

RIVEREAST

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First Prize!... Portland Little League has announced the winners of the 2018 Power Equipment Raffle Fundraiser. Karen Ferranti took first prize, a BobCat 48-inch walk-behind mower. She's shown with her prize and PLL players Drew Kelly (Tigers) and Braylon Graves (Angels). Other winners were: second prize, Husqvarna 445 chainsaw – Jeffrey Sweet; third prize, Echo string trimmer – Bryce Cote; fourth prize, Husqvarna leaf blower – Jay Swanson. The PLL thanked CZ Equipment of East Hampton, from where the league purchased the equipment, and Adams Market and The Realjo Family for providing the space to sell tickets at their locations.

Air Line Trail Opens in Portland

by Elizabeth Regan

You might miss its nondescript entrance on Middle Haddam Road, but the Portland leg of the Air Line Trail is open and accessible.

Air Line Trail Steering Committee Chairman Rosario "Riz" Rizzo Jr. said members initially forgot to order a sign to mark the trail head, which sits about a quarter mile from the intersection of Route 66 and Middle Haddam Road. The sign has since been designed and will be installed in the coming weeks.

Even without the sign, Rizzo said the trailhead parking area has reached maximum capacity at various points since the ribbon cutting ceremony June 3.

"The word is out that it's open," Rizzo said during a tour of the trail last week.

The 2.3-mile trail extends from Depot Hill Road on the East Hampton border to the YMCA's Camp Ingersoll. The committee ultimately hopes to extend the trail downtown to the Arrigoni Bridge, according to Rizzo.

The trailhead brings visitors about a tenth of a mile up a steep hill to the main part of the trail. A left turn puts outdoor enthusiasts on a western trajectory that currently continues a half mile. A right turn puts them on the roughly 1.5-mile path to East Hampton and, ultimately, the Massachusetts border.

Rizzo said crossings on Middle Haddam Road and Breezy Corners Road are marked with warning signs 200 feet before the trail to let drivers know they should slow down.

A prohibition on motorized vehicles is enforced by local police, according to Rizzo.

"They actually have a trail bike and two trained officers who will randomly come out and ride the trail," he said.

Residents Mandeh Claing and Deleann Oakliff ventured out on the new path last week.

"I live not even a mile away, so it's very convenient," Claing said. "I think it's really awe-

some. I wouldn't expect our town to do this."

Oakliff noted the diversity of the terrain.

"I think it's nice on sunny days like this, when you have a blue sky. There are some trees and some open spots," she said.

The 10-foot-wide trail is made of gravel and a stone dust coating, according to Rizzo. There's a 2.5-foot grass buffer on each side.

Rizzo said organizers are working on a plan to reduce the slope from the trailhead to the trail itself, which currently slopes at a 12-15 degree angle. He said options include filling in the hill or redirecting the path so it takes a flatter but more circuitous route alongside the existing slope.

The trail was part of the Air Line railroad, which ran between New York and Boston from 1873 to 1955. The rails were abandoned in 1968, with the state buying up the land between East Hampton and the Massachusetts border for recreational use. The Portland portion of the rails was purchased by private owners, according to Rizzo.

While Portland's trail is not operated by the state Department of Energy and Environmental Protection like the sections to the northeast, the project was funded through a \$685,932 grant from the agency. A separate \$583,800 grant to the town of East Hampton will ultimately link Portland's trail to the Belltown Village Center.

East Hampton Town Manager Michael Maniscalco said the most recent round of work on the Air Line Trail is about 95 percent complete. The final phase will take about two-and-a-half months to complete once work begins in mid- to late-August.

Rizzo said the entire Air Line Trail will cover 53 miles once the connection between East Hampton and Portland is completed.

The Air Line Trail steering committee, which was formed in 2014, gained traction when they

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Suit Alleging Sexual Harassment Filed in Andover

by Sloan Brewster

[WARNING: This story contains language that may be offensive to some readers.]

A lawsuit served against the Town of Andover this week alleges sexual harassment in Town Hall by former town employee Jay Linddy that went unchecked for multiple years.

In a civil suit served on the town on Monday, former town tax collector Donna Doyker alleges that Jay Linddy, a now-former town employee but still-current member of the boards of selectmen and education and the Recreation Commission, had sexually harassed employees in the workplace – and that one or more of them had resigned due to the harassment.

In the suit, Doyker alleges that she suffered from exacerbated medical conditions due to the harassment, including uncontrolled high blood pressure that resulted in branch retinal vein occlusions or blockages in small veins in the retina, causing her to undergo ongoing eye sur-

gery.

While Doyker's attorney, Newington-based James Sabatini, did not return calls for comment as of press time, the lawsuit states Doyker is seeking damages in excess of \$15,000.

In the suit, Doyker describes the events that led to Linddy's termination, which were also described in records the town released to the *Rivereast* last month after being compelled to do so by the Freedom of Information Commission.

According to the summons and the town records, Linddy used rude gestures and obscenities for years while at his Town Hall job.

"Linddy has engaged in a pattern of practice of sexual harassment in the workplace," the lawsuit reads. "Linddy's sexual harassment has occurred over a period of years."

Last July, the lawsuit alleges, Linddy brought in an explicit apron, which when worn depicted

a skin-colored soft penis with scrotum and pubic hair. Doyker alleges that Linddy donned the garment with the apron portion hanging over the explicit adornments and then lifted the apron, flashing the underneath portion toward her and gyrating.

The apron was the last straw for employees who submitted complaints against him to Town Administrator Joseph Higgins.

Linddy, in a six-page statement contained in the records obtained by the *Rivereast* last month, denied ever showing the offensive piece of clothing to anyone but one coworker, whose name was redacted.

"I didn't show it to anyone else," he said. "I put the apron on my desk."

In the lawsuit, Doyker alleges it was a hostile work environment due to sexual harassment and that the town was negligent in not taking corrective action. She further claims Linddy's

behaviors were known, and names Higgins as the supervisory employee.

According to the document, there was no method in place to prevent or discourage sexual harassment. The document also alleges that in 2014 another employee complained about the sexual harassment and requested the town hold a sexual harassment training session and require Linddy to attend. The request was refused, the suit alleges.

The list of complaints in the suit includes numerous examples of Linddy using profane language, telling inappropriate jokes and performing lewd acts in the office. The suit calls the harassment "pervasive" and claims that the town failed to protect its employees in the workplace.

The aforementioned town records that were released to the *Rivereast* last month appear to

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Air Line Trail Steering Committee Chairman Rosario “Riz” Rizzo, Jr. has been promoting the opening of the new rail trail while working to expand it further toward the Arrigoni Bridge.

Air Line Trail cont. from Front Page

used \$10,000 in town funds to hire trail consultant Kevin Grindle of Anchor Engineering. Grindle also worked on developing East Hampton’s portion of the Air Line Trail.

A licensing agreement with Eversource Energy in early 2016 cleared the way for the committee to oversee the construction of the trail. That spring, voters at a town meeting approved the \$172,000 purchase of approximately 23 acres on Middle Haddam Road to use as a trail head. The purchase served as the twenty percent match the town had to pay in order to receive the state grant.

The Portland portion of the trail includes several kiosks and informational displays. Rizzo said the kiosks, situated at the trailhead and the Depot Hill Road entrance, will include trail rules, history and a list of local businesses where visitors can grab a bite to eat or shop.

“It’s nice to have the trail for people who live

here,” he said. “It’s also nice when visitors come to use the trail and spend some money while they’re here.”

Historical artifacts include “maintenance racks” that used to hold extra pieces of rail and a tool box for emergency repairs, according to Rizzo. He said the committee is working to procure some old pieces of rail to lay across the racks in homage to yesteryear.

Another informational display on the trail alerts visitors to a circa 1888 viaduct used to herd cattle beneath the railroad. The sound of the Great Hill Pond Brook rushing under the granite arch can be heard even though it can’t be seen amid the foliage.

“Not only do you get exercise, but you get to see a lot of parts of town nobody gets to see anymore. Here you can set your own pace: You can walk it, you can bike it, you can ride your horse,” Rizzo said.

Suit Filed cont. from Front Page

support Doyker’s claims.

In a statement included with the records, a town employee, who said she had worked with Linddy for three and a half years, said that when she mentioned the incident involving the apron to Higgins, Higgins said he would talk to Linddy. Higgins appeared to suggest his hands were tied, however, when the employee spoke about things Linddy did on a regular basis that made her uncomfortable, including giving an obscene gesture to residents who greeted him.

“Joe Higgins then told me if it makes me uncomfortable when he does this, to tell [Linddy],” she wrote. “I told him I had been uncomfortable for three and a half years. He said that there was not much he could do about it. He suggested moving him out of his office, but that he didn’t want to go there. I know that this will cause hard feelings, but I go home and

complain to my husband every night and it is not fair to him. Please help.”

Higgins has denied giving the implication he couldn’t do much about the situation and said he told her to come to him if there were any more incidents.

“Please bring it to my attention right away,” he told the *Rivereast* he advised her.

Last September, Doyker also filed a complaint with the Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities, in which many of the same complaints were listed. Last month the commission released its jurisdiction in the matter, authorizing the civil suit.

Higgins declined to comment on the lawsuit as it is a pending case. The lawsuit has a return date of July 17, by which time the town has to respond.

Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

Better late than never? Maybe, but it never should’ve gotten this far to begin with.

I’m talking about President’s Trump decision Wednesday to sign an executive order ending the reprehensible ripping of children away from their families and stowing them in large cages.

This new “zero-tolerance” policy had resulted in the taking of more than 2,300 children from their parents since April, when it was enacted. There was no law requiring it, despite what Trump had claimed. I have verified this several places. Nor were children taken from their parents under Obama; families were detained, but they were kept together.

After repeatedly saying there was nothing he could do about the policy, Trump on Wednesday apparently remembered he was president and he in fact *could* do something about it. So he signed an executive order – bringing to an end a very, very, very cruel practice that never should’ve started in the first place. (Though I must note that, at least as of Wednesday, Trump’s executive order does nothing about reuniting the already-taken children with their parents – and again, there’s more than 2,300 of them.) I’m not saying we don’t need to do anything about illegal immigration; I’m just saying there has to be a better way than tearing children from their parents.

Also, as a Christian, I found Jeff Sessions using the Bible to justify this as incredibly offensive. It was so freaking manipulative, and pandering, and insulting. Sessions knew full well there were many, many people he’d win over by stressing that the Bible agrees with a particular course of action. The way this administration uses the Bible, uses Christianity, to curry favor is infuriating – considering its actions so rarely seem very Christian. You can’t just say it; you have to *do* it.

Not to mention the passage Sessions used can be used to try to justify any law, no matter how inhumane or frankly evil it might be. Sessions said, “I would cite you to the Apostle Paul and his clear and wise command in Romans 13, to obey the laws of the government because God has ordained them for the purpose of order.”

If you apply that logic, then any law should be considered worthy of God. Indeed, the passage was used in the 1800s to justify slavery.

But if Sessions wants to quote the Bible, he should at least be consistent. To borrow from a friend of mine’s recent online post: Can I direct him to Exodus 22:21? “Do not mistreat or oppress a foreigner, for you were foreigners in Egypt.”

Or Leviticus 19:33-34? “When a foreigner resides among you in your land, do not mistreat them. The foreigner residing among you must be treated as your native-born. Love them as yourself, for you were foreigners in Egypt. I am the Lord your God.”

Or how about Deuteronomy 27:19? “‘Cursed is anyone who withholds justice from the foreigner, the fatherless or the widow.’ Then all the people shall say, ‘Amen!’”

So, if Sessions wants to quote the Bible to defend his horrible policies, he should really give the rest of it a look. He may learn a lot of it doesn’t exactly mesh with those policies.

* * *

Ok, now that I’ve touched on not just politics but religion too, it’s time for something lighter and more enjoyable. That’s right: It’s the return of classic exchanges from the old *Hollywood Squares*:

Peter Marshall: According to the World Book, is it okay to freeze your persimmons?

Paul Lynde: No. You should dress warmly.

Peter Marshall: In bowling, what’s a perfect score?

Rose Marie: Ralph, the pin boy.

Peter Marshall: Paul, is it true that lightning once fused a man’s zipper shut?

Paul Lynde: Yes, it was God’s way telling him to slow down.

Peter Marshall: What do you call a cow that won’t give milk?

George Gobel: Hamburger.

Peter Marshall: If the draft board rejects you because you’re too fat, can you be drafted when you get skinny again?

Wally Cox: Yes, it’s called double jeopardy.

Peter Marshall: According to beauty experts at *Seventeen* magazine, what is the major cause of crow’s feet?

George Gobel: God made them so crows could dance.

* * *

See you next week.

Mystery of Diminishing Water in Hebron

by Sloan Brewster

The well that supplies the most water to town is coming up short and the state Commissioner of Public Health has declared a public drinking water supply emergency in Hebron center.

The shortage came on suddenly and unexpectedly, according to town officials, who first discussed it at the June 7 Board of Selectmen meeting when Town Administrator Andrew Tierney said he had been informed by the Connecticut Water Company [CWC] that one of the wells was not pulling enough water. He said the shortage was significant and the water company was bringing tankers of water in to restore the supply.

"They're miffed as to why all of a sudden the gallons would be dropped," Tierney said. "They did some fracking; it didn't work. They asked if we had done any blasting."

According to a declaration order issued by the state Department of Public Health last Wednesday "due to the sudden and precipitous decline in well yield, CWC is unable to adequately meet the system demand without supplemental water deliveries."

Water yields from the well that supplies the center are down by about 50 percent, according to Lori Mathieu, Public Health Section Chief of the Drinking Water Section of the Connecticut Department of Public Health. The water company is looking into possible causes, including blasting in the area and drilling of new wells nearby.

As of Wednesday, the mystery of the diminishing water had not been solved.

Craig Patla vice president of service delivery for the water company said a consultant was examining well pumps and looking for additional sources of water to support or rehabilitate the diminishing well.

Town officials, as well as officials from the Chatham Health District and the water company, were scheduled to meet yesterday to discuss short and long term solutions, according to Patla, Mathieu and Steve Knauf, chief sanitarian for the Chatham Health District.

In the meantime, the declaration order man-

dates a ban on outdoor usage for the center and residents of Hebron Country Manor, an apartment complex on Wall Street. Other measures in the order include that the water company reduce unaccounted for water such as by calibrating supply and meters, conducting leakage surveys and inspecting bleeders. The water company must also maximize the use of the three other wells in town and install 1,000 feet of above ground piping from the Country Manor system to transfer up to 36,000 gallons of water per day via the temporary pipeline to the center system.

That hook-up was already done, Patla said Wednesday.

The water company must also provide a list of its highest users to the health department and give the amount of water consumed by each. The company was also ordered to work with the users to achieve water savings.

Ryan Hallin, owner of Hebron Car Wash, was notified last week that the car wash is the second-highest water consumer of the approximately 200 users in the center, with schools being number one, he said. The car wash goes through approximately two million gallons per year and has used almost one million in 2018 as of this week, Hallin said.

Hallin wants folks to know it's okay to wash their cars, especially since he will be reducing consumption by 30 percent.

"[The water company] asked if I had a water recycling plant and if I would be willing to turn it on to help with the water shortage," Hallin said. "More or less in a nutshell, the past two days we've been undergoing pretty significant repairs to get the system up and running."

The water company offered to cover the costs of the repairs, Hallin said.

Recycled water will be used mainly for washing car undercarriages, he said, adding that most car washes use recycled water and the final rinse will always be done with fresh water.

"It won't affect the quality of the wash," he said.

Hallin pointed out that a new soft wash he's been using since October also saves water. The



Since learning about a water shortage in town, Ryan Hallin of Hebron Car Wash has been repairing a water recycling system for use in his facility.

new one uses about 10 gallons per vehicle whereas the one it replaced used 30.

The Hebron Fire Department is also located in the center of town and last Thursday, Fire Chief Nick Wallick sent an email informing officers to use hydrants only in emergencies and not to wash any trucks at Company One.

Officials will also be looking into enforcing water conservation measures, said Don Mitchell, director of health at Chatham Health District.

"Since we've been such a water-rich state we've always taken it for granted that we had plenty of water," he said.

There have been statewide water shortage issues, including the draught two years ago,

which lead to the loss of some wells, he said. Water quality has also become a problem and elevated amounts of sodium and chlorine have been found in wells on an increasing basis.

"Quantity and quality are issues that the state is looking at," he said.

On Wednesday, Board of Selectmen Chairman Dan Larson, who is an electrician and had been working in ditches installing wiring, said he has seen first-hand reasons to conserve water.

"People should be conserving anyway; I mean the ground is terribly dry," he said. "Water conservation is something that should be practiced whenever possible anyway."

Top Two PHS Students Look Back

by Elizabeth Regan

Valedictorian Yang Li and Salutatorian Emily Bradshaw will both be heading to the University of Connecticut in the fall after earning full tuition scholarships for their academic accomplishments.

UConn offers the merit-based awards to the top two graduating seniors from Connecticut schools. Li described the scholarship as a deciding factor in attending the university.

She said she didn't set out to become the valedictorian of the graduating class until she discovered that it could get her into the state university for free.

"That's what motivated me the most," she told the *Rivereast* this week.

Li knows she's in for a big transition as she moves from a school with 375 students to a college with 19,241 undergraduates.

"In the past four years I've been in the same class with pretty much the same people, so I didn't have to talk to new people," she said. "But at UConn, I'd have to look for new friends, and that kind of scares me."

Li moved to Portland at the end of third grade after having lived in places like Maryland, New York and China.

Her parents, Kuai Li and Lifang Zhang, came to the United States before she was born. Her brother, Steven Li, is a rising junior at the high school.

Li said she can't quite remember how she made friends back when she was moving around so much.

"I have a bad memory. I forget things, often," she said.

The gifted student said she can quickly memorize vocabulary words in order to ace a quiz – "but after the quiz, we don't use them anymore. Then I forget them."

Math is a different story. The process of problem-solving, which she described as more concrete and repetitive, is easily ingrained.

Li has participated in the Math League since

she was a freshman. She's also played tennis, been on the Flag Team and been a member of the Youth Action Council.

She said she has no idea what she will major in at the university, but said she's leaning toward something in the field of science, technology, engineering or math.

The top spot in the 2018 graduating class was clinched with Li's 4.39 GPA. Bradshaw, who earned a 4.31 GPA, said she "wasn't fully expecting" to take the second position.

The accomplished singer and actress with numerous local musical productions to her credit said she hasn't won any academic awards outside of music and theater during her high school career. That's why she was so surprised when she looked at her financial aid account on the UConn website and discovered she'd landed the full tuition scholarship that goes to valedictorians and salutatorians.

Bradshaw will be studying nursing with the goal of becoming a trauma or surgical nurse. She plans to minor in theater.

She credited the Portland High School music department, including teachers Sam Tucker and Kristin Novak, with providing an outlet for what would have otherwise been a very stressful four years.

"I've placed a lot of pressure on myself to do so well," Bradshaw said. "And so the music department is kind of my escape. It's where I go to destress. It really helps having something that I'm so passionate about outside of academics to kind of help balance it."

In addition to performing in the school's musicals, Bradshaw sings in the high school chorus and a capella group. She also marches with the band as part of the flag team.

"And that's how I stayed sane throughout high school," she said.

Bradshaw was grateful the school continues to support the arts even as other schools are cutting music and theater offerings.

"It makes me really happy that the adminis-

tration is so supportive of the arts, because I think that that really shaped a lot of my time here at Portland High School and it really changed the way I went through these past four years," Bradshaw said. "I'm just really grateful they gave me those opportunities."

A member of the National Honors Society and the Tri-M Music Honor Society, Bradshaw has also been involved in the math league, tennis team and Youth Action Council.

She has lived in Portland all her life. She acknowledged with a laugh that her mother has, too – and her mother's mother.

Her parents are Becki and Craig Bradshaw. Her brother, Adam, is a rising sophomore.

She credited her parents with having a calming effect on her.

"I'll be sitting there doing my physics homework and making noises and crumpling papers and throwing them, and my dad's like 'stop overthinking it, it's easier than you think.' And a lot of times it is," she said.

Both Bradshaw and Li identified physics with Wayne Kuckucka as a challenging but fun class.

"We got to launch water balloons at him," Bradshaw recalled.

They also remembered the time a laptop spontaneously caught on fire during Beth McCormick's American Studies class, forcing a whole-school evacuation. Then there was the after-school study group during which the students ordered a pizza with "PROM?" written inside the box for social studies teacher James Stotler to pick up.

"It was because we knew how much he hated promposals," Li explained.

They laughed at the memory.

"He always talked about how they were so cheesy," Bradshaw said.

The students noted they didn't have a whole lot of class-wide trips or activities to look back on, however.

A thwarted trip to Boston suffered a fate that has become known in the class yearbook



Valedictorian Yang Li (left) and Salutatorian Emily Bradshaw will bring their successful academic records with them to the University of Connecticut as Presidential Scholars.

as the class tagline: "Cancelled due to lack of interest."

Bradshaw suggested it was because the 82 students in the graduating class weren't very good at reaching consensus.

"We wanted to do a senior prank, but we could never agree on what the prank was going to be," she said.

Andover Resident Upset with Trail Plan

by Sloan Brewster

An Andover resident wants to make people aware of a trail he says will run right through his house.

When Nathaniel Houle saw plans for the Nathan Hale Greenway – a multi-use path that is proposed by the towns of Bolton and Coventry, but will feature a portion of the trail in Andover – he immediately noticed the trail line on the map crossed through his and his neighbor's houses.

“What I want to do is make people aware in Andover,” Houle said.

According to the Town of Bolton's website, Bolton and Coventry each received a grant to hire a consultant to study the possibility of locating trails on Route 6 Corridor properties recently given back to the towns for open space purposes.

In the late 1980s, the state Department of Transportation seized lands in Andover, Bolton and Coventry through eminent domain for the creation of a Route 6 expressway. Ultimately, the plan did not pass because the expressway went through the Bear Swamp and Hop River watersheds, which were sensitive areas with diverse species, according to Eric Anderson, chairman of Andover's Planning and Zoning Commission. After the plan was scrapped, some of the properties were returned to the towns with the condition they be used for open space.

According to Anderson, the map Houle referred to is conceptual, and the trail is not sup-

ported in Andover. As proposed, the trail is a fairly large stone dust path and building it would involve extensive clearing.

“From Andover's perspective, it wouldn't even really be practical to consider a wide-format multi-use path because the same reasons that got it rejected as a highway are going to get it rejected as a wide-format multi-use path,” Anderson said, reiterating the trail would go through a sensitive wetland.

“Look, I'm sensitive to it too,” he added. “This path would go right next to my house too.”

Anderson said he had spoken with the chairman of the Bolton Conservation Commission, who indicated the town supports a blue blazed hiking trail through the proposed areas, as does he.

Houle, however, said he is concerned there is a plan to take his property, something his family went through when the expressway was proposed. The Houle family property was seized for the expressway. Ten years ago, Houle bought it back.

Part of his concern lies in how his property is classified on the map.

According to the conceptual trail map – which is available on Bolton's website at tinyurl.com/y75393pv and on Coventry's website at tinyurl.com/ycgot97z – the trail would run through the three towns.

A Power Point Presentation from informa-

tion meetings in Bolton and Coventry, available online at tinyurl.com/yc2z8rww, shows approximately 10.3 miles of trail through Bolton and Coventry. The Andover portion is also indicated on the map and according to Houle, is about four miles long.

Some of the Andover portion is drawn in pink, which, according to the legend, indicates it is land released back to the town by the DOT.

Houle said his property is in that section.

After seeing the map, he spoke with officials in all three towns, which he said left him with no clear answers and has not allayed his concerns. Houle also stopped by the *Rivereast* to discuss his concerns and attended the June 6 Board of Selectmen meeting. He has also hired an attorney.

“[The trail] goes right through my house,” Houle told selectmen. “There's roughly 20 homeowners right now where the bike path goes right through their houses.”

The board, which was aware that Bolton and Coventry were studying the possibility of putting in the trail, assured Houle that Town Administrator Joseph Higgins would look into the matter.

The town has no legal authority to build a trail on private land, Anderson said.

“The reality is [Houle] owns the property,” he said. “The only way that they would be allowed to [put a trail in] would be through eminent domain and the town, as far as I know, has

never exercised that right.”

Anderson said when the town decided to sell several pieces of the Route 6 Corridor land back to the landowners he had argued it should negotiate a right to cross the land.

Anderson's assertions that Andover is not interested in a trail or that the town would not be going after land for one did not sway Houle.

“What I'm concerned about is Bolton and Coventry pushing it through,” he said. “The problem is if Bolton and Coventry build the project on either side, then the state can push it through.”

On Monday, Higgins said he had spoken with the town of Bolton and was told there were not set plans for the trail yet. The Andover portion was just marked on the map for planning purposes and there is no decision yet as to where the trail would go.

“There's no plans to take his land,” he said.

As of Tuesday, Houle still has his doubts his property is safe and added that he is not getting straight answers when he speaks to officials from Bolton.

“They still have that plan out there, right?” he said.

Houle also said he wants someone from his town to stand up for the people whose properties were drawn through on the map.

“I want Andover to say, ‘Hey you can't use people's land in Andover,’” he said.

East Hampton Finance Board Takes No Action on Budget

by Elizabeth Regan

The Board of Finance Monday took no action to recommend a revised 2018-19 general government budget after the spending plan failed at referendum again last week.

Members instead voted to postpone deliberations until a special meeting is scheduled or until the finance board's next regular meeting on July 16 – whichever comes first.

Member Alannah Coshow made the motion so the two absent members – Chairman Michael Rose and Vice Chairman Richard Brown – could get a chance to weigh in.

Member Janine Jiantonio said Rose and Brown were not able to attend because of medical emergencies.

At the end of Monday night's meeting, resident Cheryl Cwierniewicz implored members to convene within the next few weeks to come up with a general government budget proposal that balances the needs of everyone in town.

“I'm disappointed in the [finance board] tonight not voting or even attempting to vote,” Cwierniewicz said.

Per charter, the finance board must recommend a proposed budget to the Town Council. The council must then send the spending plan to town meeting and referendum.

The town attorney earlier this month issued an opinion that the town budget meeting is procedural only. He argued citizens don't get a vote because town charter requires the meeting to be adjourned directly to referendum. The opinion is a reversal of years of precedent during which citizens have participated in the meeting.

Cwierniewicz asked that finance board members work “judiciously” to come up with a budget that can be approved in time for the upcoming school year.

With roughly 16.26 percent of eligible voters turning out at last week's referendum, the \$15.17 million town spending plan was voted down 787 to 617.

The failed general government budget would have represented a \$955,460, or 6.72 percent,

increase over the current budget.

The 170-vote margin is more decisive than the last referendum on the general government budget. The May 15 vote was so close it forced a recount, which ultimately showed that the question failed by five votes.

The \$30.50 million education budget, which was presented as a separate question at referendum, passed on the first try by 125 votes. It includes the reduction of eight teaching positions. Three of the affected teachers were laid off; the remaining positions were left unfilled after teachers retired or were shuffled around the district.

Seeking Compromise

Residents advocating for more education funding have been seeking the restoration of \$670,000 in cuts made by the finance board and endorsed by the council in April. Complicating the issue was last month's unexpected release of \$715,415 in Education Cost Sharing (ECS) funding from the state, which the advocates believe should be applied to the education budget.

Instead, the finance board in May revised the first failed general government budget proposal to allocate \$117,000 of the additional state funds to pay outright for teacher laptops and student mini-laptops instead of going with the original plan to lease them over several years.

The finance board voted to use the rest of the extra ECS funds to drive down the mill rate increase.

Finance Director Jeff Jylkka cautioned at Monday's meeting that the additional appropriation must be approved by the council and then by voters at a town meeting – but only after a total town budget is approved.

Officials also decided to buy a public works plow truck and paver with cash instead of leasing them. The \$347,000 price tag would be paid for using part of this year's budget surplus, which Finance Director Jeff Jylkka said is expected to be a little over \$460,000 by July 1.

The remainder of the surplus will go into the town's fund balance. The additional appropriation request must go to the council and town meeting as well; but in this case, Jylkka said officials don't have to wait until the passage of a 2018-19 spending plan since the funds will be coming from the current budget.

Among the advocates at Monday's finance board meeting was East Hampton Middle School seventh-grader Hunter Soltanpanah. He told members that saving the teaching positions is more important than using the extra ECS money to buy more Chromebooks or using capital funds to pay for interior classroom door locks in the schools.

A \$150,000 line item in the capital budget would fund interior door locks for all classrooms in the district. The enhanced safety mechanism is designed to prevent an intruder from getting into the classroom in the event of an emergency lockdown.

Soltanpanah said there are enough Chromebooks already and the school currently has “an okay procedure” for locking down classrooms.

He said the real danger is overcrowded classrooms and a lack of course options. He counted 30 students in each of his seventh-grade classes as he relayed the story of one regularly displaced student: “We have to rely in our language arts class that a student will be absent for him to sit down. If not, he has to sit in the teacher's seat while she teaches.”

Soltanpanah argued that the future of the town rests in the academic success of its children.

“Don't vote ‘yes’ until the budget has a line item for education other than Chromebooks or locks,” he told finance board members. “Please put in a line item to restore the eight teachers you cut.”

During budget deliberations, finance board Democrats Barbara Moore and Ted Turner proposed a different way to handle the extra ECS

funds. They suggested splitting the \$715,415 allocation into three parts: roughly \$250,000 to restore three teaching positions, \$300,000 to offset the 2018-19 tax increase, and \$166,000 to help shield taxpayers from the full impact of future tax increases through the mill rate stabilization fund.

The recommendation was similar to one they made in May, which was rejected 4-3 by the finance board. Rose was the sole Republican to join the Democrats in supporting the failed motion.

Moore said Superintendent of Schools Paul K. Smith told her he could restore three teaching positions with the amount she was proposing.

Smith said this week his first priority is restoring a grade three teacher, followed by a fifth grade teacher and then a high school English teacher.

Turner told finance board members that saving teaching positions while at the same time reducing the impact of the tax increase should satisfy enough voters to get the budget approved at referendum.

“I think we have the money here and I think, because we're allocating it in two different directions, the taxpayers will like it and I think the taxpayers will pass the budget,” he said.

Finance Board member Alannah Coshow said people have come up to her around town to tell her they voted ‘no’ on the general government because the finance board did not cut enough from the spending plan.

According to Coshow, their message was “we can't afford this” and “we need a break.”

“Board of Education people, parents, teachers, students – many of the citizens – have blinders on,” she said. “We can't just move on with blinders on. We have to look at the entire picture.”

As of press time, Jylkka said a date for a special meeting of the Board of Finance had not been set.

Top Two Share Memories of EHHS

by Elizabeth Regan

East Hampton High School Class of 2018 valedictorian Emma Donohue and salutatorian Iris Simone recalled this week that some parts of their high school experience were especially challenging – like Advanced Placement U.S. History.

Donohue said the rigorous coursework turned the students in Geoffrey Lucas' class into a family.

"We all just kind of suffered through it together. None of us slept very much. I don't think I've ever been so sleep-deprived," she said.

Simone put it this way: "A couple of us cried. A lot."

Despite the heavy workload, both students said they enjoyed the class. They credited Lucas' teaching style and dry humor with giving them a deeper understanding of, and respect for, history.

Donohue said the benefits transcended social studies.

"That class, I feel, helped me become a better writer than English classes ever had," she said.

Lucas this week acknowledged the historical writing assignments didn't come easily to Donohue when she first entered his classroom as a freshman.

"History wasn't her favorite subject in the beginning," he said. "She worked at it and she got extremely good at it."

He described Donohue as a "consummate professional" who can be relied upon to perform at a top notch level.

"She's always prepared and everything is always on time. She's an excellent student," he said.

Donohue will attend Springfield College, where she will study physical therapy as part of a six-year doctoral program. She said she chose the career path to combine her interest in the sciences, her sports background and her penchant for helping others.

"I thought about biomedical engineering for

a while, because I've always wanted to do something that helps people and I've always kind of been a science/math person," she said.

But instead of focusing on a research-based career, she decided to pick a field with more opportunity for interaction.

"That way, I could still work with people with prosthetic limbs, but more on the rehab side of it," she explained.

Donohue finished out her high school sports career as a captain of the girls soccer, basketball and track teams. While she will continue as a pole vaulter on the Springfield track team, she said she'll miss the team aspect of the other sports.

She said her favorite high school memories are the soccer games won at evening games under the lights.

Some of Donohue's favorite extracurricular activities revolved around sports as well. She volunteered with the Special Olympics and participated in the school's Unified Sports program, which teams up athletes with disabilities and their peers.

She was also a member of the National Honor Society, Student Council, Yearbook Club, Spanish Club and Interact Club.

Donohue has lived in East Hampton with her parents, Dawn and Trent, since she was two years old. Her sister, Maggie, is a sophomore at the high school and her brother, Jace, is in fifth grade at Center School.

She said her family has always been supportive of what she described as her "very determined" personality and her academic focus. But they haven't been pushy.

"I think I've been hard on myself, not necessarily in a bad way, but just that I always pushed myself to do my best," she said.

Donohue earned the top spot in the class with a 4.57 GPA.

Simone, whose GPA came in at 4.56, will be heading to Boston University to study chemistry on the pre-med track.

She called her mother, Victoria DeVeau, her

biggest supporter.

"She went back to school when she had three kids, and she always emphasized how important education was," Simone said.

Simone's other closest supporters include her stepfather, Douglas DeVeau, her 15-year-old sister, Elise, and her 13-year-old brother, Devin.

Finishing out her high school years with seven advanced courses, Simone described herself as someone who has always been focused on academics.

"It's my biggest passion," she said. "So I tried to push myself as much as I could to be successful in school and in all my classes."

She's currently considering a career either in obstetrics and gynecology or pediatric medicine.

Simone credited UConn chemistry teacher Joseph Ochterski – otherwise known as Doc Och – with helping her decide to pursue the major in college. She said the course, which was her first exposure to advanced placement classes, set her up for academic success in the years that followed.

"It was a crazy hard class," she said. "It was the first two semesters of general chem at UConn smushed into our yearlong course. Every day, [Ochterski] was there supporting us and helping us learn. He always brought in food for us and let us sit with stuffed animals when we were stressed."

Simone's long list of extracurricular activities included captain and manager of the indoor track and field team, president of the National Honors Society, co-president of the Student Council, and vice-president of French Club. She was also in the Interact Club, Mental Health Awareness Club and was a Special Olympics volunteer.

She said she looks forward to participating in student government and community service opportunities at college.

"My mom's a social worker, so I've always been raised to help other people," Simone said. "It's so rewarding – especially Special Olym-



East Hampton High School Class of 2018 valedictorian Emma Donohue (right) and salutatorian Iris Simone will pursue careers in the medical field when they embark on the next phase of their lives this fall.

pics. And that inspired me to want to be a doctor, too."

It wasn't until a few months ago that the students, who were so similar in academic achievement, found out their final place in the Class of 2018 graduating class.

According to Donohue, the positions were flipped through most of high school.

"She was first and I was second," Donohue said. "I was always content with two."

Still, she put a lot of pressure on herself throughout the never ending cycle of school, sports practice, homework and sleep.

"The pressure came from myself – not necessarily to be graduating in this position, but just to do well," Donohue said.

Top Two RHAM Grads Share Scientific Focus

by Sloan Brewster

Taylor Brysgel and Harrison Oatman sat side by side in Principal Scott Leslie's office last Wednesday, but they weren't in trouble.

The pair, RHAM's 2018 valedictorian and salutatorian, were there to talk with the *Rivereast* about their high school memories and college plans.

Brysgel and Oatman both said they would miss the friends they were leaving behind as they continue their journeys.

Including themselves in that group, they said they've been friends since middle school.

"My high school years have been great; I'm sad to be leaving it behind and I'm excited to move forward," Brysgel, the class valedictorian, said.

Brysgel is planning to attend Providence College, where he will major in biology and study pre-med.

"I always knew, probably since I was a freshman, that I wanted to do something in science," he said.

While he's not positive, he thinks he may go into orthopedics.

Oatman, the salutatorian, is on his way to Harvard. He plans to major in bio-chemistry in preparation for a research career. He is considering pharmaceutical science and the development of drugs.

"This has always been something that's interested me because math and science are really my strong suit," Oatman said.

Brysgel, when asked who his favorite RHAM teacher was, did not want to hurt anyone's feelings by excluding them. But he described Sean Keane as one of the best.

Keane put in extra effort and offered short summer classes in Advanced Placement cal-

culus.

"That just shows his dedication. He makes us really prepared for the exams," Brysgel said. "But he also makes the class funny."

The teacher uses acronyms to help students remember the material and comes up with nicknames for them.

"He calls me Bicycle because my football coach started the name," Brysgel said.

Brysgel and Oatman both play sports. Brysgel is a football player and Oatman plays tennis.

"I think high school was a very positive experience for me," Oatman said. "I encountered that same experience where I had a lot of teachers really excited about what they were teaching and really passionate about what they were teaching and they were really passionate about bringing their enthusiasm to the students."

Oatman said Band Director Nick Kokus was one of those teachers

"He comes in every day with really strong enthusiasm for music and his awareness as a director is extremely professional and so I think it's a shared experience with all the other students who enroll in band classes that when you come into the class every day, it's something to look forward to and really a positive experience," he said. "He's not afraid to change things in the music to make it more creative or fitting to the needs of the band."

Kokus said he would miss Oatman, whom he described as inquisitive, and said it was clear he thinks on a deeper level.

"Harrison is a fantastic person and musician and I'm really lucky to be able to teach kids like him. He's made an amazing amount of progress in the four years that I've been able to teach him," he said. "It's clear that he's pro-

cessing everything that you're saying and storing it away in a little computer behind the eyes."

The teacher shared a story that conveyed Oatman's motivation. The band was working on a jazz piece and there was no one to play the piano. Oatman stepped up and in the course of the year perfected the piece.

"He was really excited at the opportunity, but definitely had some work to do," Kokus said. "He really embraced that new role."

As far as worst subjects are concerned, Oatman, after pondering for a long moment, said his was writing.

"I really do like challenging myself but I think writing has been something that requires more thought for me," he said. "When I'm writing an essay it might take three times longer than I expect it to."

For Brysgel, it was a quick answer.

"For me I would say my worst subjects would have to be art and music," he said. "I've never been artistic or musically inclined."

The young men's favorite high school memories involved spending time with friends.

Brysgel favored shooting hoops, which he said was a stress reliever.

"Pretty much through high school, my friends and I have enjoyed going out and going to local basketball courts," he said. "It relieves stress, and just hanging out with friends."

Oatman had fond memories of weekly trips to Moes in Glastonbury.

"My Rocking Rewards app, it's pretty filled up with a lot of trips," he said. "It's just a good time to spend with friends, even the car rides over there. I enjoyed hanging out, listening to music."

Brysgel and Oatman would not divulge what



RHAM 2018 valedictorian Taylor Brysgel and Salutatorian Harrison Oatman have been fast friends since middle school and will pursue the sciences in college.

they would be saying in their graduation speeches.

"It's a secret, we can't spoil our graduation speeches," Brysgel said. "We'll try to inspire our classmates."

"That's the goal," Brysgel said.

Colchester Town, School Budgets Sail to Victory

by Allison Lazar

Although Colchester was late to the game with sending its 2018-19 town and school budgets to referendum, the delay appeared to have been a good decision Tuesday night after the combined \$55.37 million spending package passed with an undeniable victory.

The town and school budgets were met with overwhelming support by the 1,906 residents – or 15 percent of registered voters – who came out to cast ballots. The town budget passed 1,308-619, while the school budget cruised to a similar 1,277-651 win.

The budget featured a mill rate decrease of 0.09 mills, or 0.25 percent, resulting in a 32.28 mill rate.

One mill is equivalent to \$1 in tax per \$1,000 of assessed property, meaning a 32.28 mill rate would result in a resident paying \$8,070 in taxes on a home assessed at \$250,000.

The town decided to postpone sending the budget to referendum after Gov. Dannel P. Malloy released a state budget proposal in February that would have resulted in a 3 percent tax increase for residents. However, the agreed upon state budget last month restored education funding and municipal aid to several towns, including Colchester.

The new revenue figures revealed the town would be receiving \$1.33 million more than what was projected by Malloy.

Board of Finance Chairman Rob Tarlov confirmed waiting on the revenue numbers from the state resulted in a much more favorable tax rate for residents.

Shortly after the town budget passed, Tarlov told the *Rivereast* “We were lucky in terms of the revenue side this year – that’s really the key. [The state revenue] turned it from a 3 percent tax increase to a tax decrease,” he said.

Those who participated in Tuesday’s referendum confirmed Tarlov’s sentiments.

Resident John Tortorigi said he voted ‘yes,’ simply because of the tax decrease.

The \$14.82 million town budget saw an \$113,227 increase over current year spending, but managed to pass overwhelmingly.

Items such as general government contributed \$3.65 million to the overall town budget – a \$72,223 increase over the current year. The budget also includes \$3.55 million for public works, a \$29,571 increase, and \$2.93 million for public safety, a \$66,344 increase.

Shilosky, who through the budget season has been confident with what the town and schools presented, had his confidence validated through the referendum results. He noted the wide margins of victory for both budgets.

“Listen to that count,” Shilosky said of the vote totals. “The boards did their jobs; they got it done [and] we’re moving forward after a first time ballot.”

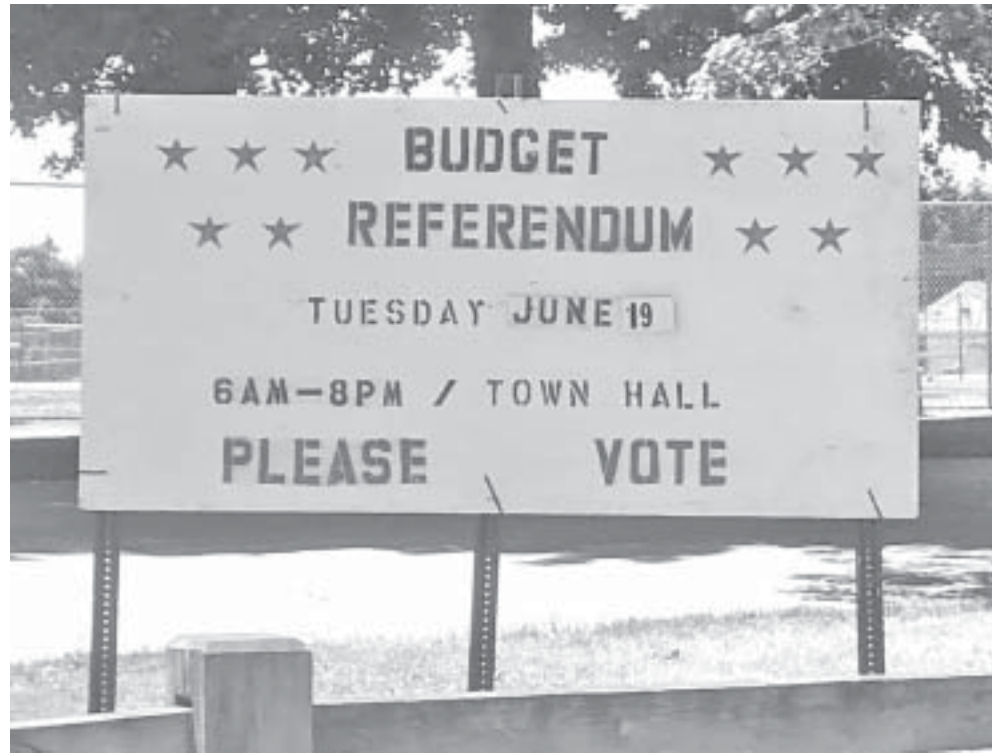
The \$40.55 million school budget was also met with overwhelming support Tuesday.

Resident Candace Cerda – who told the *Rivereast* she recently purchased a home in Colchester – said she voted ‘yes’ because of her children.

“I want the money to go to the schools,” she said.

The school’s budget – which saw a slight decrease of \$87,061 – is composed of major items such as salaries occupying \$25.50 million, a \$426,177 increase, and \$6.41 million in benefits, a \$266,150 decrease over current year spending. Transportation funds clocked in at \$2.40 million and reflected a decrease of \$17,549.

Resident Alix Rokita said she voted in favor of the school budget because she is a former



Colchester’s \$55.37 million budget passed Tuesday night with undeniable support from the community.

teacher and is aware of exactly what goes into a budget.

While some residents honed in on a specific reason why they approved the town and school budgets, others just wanted to finalize what was presented.

Resident Greg Giles said, “I voted ‘yes’ because I have confidence in our boards and selectmen,” and added, “we need to move forward – we need a budget.”

ward – we need a budget.”

At the conclusion of the referendum, Tarlov expressed some relief – as, he revealed, there was some worry the budget might not pass, simply due to the lack of feedback from the public.

“It was a very quiet [budget] season, which gave me some concern because you don’t know what you don’t know,” he said.

New Commanding Officer at Troop K in Colchester

by Allison Lazar

Lt. Christopher Sharland’s career has come full circle now that he’s been selected to fulfill the role of commanding officer of Troop K, where he started out as rookie 25 years ago.

The position of commanding officer at Troop K has been vacant since the retirement of Lt. Rafael Medina III in April.

Sharland told the *Rivereast* Monday that Troop K is a lot like he remembers it, but with different people.

Although the barracks may not have changed much, Sharland’s view on policing certainly has.

“My first few years as a rookie up until the eighth year on the job, it was all black and white; there was no gray. You either broke the law or didn’t break the law,” he said.

Sharland said spending 25 years on the job has allowed him to acknowledge the gray, which wasn’t so apparent in his early years as a trooper.

After four years at Troop K, Sharland was transferred to the former casino unit before spending two years at Troop D in Danielson and landing back in Troop K in 2000. He was stationed at Tolland’s Troop C from 2004 to 2016, with only a brief transfer back to the Colchester barracks after being promoted to Sergeant in 2006. Ten years later, he was promoted to master sergeant and transferred to

Danielson.

Sharland attained lieutenant status in May before settling into the commanding officer post at Troop K on June 8.

Sharland pointed to his last supervisor at Troop C, Lt. Todd Harbeck, as a member of the Connecticut State Police he admires most. Harbeck is now the commanding officer at Troop E in Montville.

“He was phenomenal,” Sharland said. “He was very level-headed, didn’t become flustered with different situations, did not rush to judge and would take his time – I respected him for who he was.”

These sorts of high stress situations Sharland referenced are what he labeled as the most exciting part of the job.

“It’s tough going into some situation where you don’t know the outcome, but there is also an adrenaline rush. It’s the exciting part of police work [and] that’s one of the reasons I became a trooper.”

Sharland said he knew he wanted to be a state trooper since he was a 6-year-old kid growing up in Massachusetts.

When the young Sharland used to see state troopers drive by his house, “the way they carried themselves, their appearance, their demeanor just was impressive [to me],” he said.

He said the way law enforcement is struc-

ture in Massachusetts also played a role in his decision to become a state trooper instead of a municipal police officer.

“Being from a small town in Massachusetts, I didn’t have the advantage of a civil service preference, since my town wasn’t a civil service town,” Sharland said.

Sharland explained that when you live in a civil service town and take the local police exam, you are given preference over non-residents, adding “I had that going against me.”

“I got a 100 [percent] on my civil service exam, but any passing score of a resident was ahead of me. So I knew that wasn’t a real option for me and I wanted to become a trooper.”

Sharland went on to take the exam to become a state trooper, but had a difficult time landing a job in Massachusetts even though he scored a 90 percent on the test.

He eventually decided to apply for state trooper positions in New Hampshire, Virginia and Connecticut before inevitably accepting a position at Troop K in 1993.

Away from the job, Sharland said he enjoys traveling boating and spending time with his family.

He currently lives in Somers with his wife – with whom he will celebrate 25 years of marriage in October – as well as their son and daughter.



Lt. Christopher Sharland returned to Troop K as the new commanding officer on June 8. Sharland started out as a rookie 25 years ago at the Colchester barracks before working at various troops around the state.

Colchester Valedictorian, Salutatorian Reflect on Time Spent at Bacon

by Allison Lazur

Joan Tremblay and Addey LePage have been named valedictorian and salutatorian, respectively, of Bacon Academy's 2018 graduating class. Both LePage and Tremblay will end their high school career with their 209 fellow classmates at Friday night's graduation ceremony.

Both Tremblay and LePage spoke positively about their last four years at Bacon Academy, emphasizing how crucial their teachers were to their successes.

Tremblay acknowledge that there were difficulties, but ultimately her teachers were who helped her reach her goals.

"I pretty much loved all of my teachers," she said. "They made it really special because having a relationship with your teachers is what helps you succeed and enjoy class."

While reminiscing with the *Rivereast* Wednesday, Tremblay and LePage spoke highly of their Advanced Placement Biology teacher, Christopher Juhl.

Juhl "is one of my favorite people in the world," LePage said, and added with a chuckle, "[AP Biology] was a horrible experience, but it was so much fun."

Tremblay echoed LePage's thoughts on the class.

"The hardest class but the best class I've ever taken was AP Biology. Everyone kind of suffered together," she said.

Both students weren't just satisfied with their academic teachers and classes, but also the extracurricular activities where they were able to make friends and bond with their peers.

Tremblay participated in a women's choir at Bacon Academy.

"Choir was one of the best experiences I've had here," she said. "It was such a tight-knit group of girls who you get close with over the years and then you can get to sing and go on fun field trips."

LePage, however, spent her time outside of classes on the soccer and softball fields.

LePage explained she "met some of her best

friends" on those fields, while strengthening the bond with them through traveling to games.

"That was a really cool experience to be able to do the academic part and the sports part," she said.

The students also spent a portion of their high school career partaking in controversial issues like the recent March 14 walkout which commemorated those killed in the Parkland, Fla., shooting and raised awareness about mass shootings in America.

This event allowed LePage and Tremblay the opportunity to work closely and as they put it "negotiate" with Principal Matthew Peel.

"He had very clear visions on what he wanted to do and we had very clear visions on what we wanted to do," Tremblay said. "There was a little bit of a negotiating process when we had to go back and forth with him."

She added that she was grateful Peel allowed the students to express themselves while still considering their safety, when so many students around the country were not afforded that support from their principals.

LePage was also thankful to have Peel as her principal for three of her four years at Bacon; the principal started at the school in 2015.

"He really does care and you can see it in everything he does; He's always invested and interacting with everyone," she said.

Both told the *Rivereast* they will pursue careers in the field of science – each with very specific majors.

LePage will head to Boston College this fall to major in biology on a pre-med track to eventually become an orthopedic doctor.

"I've spent a lot of time with the orthopedist with sports injuries, so I think that's where the passion for [the field] has come from," she said.

LePage also disclosed that she has an interest in psychology and may pursue that field to a degree, but will "definitely stay pre-med."

Tremblay will be pursuing her post-high school degree in the University of Connecticut's Honors programs, majoring in ecology and evo-



Addey LePage, left, and Joan Tremblay, right, salutatorian and valedictorian, respectively will each speak to Bacon Academy's 2018 graduating class Friday night.

lutionary biology.

"I'm still working [on finalizing my major] because high school hasn't really given me the opportunity to work with a lot of the natural sciences," she said.

Tremblay also said she considered pursuing a career in veterinary medicine before realizing that's not the type of role she wanted with animals.

"[As a vet] you see them once and treat them and that's it," she said. "I rather have relationships with them and observe them and see how

they think," adding, "extinction and endangered species have also really alarmed me."

Both seniors said they plan on enjoying the first summer in a long time without homework. Tremblay will be traveling internationally, while LePage will be spending time at the beach.

Both will send off their fellow peers into the next chapter of their lives with speeches at Bacon Academy's graduation ceremony tonight at 6 p.m.

East Hampton Man Seriously Injured Diving at Pool

A local man was airlifted to Hartford Hospital Tuesday afternoon due to injuries sustained while diving into a pool at a house on Country Lane, East Hampton Police said.

He was listed in serious condition as of Thursday morning, according to a hospital spokesman.

East Hampton Police Department Chief Dennis Woessner said Joshua Penn, 37, was pulled to the side of the pool by a friend, who

then called emergency services. The call came in at approximately 3:04 p.m.

Penn was found unresponsive by police and East Hampton Volunteer Ambulance responders, according to Woessner. He regained consciousness before being transported to Hartford by Life Star, which landed in a front yard on the corner of White Birch Road and Brewer Road.

Single-Collision with Tree in Colchester, Driver Transported by Lifestar

State Police said a single-vehicle collision with a tree last Friday resulted in serious injuries to the driver and suspected minor injuries to the passenger.

At approximately 2:26 a.m., Taylor Howes, 18, of 50 Nature Ave., Apt. B, was driving a Toyota Corolla in the area of Norwich Avenue, near Elm Street, when the vehicle collided with a tree.

Police said Howes was transported via Lifestar to Hartford Hospital with suspected serious injuries and her next of kin was noti-

fied of the collision.

The passenger of the Toyota Corolla, Kyle Uribanti, 20, of 222 W. Thames St., Norwich, was transported by Colchester Fire to Marlborough Clinic with suspected minor injuries.

Hartford Hospital told the *Rivereast* Tuesday that Howes is in critical condition.

According to police, this crash remains under investigation and anyone with information is asked to contact Trooper Steven Loiler at 860-465-5400.

East Hampton Police News

6/7: Jose LeBron, 36, of 29 Roberta Dr., Middletown, was issued a summons for operating a motor vehicle while under suspension, East Hampton Police said.

6/8: Stacy Rivera, 37, of 128 W. High St., turned herself in pursuant to an active warrant for her arrest and was charged with second-degree failure to appear, police said.

6/9: Arthur Flejszar, 24, of 101 Spencer Dr., Middletown, was issued a summons for passing in a no-passing zone, operating a motor vehicle while under suspension and operating

a motor vehicle without minimum insurance and is scheduled to appear before the Middletown Superior Court on Wednesday, June 20, at 9 a.m. to answer to the aforementioned charges.

6/10: Eric Markham, 47, of 43 Chestnut Hill Rd., was arrested and charged with second-degree assault and disorderly conduct, police said.

Also, from June 4-10, officers responded to 20 medical calls, five motor vehicle crashes and four alarms, and made 12 traffic stops.

Portland Police News

6/12: Michael McLean, 37, of 44 Marlborough St., Portland, was charged with second-degree threatening and second-degree breach of peace, Portland Police said.

Marlborough Police News

6/12: State Police said Nicole A. Brean, 31, of 625 Main St., East Hampton, was arrested and charged with violating a protective order.

6/12: State Police said Tyloine Reddick, 40, of 38 Hamilton St., Hartford was arrested and charged with first-degree larceny.

Colchester Police News

6/12: State Police said Christopher Nicewicz, 26, of 106 East St., Stafford Springs, was arrested and charged with second-degree failure to appear after turning himself into police.

6/13: State Police said Michael L. Harris, 38, of 313 Cornwall St., Hartford, turned himself into police pursuant to an arrest warrant issued for second-degree failure to appear.

6/15: State Police said Kyle J. Marsh, 22, of 27 Piekarz Rd., was arrested and charged with DUI and unsafe backing.

6/17: Colchester Police said Drew Bray, 21, of 16 Gregory Rd., Lebanon, and Carley Funk, 19, of 83 Mason St., Coventry, were arrested and charged with second-degree breach of peace for an incident dating back to May 29.

Fraudulent Debit Card Purchases in Colchester

Colchester Police said reports of fraudulent debit card purchases were reported.

At approximately 7:07 p.m., last Sunday police said a Colchester resident made a report of the fraudulent charges.

According to police, this case is currently under investigation.

Colchester Residence Burglarized

State Police said a residence on Sashel Lane was broken into sometime between June 9 and June 15.

Police said there was no forced entry, but cash and jewelry were taken.

According to police, this incident is currently under investigation.

Vehicles Collide on Route 85 in Hebron

State Police said failing to grant the right of way to another vehicle is what caused a collision that happened on June 11.

At approximately 2:02 p.m. police said Amanda R. Nappi, 29, of 96 Virginia Ln., Tolland was driving a Honda CR-V traveling south on Route 85, near Church Street. A Toyota Rav4 driven by Carl Wool, 74, of 182 Deepwood Dr., Amston, pulled out from a driveway and began traveling east across Route 85 in front of the Honda CR-V. The vehicles subsequently collided.

Wool was found at fault for failing to grant the right of way, police said.

Nappi was transported by Hebron Fire Department with possible injuries.

Meet the New Colchester Schools Superintendent

by Allison Lazur

Jeffrey E. Burt began his first day at Colchester Public Schools on June 4, after unanimously being appointed by the Board of Education on Feb. 27.

With an annual salary clocking in at \$168,000, Burt wasted no time getting to work.



Jeffrey E. Burt

"[There are] not enough hours in the day," he said, adding, "Everything is important and the most important piece obviously is the students; their safety, wellbeing and growing them as learners."

Because school is ending this week, Burt said he's trying to get as much done as possible in these past three weeks he's been superintendent.

Although Burt said these three weeks have been "fantastic," he disclosed it hasn't all been easy.

"The stress [so far] is getting used to a whole new system, getting used to all new folks and trying to get to know people," he said.

Burt, who for the last three years was the assistant superintendent of Milford Public Schools, as well as the assistant superintendent in Vernon for two years, began his career in education as a swim team coach in Fairfield County.

Burt explained that working as a swim team coach prompted him to become involved with teaching.

"I really loved working with kids of all skill sets," he said, "and I really loved helping them learn – kids who are nationally-ranked swimmers down to beginner swimmers. So it was really just – maybe I'll try teaching."

Burt's goal of landing an administrative role stemmed from his 13 years of experience teaching high school history.

"I started getting involved in more leadership roles," he said, "and started realizing that I wanted to take that next step into more of active leadership rather than a teacher leader so that's when I started my sixth-year [degree] in administration."

This sixth-year degree in educational leadership from Sacred Heart University is "how you become an administrator," Burt said.

Before obtaining this degree, Burt received a bachelor's degree in history from the Col-

lege of Wooster in Wooster, Ohio, and a master's degree in teaching from the Teacher's College of Columbia University in New York.

Burt is also looking to the future of education and shared his opinions with the *RiverEast* on hot topic issues like "high-stakes testing" and the overall changes in the "way to do things" successfully in the field of education.

"When I started teaching I pretty much existed in my own little room – very few people came into my room [and] I never went into anyone else's room to see other people teach and we know now that's just not the way to do things."

Burt added that as a teacher or administrator it's important to seek out feedback from your peers and experience teaching methods outside of your own because "that's the way you grow."

Burt acknowledged that "high-stakes testing is a controversial topic" of which he said he is able to see both sides.

He went on to explain that he believes high-stakes testing is a necessary tool because it measures the growth of students across the state.

On the flipside, Burt said if the information received from the testing becomes "punitive in nature" and students aren't making enough progress, then the testing can become a "fear tactic," which he labeled as the "bad side of testing."

While Burt said there have been several mentors that have impacted him – including superintendents in Sprague, Waterford, East Lyme and Milford – Colchester's now-former interim superintendent Mary Conway has been "incredible."

Conway was superintendent, and Burt's boss, when he was the assistant superintendent in Vernon.

"It was incredibly beneficial to have someone I know and respect in this position and she's been incredibly accommodating and is still supportive to this time," Burt said.

Burt's satisfaction extended beyond Conway and to the people he's met since beginning his new position.

"For the past two weeks everyone in Colchester – staff, students and the community as a whole – has been very welcoming and the support of the community for the schools is incredible," Burt said. "I really am lucky to be here."

Away from the job, Burt spends time hiking and fixing up his house in Madison where he resides with his wife and four daughters, who range in age from 10 to 17.

Obituaries continued

Marlborough

Robert H. Hill

Robert H. Hill, 54, of Marlborough, died at his home Thursday, June 14. Born Sept. 30, 1963, in Norway, Maine, he had resided in Portland before moving to Marlborough in 2011.

Robert was employed at The Travelers Insurance Company for the past 35 years, where he had worked as a Director of IT Services. He had served as past president of Sagem Village Association in Marlborough.

Robert is survived by his three sons, Sawyer Hill, McLane Hill and Wyatt Hill, all of Marlborough; his father, Gordon Hill; his mother and stepfather, Pamela and Delbert Arey of Harrison, Maine; his grandmother, Annette Clough of Hebron, Maine; a brother, Craig Hill (Lisa) of Maine; three stepsisters, Delyn Arey of Massachusetts, Kristy Marquis (John) of Marlborough, Beth Miekkel (Jim) of Scotland; several nieces, nephews and cousins.

A Celebration of Robert's Life will be held Monday, June 25, from 5:30-8 p.m., at the Blackledge Golf Club, 180 West St., Hebron.

To leave online condolences, visit spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.



Colchester

Robert Edward Carli

Robert "Bob" Edward Carli, 57, of Moodus, died Saturday, June 16, at Yale New Haven Hospital, following a courageous battle with cancer. He was born in Hartford June 18, 1960, to the late Dominick "Peter" and Mary (Skowronek) Carli.

Bob grew up in Colchester and graduated from Bacon Academy in 1978; while there he played third base for the baseball team and for a year on the UConn Avery Point team. Bob earned an electrical engineering degree from the University of Hartford and his Master's in Engineering Degree from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. He worked for Sycamore Electronics, Hamilton Standard and Pratt Whitney as an electrical engineer and enjoyed fishing, skiing and traveling.

Robert is survived by his siblings; Peter Carli of Colchester, Thomas Carli of Depew, NY, Jacqueline Jones of East Hampton and Ronald Jones, Jr. of Moodus; his step-father Ronald O. Jones, Sr. of Moodus and numerous nieces and nephews.

Bob was predeceased by his mother, Mary E. Jones, and his father, Dominick Peter Carli, who died in a plane crash when Bob was young.

Calling hours were held Thursday, June 21, at Belmont Funeral Home, 144 South Main St., Colchester. On today, June 22, the procession will assemble at Belmont Funeral Home at 10 a.m., and proceed to St. Andrew Church in Colchester for an 11 a.m. Mass of Christian Burial. Burial will immediately follow at New St. Andrew Cemetery.

Visit belmontfh.com to leave condolences for the family.



Colchester

Sean D. Harwood

Sean D. "Redwood" Harwood, 32, of Colchester, died Saturday, June 16, at his home. Born July 21, 1985, in Norwich, he was the son of Ruth (Edwards) Johnson of Norwich and the late Bobbie E. Harwood. Sean was a lifelong resident of Colchester and was employed by Bob's Tree Service of Colchester for many years.

Besides his mother, he is survived by his sister, Amber Harwood of Norwich; brother, Jessie Harwood of Colchester; sister, Crystal Harwood of Colchester; several aunts, uncles, cousins and many friends. He also leaves his cats Killa and China.

Friends called at the Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton, Thursday, June 21, with a memorial service that evening.

To leave online condolences, visit spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

Colchester

Alan Plaisted Marshall III

Alan Plaisted Marshall III, 41, of Colchester, passed away Sunday, June 17, surrounded by his loving family. He was born in Middletown Sept. 22, 1976. Alan was a graduate of Vinal Technical School and was a member of Local 91, most recently being employed at Independent Elevator.

A son of Alan P. Marshall Jr. and the late Ramona Jurczak Marshall of Durham, he is survived by his father (and stepmother, Anna Marie Marshall); his wife, Jennifer and their children, Chloe, Kaylee, Jillian, Alan IV and Zachary; his sister, Monica Rae Sistare, her husband Frank and their children, Summer Rae, Syrus and Zeke; as well as his stepsister, Darcy Madrazo and step-brother, Evan Madrazo.

He was predeceased by his brother, Zachary Ryan Marshall.

The family will receive guests from 2-4 p.m. Saturday, June 23, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. Services and burial will be private.

In lieu of flowers, donations in his memory may be made to the Marshall Memorial Fund, c/o Liberty Bank, 219 S. Main St., Colchester, CT 06415.

For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.



Colchester

Raymond Arthur Maheu

Raymond Arthur Maheu, 89, of Colchester, formerly of Willimantic, beloved husband of Rosemary (Zanlungo) Maheu, passed away peacefully Wednesday, morning, June 20. Born Nov. 9, 1928 in Willimantic, he was the son of the late Henry and Alice (Duchesneau) Maheu.

Mr. Maheu proudly served with the U.S. Navy during World War II and was a member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars as well as the B.P.O. Elks Lodge in Willimantic. He had worked as a stock clerk for Northeast Utilities for many years before his retirement.

He was son to Henry and Alice (Duchesneau) Maheu; father to four, Grace Bianci of Burlington, Vanessa and Gary Maheu and John Moriconi (and wife, Julia) and brother to three, Marcella Burton and Leo and Wayne Maheu.

Care of private arrangements has been entrusted to the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home of Colchester.

Donations in his memory may be made to the American Heart Association, P.O. Box 417005, Boston, MA 02241-7005 (heart.org).

For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

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Obituaries

Colchester

Richard Paul Haesche Sr.

Richard Paul Haesche Sr., 89, of Colchester, passed away Tuesday, June 12, with his children at his side, rejoining his late wife of 63 years, Agnes Rita (Gordon) Haesche, in Heaven. Born Nov. 28, 1928, in New Haven, he was the son of the late Rupert and Mary (Walsh) Haesche Sr.



Mr. Haesche proudly served his country with the U.S. Air Force during both the Korean and Vietnam war eras. He earned a degree in accounting and worked as an accountant during his 20 years of service. He then went to work as a tax auditor for the State of Connecticut, as well as in private practice, owning and operating Central Accounting Service of Colchester. Mr. Haesche was also an accomplished novelist, and published numerous books over the years. He loved to write poetry. He was also an avid woodworker and always had a project around the house. Over the years he built boats, decks, gazebos, sheds, shelves, furniture, and knickknacks.

Richard loved music of the big band era, and while never formally trained, he could pick out classics and standards on the piano, clarinet, harmonica, and accordion – all by ear. His family and those close to him knew Richard as a deeply spiritual man, gentle, and wise. He always had a thoughtful perspective to share that revealed the depth of his faith. He was fair and generous of heart, valued truth, and recognized the best in people. He donated his time and resources to volunteer organizations such as F.I.S.H. (Fellowship In Serving Humanity) and several charities.

He leaves his three children (and their spouses), Paula Scopino and Dr. Michael Pierce, of Glastonbury, Cory Haesche and Thomas Cannamela of Salem and Richard and Tina Haesche, Jr. of Chaplin; five grandchildren, Daniel Scopino (and his wife, Allison) of Bristol, David Cannamela of Essex, Katie Cannamela of Meriden and Lucy and Zoe Haesche, both of Chaplin; and a great-granddaughter, Romy Angelina Scopino.

In addition to his beloved wife, who predeceased him April 15, 2018, and his parents, he was predeceased by his five siblings: sister, Mary Johnson, and four brothers, Rupert Jr., Joseph, Donald and Thomas Haesche.

The family received guests Saturday, June 16, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester, with a chapel service that day. Burial with military honors and a reception will follow the service.

Donations in his memory may be made to the American Heart Association, P.O. Box 417005, Boston, MA 02241-7005 (heart.org) or to The Valor Foundation, 1101 Ben Tobin Dr., Hollywood, FL 33021 (valorfoundation.com).

Marlborough

Jamie A. McGaw

“A light that burns twice as bright, burns half as long.”

Jamie Abraham McGaw passed away unexpectedly Saturday, June 2. Jamie was a former Marine, an avid outdoorsman, and loved traveling on his motorcycle, which took him to various parts of the US with the wind at his back.

Jamie loved his family and friends, and anyone who knew him would say he was witty, charismatic, and that his smile and laugh were infectious, and he lit up any room he walked into. Jamie was loved greatly by his family and friends and will be sorely missed.

Jamie is survived by his two children, Victoria and Valerie McGaw; parents, Linda-Jo and William McGaw III.; his brother Joshua McGaw and his wife, Sarah; and Jamie's niece and nephews, Krissana, Gabriel and Alexander McGaw; his grandfather, William McGaw; his aunt, Nancy McGaw; his aunt, Gabriella Ducharme and her husband, Maurice; his aunt, Rose Darby; his aunt, Michalina Eisenberg and her husband Alan along with his two cousins, Arianna and Aaron Eisenberg; and his aunt, Margaret Darby.

The family held a private service Friday, June 8, at Mulryan Funeral Home in Glastonbury, and a private burial ceremony at Holy Cross Cemetery in Glastonbury, where Jamie was laid to rest with his grandmother, Ruth McGaw.

Jamie was a bright star whose flame will continue to shine even though he is no longer with us. Be at peace, traveler, our love goes with you.

East Hampton

Andrew Joseph Bonertz

A light in our lives was extinguished on June 15, 2018 when Andrew Joseph Bonertz, formerly of East Hampton, died unexpectedly. He was 28 and a new father.

Andrew was such a kind and caring soul. He was a protector who did not like bullies and would stand up to others when needed. He always watched out for his family.

As a child he followed his father around trying to learn everything and anything he could which is how he earned his nickname “Little Man.” From fixing cars, changing oil, and fixing go carts, Andrew could do it all. By the age of 7, he had already flown a plane.

Andrew was a gentleman who always helped out from opening doors to carrying groceries. He enjoyed Boy Scouts and earned an Arrow of Light award, which now hangs in his son's room. He had no fear and would attempt anything. As he grew he learned to skate board, a pastime that would endure into his adulthood, even when his skateboarding skills diminished he still managed to take the long board out for a ride. In High School he joined the ski club and learned to snow board. He graduated from East Hampton High School in 2008.

He was intelligent and loved history—particularly World War II—and would voraciously consume any Ken Burns documentary, often staying up all night watching war footage. His own history was important to him too, and he decorated the walls of his bedroom with old photos of East Hampton, where he grew up. He had a story for every corner and every backroad, and loved driving aimlessly for hours, reminiscing about his childhood and all the people who populated his life.

He lived in Nebraska – where his family was from – for three years during his childhood and he always felt at home there. He spoke fondly of the mid-west and was proud of the values he drew from the simple life he loved there.

But he found life to be simple and wonderful in his new home in East Hampton, N.Y., too, where he built a beautiful home life for his new family, which included his two dogs, Joey and Frank, who he loved playing with.

Andrew expressed himself through art, mostly designing his own tattoos, which he would sometimes have professionally done and sometimes tattoo on himself. Being right handed, this resulted in a lot of tattoos on his left side. Each one held a special meaning to him, even if that meaning was silly or fleeting. He had recently gotten a rather large wolf tattoo on his hand, which he said represented overcoming adversity.

There was a soundtrack to Andrew's life, and it was always playing. No matter what he was doing, there was a carefully curated song to go along with it. His tastes ranged from Waylon Jennings to Macklemore.

Being a father to his son Miller was the most important thing in Andrew's life. He nick-named him “Bubba” and taught him how to blow raspberries and dance, bouncing up and down to all his favorite tunes. Miller brought so much joy to Andrew's life in such a short amount of time.

Andrew was born Oct. 25 in 1989 at Scott AFB in Illinois. He is survived by his partner Leigh Goodstein and his son Miller Joseph Bonertz, born June 28, 2017, of East Hampton, N.Y.; his parents, Joseph and Susan Bonertz of East Hampton; his sister, Ashely Bonertz (fiancé Aaron Davis) of East Hampton; younger brother, Brandyn Bonertz (Amanda Butler) and their son Bodhi, born April 2, of Avon. His grandmothers Mary Ann Bonertz of Menominee, Neb., and Marilyn Kinzel of East Haddam; uncles, Timothy Bonertz (Pam Kline) of Yankton, S.D.; Paul Kinzel and his son Sam of Cherry Hill, N.J.; aunts, Wendy (Junior) St. Pierre of Yankton, S.D.; Catherine Jansen of Hartington, Neb.; and Valerie Ashely of Duxbury, Mass.; his cousins, Cody, Allison, Grace, Aspen Jansen of Hartington, Neb.; Nicholas and Alecia St. Pierre, Yankton, S.D.; and John Luis and Benjamin Ashton of Spain.

Andrew was preceded in death by his grandparents, Allen Joseph Bonertz of Menominee, Neb., and James Henry Kinzel of Cherry Hill, N.J.

A prayer service was held June 19 at Spencer Funeral Home. He will be cremated and his ashes interred with his grandfather in Nebraska according to his wishes. A celebration of Andrew's life will be held at a later date in New York.

The family asks in lieu of flowers donations be made to a fund in the name of Miller Bonertz at Liberty Bank, 2 W. High St., East Hampton, CT 06424.

To leave online condolences, visit spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.



Marlborough

Wesley James Willys

Wesley James “Jim” Willys, 82, passed away peacefully Saturday, June 2, at Cobalt Rehabilitation Center. He had lived for many years in East Hartford and then moved to Marlborough, where he built his home.

He worked for many years at Hartford Insurance Company designing office space. When he retired, he volunteered at NPR and pursued his interests in classical music, antiques, entertaining friends at his home, and collecting cars, especially BMWs.

When you met Jim, you knew immediately he was a gentleman of a bygone era. He wrote ‘thank you’ notes by hand and loved to give floral arrangements as gifts. Jim was an avid reader, historian and gifted conversationalist.

Jim was predeceased by his parents, Raymond and Elizabeth Willys. He will be missed by his dear friends, Ronni Sherman and Pamela Feldman.

Special thanks to Chris at Cobalt Rehabilitation for making Jim feel so special and to Jane Berry, Esq., for providing care and guidance.

Graveside services were Friday, June 15, at Rose Hill Memorial Park, 580 Elm St., Rocky Hill.

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



Colchester

James W. Cahill

James W. Cahill of Colchester, formerly of Southington, passed away Saturday, June 16. He was 86 years old.

Jim leaves his beloved daughter, Colleen Kalita; two sons, James Cahill Jr. and Bryan Cahill; four grandchildren, Alycia, Joshua, Melyssa-Amber and Sean-Patrick; and seven great-grandchildren.

Jim had a long and successful career with First National Stores. He since enjoyed many years of retirement, during which he survived three loving wives, Clara, Alice and Helen.

A graveside funeral service was held Tuesday, June 19, at the New St. Andrew Cemetery, Gillette's Lane, Colchester.

The Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home of Colchester has been entrusted with care of arrangements. For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.



Colchester

Gary “Gee” T. Schilling Jr.

Gary “Gee” T. Schilling Jr. of Colchester passed on from this life all too soon Tuesday, May 29, from a tragic accident.

Gary was a traveler, a lover of nature, a poet, an artist in all ways, he loved fiercely and laughed full-bellied. He saw the beauty in the world even from the side of some desolate highway, maybe a colorful rainbow, some furry little creature, or the beautiful iridescent wings on a dragonfly. He was an extremely talented artist with a love for tattooing who left his mark in pencil and ink across the country. He lived by his own rules and traveled from the Atlantic to the Pacific hitching rides, hopping trains, driving the many beater cars he owned over the years, and walking thousands of miles touching the lives of so many souls from all walks of life.

He is survived by his mother and stepfather, Penny and Don Gadbois; his father and stepmother, Gary Sr. and Sandra Schilling; his siblings, Ray, Robin, Evan, Tajia, Rosie and Tiffany; and his children, Haley and Eyezik.

A private family memorial will be held to celebrate Gary's life and for the many that can't attend please celebrate him the way you knew him best.

In lieu of flowers, please donate to your local soup kitchen.