpenGov Contract Signed in Colchester

by Allison Lazur

The Board of Selectmen unanimously decided to enter into a service contract with OpenGov financial transparency software at its April 13 special meeting.

Discussions over whether to move forward with the agreement have taken place since mid-2016 after First Selectman Art Shilosky made the decision to pull the funding at that time.

Shilosky was subsequently criticized by the Board of Finance for his decision which led the selectmen to hold a meeting with OpenGov representatives on April 5 to better understand the software.

During that meeting, concerns were raised and the selectmen were unable to move forward with signing a contract at that time.

However, after allowing the town’s attorney to review the contract and make changes as necessary, the selectmen were able to solidify an agreement with OpenGov.

These changes included an appropriation clause – in the event the funds are not available in next year’s budget for the software – as well as a 30-day extension of time to make sure the software is compatible.

“It would be nice to have some basic policy in place [before then],” finance board chairman Robert Tarlov said – who was also in attendance of the meeting.

Tarlov went on to explain that establishing an initial policy that can be built upon – before the program is up and running – would be ideal.

According to its website, OpenGov not only provides citizens with easy access to the town’s financial data and records, but also helps town officials “save hundreds of hours” processing information requests, while still complying with transparency mandates.

The selectmen began discussions on how to formulate a policy to monitor the information available through the software, as well as dictate which town officials have access to inputting what data.

“I don’t want to put a policy [in place] that restricts the openness of OpenGov,” Shilosky said.

He also suggested establishing a committee consisting of two members from the Board of Selectmen, as well as a member from the finance board. Board of Selectmen Vice Chairman Rosemary Coyle and Selectman Stan Soby verbally agreed to volunteer their time to such a committee.

Because of the number of questions that remained, Shilosky said the idea is that Coyle and Soby will “filter out everything we are concerned about and then the rest of us can

jump in.”

Coyle had her own list of questions she was hoping would get answered.

“Who will be in charge of vetting information for accuracy?” she said. “What if we give a login to someone on a board or commission and he violates that privilege and allows the general public to get into that level? How do we deal with that?”

No concrete answers were provided, but the selectmen continued to delve into the concerns for privacy and security.

“We need to have someone come in and talk about role based security,” Selectman Stan Soby said. “That would help people understand how levels of access to types of information are controlled.”

The selectmen pinpointed ambulance revenue as a report that could potentially be requested and cause issue. When adhering to such a request, personal information would have to be removed from the report to refrain from violating the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). The Board of Selectmen was unsure how to secure confidential information already embedded in the system when satisfying such a request.

OpenGov will also theoretically cut down on

the overall number of Freedom of Information requests received by the town because the majority of information will be available through the software.

A citizen can submit a Freedom of Information request to obtain public information, a right that is protected under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

Resident Deanna Bouchard told the *Rivereast* this week she is “very happy” the contract with OpenGov was signed.

“If we don’t have to go through the Board of Selectmen, it will make it easier to get information through OpenGov,” she said.

While the planning of how and who among town officials will handle this new software is still in the early stages, the idea that Colchester needs to utilize OpenGov to its full potential was articulated by Coyle.

“If we want to see if this is a useful tool, we need to track the usage of it and report it to the Board of Selectmen on a monthly or bi-monthly basis,” she said.

Coyle also explained that because this software is an annual expense the tracking of who uses the program “needs to be part of what we need to do to be accountable for the money that we’re spending.”

\$45.64M Heads to East Hampton Voters Next Week

by Elizabeth Regan

After town officials spent months trying to reconcile calls for a minimal tax increase with the need to adequately fund schools, voters on Tuesday will have the chance to weigh in on the \$45.64 million 2018-19 proposed budget.

The spending plan, approved unanimously by the Town Council in April, represents an increase of \$1.38 million, or 3.12 percent, over the current budget.

Voters will once again see two yes or no questions on the ballot: one asking if the \$30.50 million proposed education budget should be approved and another asking if the \$15.14 million proposed general government budget should be approved.

The education budget proposal is an increase of \$451,697 – or 1.50 percent – over the current budget. The allotment comes in at \$670,000 less than the Board of Education had requested in a unanimous vote in February.

The general government budget, including debt and capital, is 6.53 percent over the the current budget.

The budget proposal, if approved by voters at referendum, could result in a mill rate of 33.02 mills, which would amount to a 1.70 mill increase over the current year. The change amounts to a 5.43 percent increase in taxes compared to this year.

A mill is \$1 tax per \$1,000 of assessed property value. Under the estimated mill rate, a taxpayer with a home assessed at \$200,000 for the 2018-19 fiscal year would pay \$6,604. That's \$340 more than the hypothetical homeowner paid this year.

This year's budget-planning season has included an outcry from schools' advocates seeking more support from the town in the face of continuing reductions in state education funding and sharp increases in special education costs.

Republican Town Council Chairwoman Melissa Engel was pointed this week in her analysis of the budget situation, which she said has two possible outcomes.

According to Engel, voting 'yes' for the budgets will result in an increase of 1.70 mills.

She said voting 'no' will result in further reductions to the budget.

Engel had a message for those who might be considering voting down the education budget because they feel it does not sufficiently fund the schools: "If you vote 'no' with the expectation that we'll put more money back in, you're wasting your vote."

She said a 'no' vote in East Hampton has historically resulted in further reductions, where it is assumed a budget fails because it is too high.

East Hampton's ballot does not include any advisory questions that could give the council more information about why people voted the way they did. Some other towns, like Hebron, ask voters if they consider the budget too low or too high.

Education advocate and former Board of Education member Tania Sones wrote in a message this week that the budget "will not sustain the quality of education" in town.

Sones said the town has a habit of placing Band-Aids on problems instead of formulating a long-term, sustainable plan for generating revenue while maintaining resources.

"What's even more unfortunate is now we're stuck – if residents vote NO to education, they have made it clear that this budget will be cut even further," she wrote. "They are consciously ignoring the impact this will have long-term in our community. We could have avoided this situation with alternative solutions proposed that the boards blatantly chose to ignore."

The education spending plan was approved by the school board as a 3.73 percent increase over the current budget, but was whittled down by the finance board to the 1.5 percent increase townspeople will be voting on. Superintendent of Schools Paul Smith said the difference between the two boards' plans will likely result in the reduction of eight teaching positions. While some of those teachers will be moved elsewhere in their schools or the district, Smith said he anticipates three of them will lose their jobs.

On the chopping block are teachers in math, science and English; a health teacher covering the middle and high school; a librarian and Spanish teacher in the middle school; and a fifth- and third-grade teacher.

An assistant cheerleading position added in the school board's proposed budget will not remain.

Any cuts would have to be approved by the school board once high school course enrollments are complete and exact class sizes for the coming year are determined, Smith said.

The education budget increase this year is driven by continuing reductions in education funding from the state and increases in special education costs, according to officials.

The council-approved general government

spending plan cut Town Manager Michael Maniscalco's operations budget by \$15,000. The cut came in the form of a \$10,000 reduction to the \$442,551 library budget and a \$5,000 cut to the requested Middle Haddam Library allocation of \$10,000.

On the capital side, the proposal was reduced over the course of the budget planning process in several areas. A request for \$40,000 in sidewalk replacement funds was cut to \$20,000; a new vehicle for the police chief was put off for a future year; and \$25,000 in funding for the Air Line Trail was removed from the capital budget proposal.

Maniscalco said the Public Works department will perform "in-kind" work on the Air Line Trail project – instead of paying in cash – to fulfill the local match requirement that came with a grant from the state to connect the rail trail to Portland.

While the finance board had recommended reducing funding for a new Seamster Park playground, the Town Council restored the Park and Recreation Department's full \$30,000 request.

Late-Breaking State Budget Changes

The proposed town budget presumes an anticipated \$1.2 million decrease in education funding from the state, based on estimates from Gov. Dannel P. Malloy in February. That decrease, along with debt for the high school renovation and road projects, has been blamed for the expected 1.70 mill increase to the mill rate in the coming year.

But it was announced late Wednesday night that lawmakers passed a state budget restoring education aid to most towns.

According to a document from the legislature's Office of Fiscal Analysis, East Hampton is slated to receive \$701,273 more from the state than officials were anticipating in the proposed budget.

According to the news website *The Connecticut Mirror*, the new budget provides a total of \$70.5 million more to municipalities in 2018-19 than it is giving them this year.

Language in the budget bill forbids Malloy from reducing municipal aid in order to achieve budget savings.

Last year, Malloy cut municipal aid by \$90 million in aid to municipalities after lawmakers left it up to him to find \$880 million in unspecified savings – otherwise known as "holdbacks" – when they passed the state budget in October.

The Board of Finance is responsible for set-

ting the mill rate once a budget is approved.

Finance Director Jeff Jylkka said members have three options every year: They can either raise the mill rate, lower it or keep it the same.

Lowering the mill rate means less in the way of taxes. Keeping it the same would mean the additional revenue from the state would ultimately end up in the fund balance, Jylkka said.

Jylkka said some questions remain about whether some of the additional funding from the state would have to be directed to the Board of Education to keep the town in compliance with the state's Minimum Budget Requirement. The rule is in effect to ensure school districts spend at least as much in each new budget year as they did in the last.

Town Manager Michael Maniscalco said Thursday morning that the finance board will have to talk about how confident they are that the funding promised in the state budget will actually come through – "not just in this year, but in outer years."

He said lawmakers running for re-election came up with a good deal for municipalities this time around, but he wondered what will happen next year when they're not up for re-election.

Keeping a healthy fund balance is crucial to good interest rates on approved projects like the \$18.98 million town hall complex and future projects such as a town water system, according to Maniscalco.

Superintendent of Schools Paul K. Smith said Thursday he hopes the finance board will consider putting any additional education funding into the schools budget.

He said he would use the funding "solely" to reinstate the eight teaching positions slated for elimination in the current budget proposal.

Board of Finance member Richard Brown said members have not yet had conversations about what to do with the unexpected funding.

"It wasn't discussed because we thought it would be more likely that the state would have more holdbacks like they did last year," he said. "We never considered the opposite, that there would be more revenue."

Finance Board Chairman Michael Rose said it'll be up to the seven members to figure out what to do when it comes time to set the mill rate.

He said he does not have a personal opinion at this point.

"There's a lot of people who have their thoughts, and that will be up to them," he said.

Hebron Police News

5/4: State Police said Thomas Toscano, 52, of 22 Holy Circle, Apt. B, Windsor, was arrested and charged with violating a protective order and second-degree threatening.

Portland Police News

4/30: Chris Tucker, 20, of 59 Schuyler Ave., Middletown, was charged with possession of less than half an ounce of marijuana and possession of drug paraphernalia, Portland Police said.

4/30: Michael Juradd-Murphy, 19, of 127 Grand St., Middletown, was charged with possession of less than half an ounce of marijuana and possession of drug paraphernalia, police said.

5/4: Chase Varricchio, 32, of 22 Riverside St., was charged with third-degree larceny, police said.

5/6: Francis Goulet, 64, of 862 North Farms Rd., Wallingford, was charged with speeding, operating under suspension and failure to appear, police said.

Marlborough Police News

5/4: State Police said Javier Delgado, 42, of 193 Jefferson St., Hartford, was arrested and charged with third-degree burglary, first-degree criminal mischief and third-degree larceny. Delgado was accused of being involved with the break in of the Marlborough Wine and Spirits on June 10, 2017, police said.

5/5: State Police said Brandilyn Morse, 18, of 11 Hall Trl. was arrested and charged with DUI and improper parking.

Colchester Police News

4/29: Colchester Police said Ameila S. Braman, 20, of 58 Plymouth Ln., Manchester, was arrested and charged with second-degree harassment and violating a protective order.

4/30: Colchester Police responded to a complaint of unwanted text messages to a juvenile. According to police, this case is currently under investigation.

5/1: Colchester Police said Coty J. Nichols, 29, of 674 Deep River Rd., was arrested and charged with fifth-degree larceny after turning himself in on an arrest warrant. The arrest warrant stemmed from an incident that occurred in

February where Nichols was suspected of stealing cash from the Ace Hardware in Colchester while he was employed as a cashier, said police.

5/2: State Police said Aleksey Markelov, 31, of 226 Mansfield Ave., New London, was arrested and charged with DUI.

5/4: State Police said Jonathan Bennett, 49, of 487 E. Pond Meadow Rd., Westbrook, was arrested and charged with operating a motor vehicle without minimum insurance, operating a vehicle under a suspended license, disobeying signal of officer and DUI.

Trooper at Fault in Hebron Crash

A state trooper was found at fault for a two-vehicle collision that left one woman with possible injuries, according to state police.

The crash took place Friday, April 27, at approximately 11:59 a.m.

Trooper Christopher P. Briganti, 27, who was on duty at the time, was given a verbal warning for following too close, police said. Briganti was driving a Ford Crown Victoria police cruiser that struck a Toyota Camry driven by Amy C. Knox-Green, 39, of 79 Northam Rd., Amston.

Knox-Green was driving westbound on Route 66, near the intersection of Millstream

Rd., when her vehicle was struck by the cruiser, police said.

According to police, Briganti and Knox stated that traffic had quickly slowed and they had to suddenly slow their own vehicles causing them to skid on the wet pavement. Knox-Green was able to avoid striking the vehicle that stopped in front of her, but Briganti was unable to stop in time to avoid colliding with Knox-Green's Toyota Camry, police said.

Knox-Green complained of minor back pain and was transported by the Hebron Fire Department to Middlesex Memorial Clinic. Both cars were towed from the scene.

Police News

4/20: Mark G. Recor, 74, of 10 Sears Place, was arrested and charged with first-degree larceny, East Hampton Police said.

4/23: John Pollard, 58, of 68 Childs Rd., was issued a summons for traveling unreasonably fast, misuse of plates, operating an unregistered motor vehicle and operating a motor vehicle without insurance, police said.

4/26: Blaire Ocelik, 36, of 85 N. Main St., was arrested and charged with violation of a civil protective order, police said.

4/27: Macy White, 49, of 1113 Portland-Cobalt Rd., Portland was issued a summons for operating a motor vehicle without a license,

operating an unregistered and uninsured motor vehicle and traveling unreasonably fast, police said.

4/29: Christopher Cortesi, 50, of 30 Plains Rd., Moodus, was issued a summons for failure to obey a control signal, operating under suspension and operating a motor vehicle without insurance, police said.

5/2: Cory Burtchell, 41, of 5B Barton Hill Rd., was arrested and charged with sixth-degree larceny (shoplifting), police said.

Also, from April 23-29, officers responded to 12 medical calls, three motor vehicle crashes and nine alarms, and made 23 traffic stops.

Obituaries

Portland

Luva Mead Hoar

Luva Mead Hoar, 96, of Brimfield, Mass., passed away on Friday, April 13, after a brief illness.

Luva was born in Quinebaug Oct. 16, 1921, the daughter of Earle Benjamin Mead and Cecelia Ellen Gaboury. Her father was a farmer, millwright, and carpenter. Growing up in the depths of the Great Depression of the 1930s in the Quinebaug section of Thompson, even as a child Luva was determined "to make an impact" with her life. She decided that becoming a teacher would be the way to do it. With a loan of \$50 from a family member, she was able to enter Willimantic State Teachers' College (now Eastern Connecticut State University), Class of 1942, and begin a long career as an educator and public servant.

Luva began her career in Middle Haddam, teaching fifth- and sixth-graders in a two-room schoolhouse. She taught there for four years, before taking a short hiatus to marry Marc Baker and have two children, Jonathan and Pamela. During that time she also taught in an adult literacy program. After five or six years she returned to teaching, first in East Hampton and later in Portland, where she began 22 years of teaching children in second grade and kindergarten. She also worked for some time as a speech therapist in the Portland school system. Her first husband passed away in 1969. Luva married Col. John L. Hoar in 1974 and retired from teaching in 1977.

During those years, Luva also led an active civic life, which she continued after her retirement from teaching. In Portland, she was involved with the Democratic Town Committee, the Historical Society, the Portland Land Trust, and the Long-Range Capital Planning Commission. She served on the Library Building Committee for the new Portland Public Library, served as chairman of the Library Board and helped with the Friends of the Library.

In 1994, Luva was named Middlesex County Distinguished Citizen of the Year.

Her public service extended outside of Portland as well. From 1955 to 1980, she served on the Board of Directors of the Eastern Connecticut State University Alumni Association, including two terms as president, from 1966 to 1969 and 1973 to 1975. She had been a member of the Board of Directors of the ECSU Foundation since 1975 and served as president from 1981 to 1983. She received the Distinguished Alumni Award in 1984, the ECSU Presidential Medal for Service to the University in 1989 and the ECSU Foundation Distinguished Donor Award in 2009.

At the statewide level, Luva devoted a great deal of her time and energy to the whole Connecticut State University System. On its Board of Trustees from 1975 to 1995, she served on many of its committees and eight search committees for campus presidents and executive officers. Luva was also a member of the Standing Advisory Committee of the Board of Governors for Higher Education.

In 1985, the *Hartford Courant* recognized Luva as the driving force behind volunteer efforts to help more of Connecticut's students afford a college education. The next year, she established the Luva Mead Hoar Endowed Scholarship at Eastern; it is presented to a junior or senior who has demonstrated commitment to the community as well as to the University.

In 2001, the University recognized and thanked Luva for her years of service and unstinting support of Eastern and education in Connecticut by naming one of the then newest residence halls on campus, Luva Mead Hall.

Luva's service in all of these areas arose from her belief in the ordinary citizen as the foundation of society. She worked to maximize the opportunities for individual citizens to learn, to act, and to participate fully in a public life and society in which she never lost faith. Her legacy is those many students, readers, and citizens who benefited from her commitment to public service and her belief in the "common man." She would want you all to know that in her last days, her confidence in you and in the world you help to build remained unshaken.

Luva was predeceased by husband Marc Baker (1969), her son Jonathan (2002), and husband General John L. Hoar, as well as seven brothers and sisters. She is survived by her sisters, Phyllis Tarullo and Cynthia Champion; her daughter, Pamela Engberg and son-in-law Jim Engberg; her stepchildren, Jackie and husband Joseph Lovett, Paul and wife Kathy Hoar, Elizabeth Doherty, Margaret and husband Mike Eck, Ann Adams, and Marilyn and husband Keith Emery; as well as many nieces, nephews, and grandchildren.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be directed to the Luva Mead Hoar Endowed Scholarship at Eastern ([see easternct.edu](http://see.easternct.edu)) or call Joe McGann at 860-465-4514 with the checks made out to the ECSU Foundation, or to the Portland Public Library (portlandlibraryct.org/GettingInvolved/Donations.aspx or 860-342-6770).

Calling hours will be from 10-11 a.m. Saturday, May 19, at the Portland Memorial Funeral Home, 231 Main St., Portland. Guests are invited to a reception at the clubhouse at Quarry Ridge Golf Course, 9 Rose Hill Rd., Portland, following the burial.

East Hampton

Patricia Youngs Strecker

Patricia Youngs Strecker, 63, of Florida, formerly of East Hampton, passed away Tuesday, May 1, with her family by her side. She was born in Hartford in 1955. She graduated from East Hampton High School and received an associate's degree from New Hampshire College. She was an active member of St. Patrick Catholic Church of Jacksonville where she served as president of the Women's Council.

She is preceded in death by her son, Matthew David Strecker; father, John Arthur Youngs; sister, Joanne Youngs Stupnitski. Survivors include her husband of 37 years, Alan Henry Strecker; mother, Joan Sieverts Youngs; sisters, Mary Ellen Youngs and Nancy Youngs Wilcox (Bruce); sister and brothers-in-law, Judy Strecker High (Leslie) and Robert Charles Strecker (Jackie), her beloved nieces and nephews, Sandra, Rachel, Danielle, Leah, Katrin, Jonathan, Henry, Andrew, Margaret, Charles and Jennifer.

Despite her physical challenges, Patricia lived life to the fullest. She was an inspiration and was loved by everyone she met.

The funeral Mass was held Friday, May 4, at St. Patrick Catholic Church in Jacksonville, Fla., with Father Christopher Liguori officiating. The family received friends Thursday evening, May 3, at Cedar Bay Funeral Home in Jacksonville.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the charity of your choice.

Marlborough

Jean Palmer

Mrs. Jean Elizabeth (Miles) Palmer, of Marlborough, born Tuesday, May 8, in Hartford, to the late John Miles and Lillian Miles, passed away at age 64 Thursday, March 29, in Hartford, surrounded by her loved ones. Jean was the loving wife of Mark Palmer.

She is survived by her son, John Palmer; daughter, Rachel Palmer and fiancé Steve Dunko; and brother, Jerry Miles and a granddaughter. She loved boating, going to the beach, going to Red Sox games, and every Sunday you know there would be a big meal to watch her New England Patriots.

Donations in Jean's name to No Kids Hungry and Make-a-Wish Foundation are welcome and appreciated. Jean lived for her family, loved spending time with them especially the holiday seasons. Those who knew her knew she always had a smile on her face. She will be deeply missed and will never be forgotten.

Friends and family members may attend the Celebration of Life service Saturday, June 2, from 2-7 p.m., at Glastonbury Elks Club, 98 Woodland St., South Glastonbury, CT 06073.

East Hampton

Eleanor C. Lawton

Eleanor C. Lawton, 78, of Oakdale, formerly of Portland and Killingworth, wife of the late Henry Lawton died Thursday, May 3, in Colchester. Born Sept. 3, 1939, in New Haven daughter of the late William J. and Helen (Southmayd) Colligan Sr.

Eleanor was a long-time member of Trinity Episcopal Church Portland, a former member and president of the Killingworth Volunteer Fire Department Auxiliary, and a 50-year member of the I.O.R.M. Degree of Pocahontas, where she held the highest office in the state.

Eleanor is survived by her loving family: a daughter and son-in-law, Cheryl and Robert Robshaw of Oakdale; a brother John Colligan of Tenn.; a sister, Areta Ruotolo of Glastonbury; and also several nieces and nephews. She was predeceased by a son, William Lawton.

Funeral services will be held Monday, May 14, at 11 a.m., in the Trinity Episcopal Church, 345 Main St., Portland. Burial will be in the family plot in Trinity Cemetery, Portland. Friends may call at the Trinity Episcopal Church on Monday morning from 10 a.m. until the time of the service.

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



East Hampton

Vernon Lionel Lanou Jr.

Vernon Lionel Lanou Jr., 72, of East Hampton, formerly of Rocky Hill, beloved husband of Kathleen (Cusack) Lanou, died Sunday, May 6, at Yale New Haven Hospital, after a brief illness. Born Nov. 15, 1945, in Hartford, he was the son of the late Vernon and Tina (Quintiliano) Lanou.

Vernon proudly served his country in the Navy during the Vietnam War. He was the owner and operator of V. Lanou and Company Paving Contractors. Vernon was a longtime member of St. Patrick Church in East Hampton and the Knights of Columbus Belltown Council. He enjoyed everything mechanical, especially cars and boats. He was known as the first "Tim the Tool Man."

Besides his wife Kathleen, he is survived by his four sons, Keith V. Lanou and wife Kimberley of East Hampton, Stephen J. Lanou and wife Diane of Reno, Nev., James P. Lanou and Amy Comer of Vernon, Andrew J. Lanou of Foster City, Calif.; a sister, Judy Ceramicoli and husband Edward of Marlborough; five grandchildren, Savannah, CarliAnne, Faith, Keith, Christian; and three great-grandchildren William, Kenna and Abel.

He was predeceased by his brother, Richard V. Lanou.

Friends called at Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton, Thursday, May 10. The funeral procession will begin at 9:30 a.m. today, May 11, at the funeral home, followed by the funeral liturgy, at 10:30 a.m. in St. Patrick Church in East Hampton. Burial will be private in St. Patrick Cemetery.

Those who wish may make donations to The Smile Train at smiletrain.org. To leave online condolences, visit spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

Colchester

Robert William Rumbel

Robert William Rumbel, 62, of Colchester, passed away in Hartford Friday, May 4, on the 33rd anniversary of the wedding to his beloved wife, Gena (Pogoda) Rumbel.

He also leaves three children, triplets, Matthew, Michael and Melanie, all of Colchester; siblings, Susan Johanson and Thomas Rumbel, both of Walpole, Mass., William and his wife Clare of Mansfield, Mass.; and numerous extended family members and friends.

Born in Norwood, Mass., on Dec. 27, 1955, he was a son of the late William and Rita (Barry) Rumbel. He was a proud veteran having served in the U.S. Marine Corps. He later earned his MBA from RPI and went to work as an Engineer for Northeast Utilities. After retiring from NU, he worked for Toyota of Colchester.

Bob was a faithful fan of the New England sports teams. As a young father, he coached his children's youth soccer, baseball, and basketball teams. He loved cars, trucks, boats and spending time with family and friends at their beach house in Rhode Island. Most importantly, he will be remembered by his loved ones as a devoted, hard-working and loving family man.

Friends and family attended calling hours Tuesday, May 8, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. The funeral was Wednesday, May 9, starting at the funeral home, before the celebration of the funeral liturgy that morning at St. Andrew Church in Colchester with full military honors. Burial was private.

Donations in his memory may be made to the American Cancer Society, cancer.org.

For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.



Amston

Paul Anthony Billard

Paul Anthony Billard, beloved son of Krista (Berest) Billard and Anthony C. Billard, passed away suddenly Sunday, May 6, at the age of 21. He was born Sept. 5, 1996, and grew up in Hebron, and was a 2014 graduate of RHAM High School.

Paul was presently studying to become an electrician at Lincoln Tech. He was a talented musician, both writing and singing rap, as well as an avid skate- and snow-boarder.

In addition to his parents, he leaves his brother, Mark; grandparents, Robert and Olga Berest of Manhasset, L.I., N.Y., and Thomas and Jennifer Billard of Hebron; and numerous extended family and friends.

A celebration of his life and love will be observed at 7 p.m. tonight, May 11, directly at the RHAM High School auditorium. There were no calling hours and he will be laid to rest privately in the Billard-Smith family plot in St. Peter's Cemetery, Hebron.

In lieu of flowers, donations in his memory may be made to SCADD, c/o Heidi Brown, 37 Camp Mooween Rd., Lebanon, CT 06249 (or online at scadd.org).

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

Marlborough

Lyman Desso Sr.

Lyman "Ike" Desso Sr. of Brooksville, Fla., formerly of Marlborough, passed away Sunday, May 6, at the age of 89.

He was predeceased by his wife, Shirley Mitchell. He leaves behind his best friend Linda Duncan, her five children and many grandchildren.

Ike is survived by his six children, Marie Gill of Putney, Vt.; Lyman and Joanne Desso of Brooksville, Fla.; Clifford Desso of Troy, Vt.; Clement and Barbara Desso of Flag Pond, Tenn.; Rebecca "Becky" Fuller and Joe Billiel of Marlborough; and David and Barbara McNaughton of Salem; along with many grandchildren and great grandchildren.

He was predeceased by 11 brothers and sisters and leaves behind a brother Patrick Desso and his wife Viola of South Burlington, Vt.

Ike served in the U.S. Army (Korean Veteran) and was a member of many organizations including the Shriners, Mason, American Legion Post 197 of Marlborough; VFW of East Hampton; Moose Lodge of Marlborough; Marlborough Volunteer Fire Department and Polish Club of Colchester.

Ike worked at the Town of Hebron Public Works for a number of years. He retired to Florida and drove to Connecticut each summer in his Coach. He enjoyed playing cards and horseshoes.

Private funeral services will be held with military honors at the State Cemetery in Bushnell, Fla.

In lieu of flowers, donations in his memory may be made to Sturgill Hospice Care Center, 12242 Cortez Blvd., Brooksville, FL 34601.

Portland

Memorial Service for Hazel Johnson

All are invited to a memorial service Saturday, May 19, for Hazel Johnson, who died Jan. 12 at the age of 98.

A funeral Mass will be held at 1 p.m. at the Church of St. Mary in Portland, followed by a reception at the church hall.