

RIVEREAST

# News Bulletin

Serving Amston, Andover, Cobalt, Colchester, East Hampton, Hebron, Marlborough, Middle Haddam and Portland

Volume 42, Number 50

Published by The Glastonbury Citizen

September 21, 2018



Boy Scout Troop 72 recently took a camping trip to Gettysburg. Pictured from left in front of the Abraham Lincoln monument are Kent Whitesell, Reynaldo Valenzuela, Ben Smith, Jared Evans, Thomas Smith, Al Letendre, Tim Anderson, "Abe Lincoln," Jack Boyden, Ben Petrosky, Thomas Keltonic Colin Larkin, Conner Denecour, Sean Reading and Peter Larkin.

## Colchester Scouts Go to Gettysburg

Boy Scout Troop 72 recently took a four-day camping trip to Gettysburg National Military Park in Pennsylvania.

The troop camped and cooked right on the battlefield, and saw live artillery reenactments battles by over 200 Union and Confederate troops. They also saw the National Cemetery, took a guided bus tour, visited museums, hiked to Devils Den and Little Round Top, and ex-

plored the battlefield grounds.

The troop's September overnight campout is a canoe trip on the Connecticut River to Seldon Island. Troop 72 meets at Colchester Federated Church, 60 Main St., Mondays at 7 p.m. from September to June. Troop 72 is always seeking new members aged 11 to 17. Contact Ben Smith at [scoutmaster@troop72ct.org](mailto:scoutmaster@troop72ct.org) with any questions.

## Third Try Not the Charm

by Elizabeth Regan

The third budget referendum on East Hampton's 2018-19 town spending plan failed resoundingly.

Town meeting moderator Steve Greco announced the machine vote to the public shortly after the polls closed Wednesday evening, while Registrar of Voters Stephanie Lee disclosed the number of absentee votes to reporters. The \$14.95 million budget town proposal failed by a total of 1,086 'no' votes to 612 'yes' votes.

The initial May referendum on the town budget – which includes general government operations, capital spending and debt – failed by five votes after the close margin triggered a recount. The subsequent referendum in June failed by 170 votes.

The schools' spending plan – which was a separate question on the ballot back in May – passed on the first try by 125 votes. It included the reduction of eight teaching positions, including three layoffs.

At least some of Wednesday's voters – it's impossible to know how many without an advisory question on the ballot – voted against the town budget this time because officials failed to restore any of the lost teaching positions despite the announcement of about \$700,000 in unexpected funds from the state combined with a 2017-18 budget surplus of roughly the same amount.

Now, education advocates like former Board of Education member Tania Sones want members of the Board of Finance and Town Coun-

cil to heed the message they believe the failure of the budget sends.

"I really hope they listen to the voices of the residents to be able to say 'let's reevaluate, let's listen and then let's adjust.' I think what they need to do is start to talk about funding for those lost teaching positions," she said.

Former Finance Board Chairman Michael Rose resigned from the finance board in July after his fellow Republicans rejected a plan by Finance Director Jeff Jylkka to pay for student computer tablets and classroom interior door locks out of last year's budget surplus instead of keeping them in the proposed capital budget. The move would have freed up \$250,000, which would then have been used to restore three teaching positions. Rose joined the finance board's two Democrats as the only members in support of the plan.

"When we have \$1.4 million that we didn't plan on when we put these budgets together, it blows my mind that we would let teachers go. It just absolutely blows my mind," he told fellow members at the time.

Sones on Wednesday told reporters she objected to the finance board and council's decision to approve a supplemental appropriation of \$570,000 to fund the purchase of a public works plow truck and paver as well as repairs to the community center roof using surplus funds from the past fiscal year. The move was approved by voters at a town meeting last week

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## RHAM Board Keeps Pay-to-Play As Is

by Sloan Brewster

Despite pleas from the public, the RHAM Board of Education Monday decided not to decrease pay-to-play fees at the middle and high schools.

Earlier this year, the board agreed to increase the fees students must pay to participate in sports or extracurricular activities. The increase took effect at the start of the current school year. For students playing sports, the fee is \$170 per student per season, with a family cap of \$510.

This is an increase from last year – particularly for students at the middle school. At the middle school, students had been paying a fee of \$155 per athlete for the entire year, whereas high school athletes paid \$185 for the entire year.

At Monday's meeting, Vince Colonna, president of RHAM Sports Boosters, said the community was on board with the increases in the springtime, as the understanding was that there was a budget deficit. But since that time, the school board had realized a \$150,000 surplus from the 2017-18 budget – and Colonna argued this eliminates the need for the extra funds.

Colonna also said there are other towns that do not have pay-to-play fees at all – and added that this increase is "huge" for some families.

Beth Humphreys of Andover said she agreed with Colonna – and added she felt that money paid into athletic programs should be used more effectively on athletics.

"The money is there to make the program work better and I don't feel it's being used appropriately," Humphreys said.

Eva Gallupe, business manager, said knocking the fees back could cause budgetary problems.

"It could leave a hole in the revenue," she said.

Schools Superintendent Patricia Law said that while it was a "raw estimate," the increased fees were expected to bring in \$49,000 in revenue.

"This was really hard in the budget process to try to anticipate what the pay-to-play was going to be," she said.

Law noted that the increases, along with the entire budget, were approved by voters – and pointed out that nothing was taken from athletics in the budget.

"Rolling [pay-to-play] back and making those changes to me is a bit of a concern," she said.

Board member Susan Rapelye asked if the surplus funds from 2017-18 could be used to offset the difference – to which Gallupe said

no.

"Okay, so [what is] the reason why this topic is coming back up?" Rapelye asked.

Board of Education Chairwoman Judy Benson-Clarke said voters had accepted the proposal to increase the fees when there was a "huge deficit" but that has since changed.

"When they saw that there was a surplus they realized that people were paying a lot," she said. "One person said to me if this was [a deficit in] special ed we'd have to come up with it, so why not come up with it for all the kids?"

Benson-Clarke said she believed the increased burden on parents was significant.

Amy D'Amaddio, board vice chairman, said she felt it would be a mistake to reduce the fees. She said a lot of thought went into drafting the budget and said the idea to roll the fees back "seems like more of an emotional decision."

Board member Joseph O'Connor, who conferenced into the meeting via phone, said other schools don't charge students to pay sports.

"I don't know the history of how we got to pay to play but I know that most schools do not have it," he said. "I would like to also see pay to play go away."

He suggested the board revisit the matter in

the next budget season.

David Gostanian, board treasurer, chimed in a few minutes later to say that, despite what Colonna said earlier, other schools do indeed charge athletes to participate in sports – and added that he believed RHAM's fees were actually low.

In nearby Colchester, for example, any student who plays a sport at Bacon Academy, the town's high school, is required to pay a \$180 fee per sport, with a family cap of \$540.

Gostanian also added, "If there's a genuine [financial] hardship, I think that's taken into account."

But later in the meeting, Benson-Clarke pointed out that not all folks would be quick to ask for relief.

"I remember a parent who shared that she would sell her wedding ring before she would go to the school for help with money," she said.

The motion, which was made by Rapelye and seconded by D'Amaddio, failed with 10 'nays' and an abstention by O'Connor.

Benson-Clarke asked that the program subcommittee review how much parents are paying and the potential impacts – but D'Amaddio balked at this.

"We talked about this when we passed the

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**Third Try cont. from Front Page**

in a 41-32 vote. “With the recent off-budget appropriations, it’s clear we’re spending beyond our means,” she said. “If we’re overspending our budget, it shows we’re not working with a true mill rate.”

Referencing Jylkka’s failed proposal to re-store three teachers as well as the subsequent “off-budget” spending, she said officials have failed to heed the education advocates’ message.

“The finance director made a proposal before, and now the stakes are higher,” Sones said. “We can go through four, five or six referendums if residents aren’t being listened to.”

Richard Brown, who was appointed finance board chairman on Monday, said after the referendum results came in that members will meet Sept. 26 to talk about what to do next.

“There are a number of options there,” he said.

He attributed the ‘no’ votes to two different philosophies.

“From the people I’ve spoken to in the past week or so and today, half of it seemed to be the budget is too high and the other half is the people who won’t accept the school budget as it is,” Brown said. “Despite declining enrollment and despite an increase of half a million in spending, they’re still holding this budget hostage for money that doesn’t belong to them. The [Education Cost Sharing] grant is for tax relief.”

The school district has described the Education Cost Sharing grant from the state as an attempt to make up the difference between what a town can afford and what education actually costs.

The failed \$14.95 million budget was down from \$15.14 million at the first referendum and \$15.17 million in the subsequent round.

The most recent cuts included a \$91,000 reduction made by the finance board due to the decision to pay for repairs to the community center roof out of the current budget surplus instead of the capital fund. Councilors also made multiple cuts by reducing the vehicle sinking fund by \$75,000, taking out \$18,000 from its budget for road repair and maintenance and removing \$30,000 from the public safety budget by deferring until 2020 a plan to dredge a small pond near Watrous Street.

The budget proposal would have resulted in a mill rate of 32.21 mills, which would amount to a 0.89 mill increase over the current year.

The projected increase was down from the 1.01 mill increase associated with the budget proposal that failed in June.

Property taxes for someone with a home assessed at \$250,000 would have gone up \$223 in the upcoming budget year if the general government budget passed.

Town Manager Michael Maniscalco said Wednesday night that he’s been told by Jylkka the town can operate through the 11th month of the fiscal year – which would be next May – based on current revenue. Officials sent out July 1 tax bills based on the previous fiscal year’s mill rate.

Available funding would cover basic services revolving around health, public safety and welfare, he said. Spending on capital projects involving infrastructure improvements and big-ticket purchases is frozen.

When asked by reporters how long he’s planning to go without an approved budget, Maniscalco said that’s up to all the taxpayers at referendum.

“My vote only counts for one; it doesn’t count for that many,” he said. “I think we have a responsibility as public servants, as a bureaucracy within the community, to provide our residents with health, safety and welfare. We have to make sure we can do the basic services.”

Jylkka and Maniscalco will be conferring with Town Attorney Richard D. Carella to find out exactly what authority state statute gives the finance board and council when it comes to operating without a voter-approved budget.

Jylkka said he believes the council will have to put forth a “financial plan” until a budget is passed.

The officials were unclear what a financial plan refers to in this context.

“We have to have a conversation with the town attorney and figure out what that means, what it entails and how it’s done,” Maniscalco said.

Jylkka noted the last time the budget season dragged on this long was in fiscal year 2006-07. The budget finally passed at its fifth referendum on Sept. 19, 2006. He said he had hoped the synchronicity in dates boded well for the passage of Wednesday’s vote – but that’s not how it turned out.

The finance board and Town Council must approve the next budget proposal before sending it to another town meeting and referendum.

The finance board meets Sept. 26 at 7 p.m., at a location to be determined.

**Observations & Ruminations**

by Mike Thompson

With the number of baseball games remaining this season growing short, I opted to watch the Mets game Monday night instead of the Emmys. I followed along with the Emmys on my phone and saw who the winners were and then, after the game ended, I flipped over to watch the end of the telecast.

I wasn’t very impressed.

Oh, I didn’t have any complaints about the winners – particularly *The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel*, a delightful series which won Best Comedy – but the production itself left a lot to be desired. My biggest complaint is Lorne Michaels, who produced the show, apparently felt the need to reinvent the wheel when it came to the awards being presented.

As anyone who’s ever seen an awards show can tell you, the formula is simple: one or two presenters come out on stage, they do some shtick or banter, then they read the nominees and announce the winner. But for this year’s Emmys, the nominees were shown (they weren’t even announced, really; just clips from each of the nominated shows was shown on screen), *then* the presenter came out and did some (pretty unfunny) shtick. And then they simply announce the winner.

It made things unnecessarily confusing. There’s a reason why “banter-nominees-winner” is the formula. If you stick the “banter” part in the middle, the audience may forget what the nominees are, or even what the category is, by the time the winner is announced. This is especially true if the banter or shtick is overlong and woefully unfunny – as it generally was from what I saw Monday night.

To make matters worse, when the winner was announced, there was no wording or anything on screen letting you know what the person won for, as there traditionally is. There were no on-screen graphics at all, for reasons I don’t quite get.

All in all, messing with the way the awards were presented was a pretty unsuccessful experiment. At least I hope it was an experiment – and things go back to normal next time. The whole thing just flows much smoother that way.

\* \* \*

Speaking of the Emmys, here’s a trivia question for you. Veteran actor Henry Winkler finally took home an Emmy Monday night, for Best Supporting Actor. In the 1970s, Winkler was nominated three times for Emmys for his unforgettable portrayal of Arthur Fonzarelli on *Happy Days*. Twice he lost to Carroll O’Connor of *All in the Family*. Who was the other person he lost to? The answer is at the end of the column.

\* \* \*

It wasn’t exactly the contest of the century – the Red Sox have their division sewn up, and my Mets are wrapping up another lost season – but I had fun watching the Mets head to Fenway last weekend to take on the Sox.

The Friday night game was of course the most fun, as the Mets took a pounding to Boston, and won 8-0. New York went on to lose the next two games, but it was tough to get too upset about that (although, holy cow, what does poor Jacob deGrom have to do to get some run support? I’m really afraid the Mets’ offensive ineptitude is going to cost him the Cy Young). Boston does, after all, have the best record in baseball.

Besides, here’s a little secret: Back in my younger days – around age 9 or 10 – I operated under the mistaken impression that you could have more than one favorite baseball team. The Mets were still my top favorite, but I did have a second-favorite team, and that was the Red Sox. I even had a favorite Red Sox player: Mike Greenwell. (I think I mostly liked him for his name.)

Of course, before long I realized the only way you could be a true fan of a team was if

you threw yourself 100 percent behind it, and by middle school I was eating, sleeping, breathing Mets. But I never forgot those Bostonians, and to this day it’s tough to root against them. Provided they’re not playing the Mets, of course.

\* \* \*

Speaking of baseball, while I was watching last Friday’s game on TV, I saw a tweet from a New York sports writer mentioning that Yankees star outfielder Aaron Judge was inserted into the game and it “woke the crowd right up.” Huh? The Yankees at that point were leading 8-0, at home in the Bronx. They weren’t losing – they were winning, and big. The crowd needed to be “woken up?”

I’ve been fortunate to have been at a few Mets games over the years where they had a big lead like that. And let me tell you: it’s tremendously exciting! When your team keeps scoring and scoring, how could you not get excited? I mean, that is what you came to see, right? I certainly wouldn’t need something to happen to get me interested in the game again.

That tweet perfectly captured why I can’t stand Yankees fans. The sense of entitlement drives me crazy. They expect everything to be handed to them on a silver platter – so much so that when that silver platter shows up, they just don’t care.

\* \* \*

Anyone who pays attention to politics at all knows how ugly it’s become. And it’s not just on the national level anymore. It’s trickled down to the state – and even, in some cases, to the *Rivereast* towns.

*Hartford Courant* columnist Kevin Rennie has a daily blog where he offers, in his words, “news, comment and other disturbances” – and the other day he posted something that was indeed pretty disturbing.

Rennie shared an email he had obtained that was written by Portland resident Betsy Guala. It was in response to a routine campaign email she’d gotten from state Rep. Melissa Ziobron, who’s currently running for state senate in the 33rd District, which includes the *Rivereast* towns of Portland, Colchester and East Hampton.

Guala must’ve wound up on a mailing list somehow – and she wasn’t happy about it.

“F—k off you Republican c—t!” Guala, who is an instructional designer at UConn, wrote in the email. “Your party ruined Connecticut and your party is ruining the country under that corrupt, lying, idiot Trump. Don’t f—king email me again!!!”

Now, I’ve been pretty clear over the past two years I’m not a Trump fan, at all. But that kind of language was just uncalled for. It’d be uncalled for against anybody, but especially against somebody like Ziobron. I’ve talked with her several times over the years, and she’s always been a delight: very nice, forthcoming, and accessible. Plus, she works her butt off in the General Assembly; she really does.

I’d like to think Guala just fired off that email in the heat of the moment, and if she had to do it again would choose her words differently. I’m not blaming her for being angry; goodness knows there’s a lot right now to be angry about. But the hate, the very strong language, that she was displaying – I see more and more of it these days, and it just doesn’t help matters.

\* \* \*

Here’s the trivia answer: Winkler lost in 1976 to Jack Albertson, star of *Chico and the Man*. (He played the Man.) Not to brag, but I’m something of a TV trivia expert, and I never would’ve guessed that in a million years. If any of you did, my sincere congratulations. You know your ‘70s TV.

\* \* \*

See you next week.

**Pay-to-Play cont. from Front Page**

budget,” she said.

Colonna, speaking at the end of the meeting, asked the board to revisit the matter at a later time, and consider capping the fee at \$340.

“Bravo,” he said sarcastically of the failed motion. “I guess everyone’s scared.”

# Hebron School One Step Closer to Safe Water

by Sloan Brewster

Hebron Elementary School administration is one step closer to its goal of making the school's water safe to drink again.

Lead was first discovered in the school's water in November 2016. Since that time, the school system has been unable to put together two consecutive tests showing the water was clear – as is mandated by law.

However, the district submitted samples to the state Department of Public Health (DPH) in June and they came back clean, Superintendent of Schools Timothy Van Tassel said in a phone call Monday. He gave the Board of Education the same update at last Thursday's meeting.

Until there are two clear testing periods, Van Tassel said, the board and DPH will remain in the administrative agreement, which details how the district will continue to address the lead issue – namely by regular testing. He said he expects the next round of results to come in in the next week or two.

The agreement was a follow-up to an administrative order, from which the board was released in May and which replaced the initial

order, which expired last November. According to Van Tassel, the agreement replaced the order as the district was in compliance with the order and the DPH believed the district's plan of action would justify the change.

The order indicated that the district had to continue monitoring the lead by sampling the water at the school, regularly submitting samples to DPH and giving DPH monthly reports regarding the injector system installed last year. The system treats the water with zinc orthophosphate, a corrosion inhibitor.

Lead levels had decreased enough to knock the district off the order but were not at the DPH threshold, Van Tassel said. The agreement was the next step.

The district's ability to mitigate the lead will depend on whether or not the treatment system, combined with a flushing protocol initiated at the end of the last school year, is working effectively to address the levels of lead, Van Tassel said. The treatment system proved less effective than anticipated so the district established protocols to assure water is constantly running at strong enough rates that lead levels

don't become larger.

Samples taken in June 2017 were good but the next round of tests in September of that same year failed to meet DPH standards, Van Tassel said. The theory is that lack of use over the summer left stagnant water in the pipes and caused the lead to leach into the liquid, he said. The hope is that making sure water was running through the pipes as opposed to sitting there during the summer months would prevent that from happening again this year.

If the next samples come back clear, DPH could release the board from the agreement, Van Tassel said.

That does not mean the board will stop doing the testing.

The plan is to continue doing it and in the meantime to keep the school on bottled water, a measure the district has taken since the lead was first detected and one that, according to Van Tassel, was not required by the DPH.

The DPH did not tell the district to switch to bottled water, he said.

"The actual [lead] levels weren't that high,"

he said. "The actual levels did not require us to go to bottled drinking water."

The district took the precaution because the tests were positive and it was unclear if the levels were going to increase.

Even if the latest samples come out clean, the district intends to take an extra precaution and wait for the January test before going back to drinking the water, Van Tassel said. Until then, the school will continue to employ water coolers.

"We could discontinue [the bottled water] but we're going to keep the bubblers," he said.

Van Tassel has also noted that the lead is not coming from the water source but from lead solder used in older piping, which is evidenced by lead levels in different areas of the school, the superintendent said.

"It's very noticeable," he has said. "When we do the lead testing we test different points – at the oldest points it's higher."

The problem is not unique to Hebron, Van Tassel added. The lead solder was used in pipes in a lot of older schools in past.

# New-Look 57 Fest Returns Tomorrow in Colchester

by Allison Lazur

The town's 14th annual autumnal festival, Celebrate Colchester-57 Fest is tomorrow and in addition to a new name, the celebration will also see some new aspects.

Approximately 4,000 people are expected to gather at the recreation complex from 1-8:30 p.m. on Old Hebron Road to celebrate the town being named the 57th best place to live in the country by *CNN/Money magazine* in 2005.

Parks and Recreation Director Tiffany Quinn said she's looking forward to "watching the community have fun and meeting new people in the community," as this is her first year as the parks and recreation director.

This year the name of the festival was changed from "57 Fest" to "Celebrate Colchester-57 Fest" after the Parks and Recreation Commission asked residents to submit their suggestions in May for a new name.

Winners Peggy Filoramo, Izaashun Larraneta, Pamela Candler and Matt Payne all submitted the same suggestion and will each

receive a VIP parking space and prime seating for the fireworks that night, she explained.

The goal is to "bring the community together to share a day of fun for all ages," Quinn said.

A Battle of the Bands competition is a new feature to this year's festival as well as the overall setup of the event, she explained.

Over 30 vendor booths and activities will give attendees the opportunity to interact with organizations such as the Colchester Fire Department and its touch-a-truck demonstration or the Bacon Academy Robotics.

Attendees can partake in the toy drive, bean bag toss, a giant Jenga game, or get their face painted, while also having the option to step into an inflatable sumo suit or bounce house.

After working up an appetite, festival-goers can enjoy burgers, fries and falafel from the Munchies food truck, ice cream from the Classic Scoop or swing by Pierogis on Wheels.

The \$10,650 festival is funded by donations

from local businesses and individuals and while the parks and recreation commission did meet its goal this year, there was concern the fireworks might have to be cut after funding fell short.

Quinn noted raising funds and getting volunteers was the biggest challenge during the planning process.

However, just last week several businesses including Dime Bank, Copies Plus...more and Troiano – to name a few – stepped up to make the fireworks happen.

The presenting sponsor this year is Alpha Q Inc., an aerospace manufacturing company.

Those interested can kick off the festival bright and early with a free fun run at the Bacon Academy track at 9 a.m., with registration from 8-8:30 a.m.

Later in the day, the Music Bureau from Salem will host the Battle of the Bands competition from 2-5 p.m. for musicians under the age of 19. Further details and information on how

to enroll can be found at [57festboth.com](http://57festboth.com)

That night, from 6-8 p.m., the music continues with a family concert featuring Slackers Union – a rock and cover party band.

The event concludes with a fireworks spectacle at 8 p.m.

Quinn said her goal for next year is "to fund the event in a way that engages the community as well as the businesses."

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The event is scheduled to take place tomorrow, Sept. 22, from 1-8:30 p.m., at the recreation complex located at 185 Old Hebron Rd., with a rain date of Sunday.

Parking is available for \$5 in the upper lots at the recreation complex. The lower lot by the football field is not available for public parking. A free shuttle bus will run from Bacon Academy to the complex from 1-9 p.m.

For more information, visit [celebrate-colchester.com](http://celebrate-colchester.com).

# New School Board Member Appointed at RHAM

by Sloan Brewster

The Marlborough vacancy on the RHAM Board of Education has been filled – and Republican Scott Fleeher is the new man in the seat.

Fleeher's first official meeting was Monday, though he attended a meeting of the board's facilities subcommittee earlier in the month as a resident "to just kind of get a feel," he said in a phone call Monday. He's now a member of that subcommittee.

On Sept. 4, the Marlborough Board of Selectmen appointed Fleeher to the seat left empty in July when Republican Carole Shea resigned in anticipation of a move out of state. His term runs through November 2019.

Fleeher was one of two Marlborough residents vying for the seat. Jannat Gill also expressed interest and attended a selectmen's meeting in August to put her name in the ring.

"We actually were very fortunate to have two very well-qualified and well-meaning individuals to step forward," Marlborough First Selectwoman Amy Traversa said.

The board was set to appoint Gill, who came forward first, when Fleeher's name was mentioned as someone also interested in the seat, Traversa said. The board tabled its decision to give Fleeher a chance to attend a meeting and explain why he was interested.

A sticking point in making the selection for some selectmen was whether the school board appointee should be a Republican, said Dick Shea, selectman.

"There was an undercurrent," he said of discussions by selectmen. "A tug of war."

Carole Shea, who is also Dick Shea's wife, is a Republican, Gill is a Democrat and Fleeher is a Republican.

In a story last month about Carole Shea's departure from the board, Sue Rapelye, another RHAM member from Marlborough, and Ken Hjulstrom, Marlborough Republican Town Committee chairman, said selectmen were required to appoint a Republican replacement.

Traversa and Dick Shea clarified that that is not the case. While there is a requirement in the town charter to fill a vacated seat of a board or commission with a member of the same party as the person who left, appointment to the regional board of education follows the state general statutes that don't require that, they said.

"It's the one board we don't have to worry about parties," Traversa said. "We could fill it with the person we thought was most qualified."

In the end, Shea said his support for Fleeher stemmed from his vast experience.

"If he was a Democrat or a member of the Green Party or a Libertarian or whatever, it wouldn't have mattered," he said.

According to his resume, Fleeher has a master's degree in international relations from Boston University and served as military attaché for the U.S. Embassy in Athens, Greece, was team lead for a special operations command in Afghanistan, which he led on more than 100 combat missions, was director of the Balkans

Desk of the Defense Intelligence Agency, and served in the U.S. Army as director of a helicopter company.

He was awarded the bronze star for his service in Qandahar and Afghanistan between 2007 and 2008.

Fleeher's 25-year military career was followed by corporate leadership positions, including his current role as director of customer experience for Comcast.

He was also previously on the Marlborough Board of Finance.

"His qualifications were really quite extraordinary," Shea said. "If you were looking for Central Casting to provide you with a hero for a movie you'd pick Scott."

Evelyn Godbout, Marlborough selectman, said she had experience with Fleeher as they served on the finance board when she was chairman.

"The town of Marlborough would be very fortunate to have Scott serve on the [RHAM] Board of Education with his background and experience," she said.

Godbout said her one concern was about Fleeher's ability to commit the time based on his "work and other things." Once he assured selectmen he could fit it in, she was good with the appointment.

Fleeher's interest in joining the board is a product of a desire to give back and has "zero percent" to do with politics.

"It's pretty simple. I've got two kids that are

products [of RHAM] one just recently graduated and one still in the system and my kids have received an absolutely great education from RHAM the high school and the middle school," he said. "It's about serving the kids. ... I'm not into politics."

Fleeher said through his experience in the military, corporate and as a diplomat overseas combined "with me being a current customer of RHAM" he wants to help the board and be a member of the team.

"Whether I leave six months from now or in 10 years, I just want to leave the board in better condition than when I got there," he said.

According to Fleeher, every effective organization or board has key components, including teamwork, collaboration and compromise.

"The board is called the Board of Education, so providing education has to be at the center of all the decisions that we make," he said. "The children should be at the center of every decision that the board makes. The other side of that equation is the taxpayers."

There needs to be balance between bringing children high-quality education and watching out for the taxpayers, he explained. He added that there should also be transparency between the administration and board, as well as clear goals and metrics to show they are being met.

"Accountability is a very important thing to me," he said. "I'm going to be expecting and looking for clearly-defined goals."



# Lack of East Hampton Budget Taking Toll on Lake

by Elizabeth Regan

The future of Lake Pocotopaug remains unclear amid high levels of blue-green algae and an unsettled budget situation.

Conservation-Lake Commission member Joe Carbonell said the failure to address simple fixes – such as routine cleaning of the catch basins around the lake – shows neglect on the town’s part.

Carbonell sent a pointed email to public works director Dean Michelson describing the catch basins as the “last defense” before stormwater runoff ends up in the lake. He said the basins should be cleaned every spring and fall as they were during the tenure of former public works director Phil Sissick, who left in 2016.

Catch basins trap sediment and debris to reduce the pollution discharged into the lake.

“If this is too much to handle, please advise,” Carbonell wrote to Michelson.

Catch basin maintenance – and, in some cases, repair – is a key component of the Lake Pocotopaug Nine Elements Watershed Based Plan published in 2016. Commonly referred to as the nine-point plan, the document recommends an array of improvements to address the notoriously impaired lake. The total project could cost up to \$1.4 million, according to the report.

The report’s author, limnologist and certified lake Manager George Knoecklein, has been monitoring the lake for the past five years. He has also examined voluminous data compiled over three decades by other scientists and engineers.

The potentially-toxic blue-green algae

blooms have led to weeks-long beach closures every summer since 2014, the year after the state Department of Public Health established guidelines to protect residents from possible health risks. But the problem has been around for roughly three decades, according to the nine-point plan.

Town Manager Michael Maniscalco this week said his hands are tied when it comes to catch basin cleaning as long as there is no voter-approved 2018-19 general government budget. With the failure of the budget at its third referendum Wednesday, town operations continue to be funded according to temporary monthly budgets set by the Town Council.

“That makes it hard when you have an annual, one-time expenditure for catch basins,” Maniscalco said. “Because [public works] is only getting a twelfth of that every month.”

The town typically hires a contractor to clean the basins in the spring, according to Maniscalco. He said they were last addressed in 2017.

The budget proposal shot down Wednesday included \$9,800 for semi-annual catch basin cleanings, according to the public works department.

Maniscalco said there is no capital funding for infrastructure improvements available until the town budget – which includes general government operations, the capital improvement plan and debt – is approved at referendum.

“It’s unfortunate we’re stuck balancing a number of competing responsibilities and requirements,” Maniscalco said. “Because of the budget constraints we’re under right now, the

catch basin cleaning is not rising to the top as something that’s of an immediate need. It would be great to be able to do it. We just don’t have the funds.”

Residents around the lake have long complained ignoring water quality issues will have a disastrous effect on property values surrounding the lake – and tax revenue will decrease along with the deteriorating water quality. The claim is bolstered by a 20-year-old University of Connecticut study that found lakefront property values drop roughly 36-43 percent when it becomes unsafe to swim or eat fish caught in the water.

The town last year received a \$236,700 grant from the state Department of Energy and Environmental Protection in 2017 to address stormwater runoff concerns in the lake watershed. But Parks and Recreation Director Jeremy Hall, who is coordinating the project for the town, said the funding will not come through until details about the scope and cost of the work are ironed out.

He said the town’s contracted engineering firm, Anchor Engineering Services, Inc. has been evaluating areas around the lake that produce the most stormwater runoff to see where a catch basin or subsurface infiltration trench can be installed.

The engineers found that soils on Clark Hill Road, Mott Hill Road and Ola Avenue aren’t able to absorb the amount of water that would be directed there with the installation of a catch basin, according to Hall.

An email from engineer Kevin Grindle to Hall said “the most feasible option” on Clark

Hill Road would be to install subsurface infiltration instead of a catch basin. But the system “would be costly to construct and would require continued maintenance to achieve optimal sediment removal and service life,” according to Grindle.

Subsurface infiltration methods are typically a series of perforated pipes or chambers installed underground and used as alternatives to open trenches or basins for space-limited sites such as those within the Lake Pocotopaug watershed, according to Grindle. They are designed to capture, temporarily store, and infiltrate stormwater over several days.

Hall said he will be meeting with environmental engineer Steve Trinkaus, whom he described as the go-to guy for low-impact, sustainable development in the state, to get additional perspective.

Carbonell praised the decision. “I’m glad the town is realizing some people don’t have the expertise to mitigate the water, and Steve does,” he said.

Hall stood by the original decision to use the town engineering firm, describing the engineers as “more than capable” of doing the work. But he added that “there are low-impact development engineers out there” who can bring new ideas and insight to the project.

Maniscalco said he agrees Hall should take a look at what Trinkaus can offer and determine if “it’s any different or more cost effective” than Anchor Engineering.

“So we’re exploring that option,” Maniscalco said. “But does that mean that’s the way it’s going to go? Not exactly.”

# Portland Board Eyes Adding School Resource Officer

by Elizabeth Regan

The Board of Education has begun exploring the possibility of hiring a School Resource Officer to replace outgoing security guard Tim Casey.

Casey is set to retire at the end of the school year. He has worked in the high school complex for three years, according to Superintendent of Schools Philip O’Reilly.

O’Reilly said the impending retirement, combined with student advocacy, spurred the conversation about bringing an armed officer into the secondary school complex.

O’Reilly pointed to a meeting last spring during which he, Portland High School Principal Kathryn Lawson and Portland Police Officer Paul Liseo met with a concerned group of high school students following the Feb. 14 attack on the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Fla., which killed 14 students and three teachers.

“One of the items that continually came up was their interest in having a school resource officer,” O’Reilly said.

A school resource officer is defined in state statute as a sworn police officer of a local law enforcement agency.

Senior Mark Matera and Junior Olivia Runte, who serve as Board of Education student representatives, said they fully support the addition of an armed officer.

Matera said the students’ commitment to school safety was evident in the Rally of Remembrance held one month after the Parkland shooting.

He described the rally as a way to show sympathy for the victims and to illustrate Portland’s commitment to creating a safer school environment – without taking a political stance.

“This is hopefully one of the things that will arise out of that, and out of the student body’s activism,” Matera said.

Runte said she feels safe at school, but added the fear of a school shooting is always in the back of her mind.

“Especially with how frequent school shootings and things of that manner are becoming, I think just to have an officer around the school would make us feel a lot safer than we already do,” she said.

In 1985, an eighth grade student opened fire at Portland Junior High School on Main Street, killing a custodian. According to the recently-published book, *Mass Shootings in America: Understanding the Debates, Causes, and Responses*, 13-year-old Floyd Warmley was convicted of murder and kidnapping and sentenced to four years in a juvenile correctional facility. He was released for good behavior after three years.

State statute – then and now – prohibits chil-

dren under the age of 14 from being tried as adults and specifies they cannot be incarcerated for longer than four years.

An April article in the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education *Journal* reported recent, high-profile school shootings have led many districts in the state to think about placing a sworn police officer in their schools.

O’Reilly earlier this month began providing school board members with information on the topic so members are well prepared for upcoming budget discussions, which will begin in January.

He said this week that discussion with the Board of Selectmen and police department will begin “shortly.”

First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield could not be reached for comment by press time.

A report by the research arm of the state General Assembly, published in March, found that 70 of the 113 public school districts surveyed utilize school resource officers “in some manner.”

In some cases, the school resource officer is shared by the school district and the local police department. In other cases, the officer is assigned exclusively to the school district. The cost can be borne by the general government budget, the local school system budget or, in regional districts, by the regional school bud-

get.

O’Reilly said the data indicates districts are “all over the place” when it comes to how the role of the school resource officer is structured and funded.

The school board will explore all the options before coming up with a proposal for replacing the security guard position as part of the 2019-20 spending plan, according to O’Reilly.

Other *Rivereast* schools with a school resource officer include the RHAM school district and Colchester schools.

The regional school district encompassing Hebron, Andover and Marlborough utilizes a Hebron police officer who works in the middle and high school for 10 months of the year. The district last year reimbursed the town for salary, benefits and a vehicle at a cost of \$84,679, according to Hebron finance director Elaine Griffin.

Griffin said the officer, Ricardo Martinez, is able to perform part-time patrol officer duties in Hebron during the summer months.

Hebron Town Manager Andrew Tierney said he’s a proponent of having a school resource officer despite the cost implications for taxpayers in the schools’ three sending towns.

“They’re innocent kids. I think with what’s going on in the world today, we have to protect them,” he said.

# Officials Debate How to Pay for Tree Removal in Marlborough

by Allison Lazur

Dead white oak trees ravaged by gypsy moths have been tagged for removal for reasons of public safety. While officials agree the removal is critical, necessary and time-sensitive, the matter of just how exactly to pay for it has spurred debate surrounding interpretation of the town's charter.

In the budget for the current fiscal year – which started in July – \$15,000 was allotted for tree removal. However, as of Aug. 21 the town had already spent \$21,000 on removal, with another \$10,500 in encumbrances – or money set aside to pay expected invoices. This means that, less than two months into the fiscal year, the town is already more than \$16,000 over what it had budgeted.

With many trees still needed to be cut, Public Works Director John Jones said his best estimate is that the total cost of the tree removal would be “well” over \$100,000. Jones and First Selectwoman Amy Traversa said the extent of the tree damage caused by the gypsy moths had caught the town by surprise.

Jones said on average approximately \$7,500 a week is spent on tree removal, with 2.5 to 3 trees felled a day.

“We finished [removing trees from] Ogden Lord Road and South Main Street, but we still have Portland, Chapman and South roads,” he said, adding, “We dropped over 100 trees on Ogden Lord alone.”

While the costs continue to climb, the boards of selectmen and finance are left to decide how exactly to pay for the overages.

At a Sept. 12 finance board meeting, chairman Doug Knowlton said upon reviewing Board of Selectmen meeting minutes from Aug. 21, he learned discussion of exceeding the tree removal budget was brought up – as well as how to handle obtaining additional funds.

The Aug. 21 minutes disclose the selectmen felt the additional cost for tree removal will not be possible to accurately determine, nor where the money will come from, until after the winter and all of its related snow-removal expenses. The minutes further state “there may need to be an appropriation of funds from the Board of Finance.”

Knowlton explained at the Sept. 12 meeting that while no formal request had been made to the finance board by the selectmen, he thought it was an important “informational item” to discuss with the rest of the finance board.

Board of Finance Vice Chairwoman Susan Leser inquired about the possibility of obtaining federal money to resolve the issue. But Traversa – who was also in attendance of the meeting – said “There is no federal money for this.”

Traversa additionally confirmed the tree removal budget had been exceeded and the total amount of money it will cost to finish the undertaking is unknown.

“We will try to keep [the finance board] informed as best we can,” she said. She said the current estimate of total tree removal is \$100,000, “but who knows, it could be higher than that. It depends on what happens with storms.”

The finance board acknowledged that the line item for tree removal is over budget and will continue to grow, but took no action on the matter.

However, at Tuesday's Board of Selectmen meeting, Selectman Dick Shea questioned whether the decision by the selectmen to spend the money now and figure out how to make up the difference in the spring, violated the town's charter, especially since the cost is expected to exceed the budgeted amount “by three, four, five [times] or more.”

He noted the accounting and expenditures section of the town's charter bringing the rest of the selectmen's attention to section 6.11.2 which states “No officer or agency of the Town shall expend or enter into any contract which would obligate the Town to expend in excess of an approved appropriation. Any officer who, without authority from this Charter or the CGS [Connecticut General Statutes] expends or causes to be expended any money of the Town, except in payment of final judgments rendered against the Town shall be liable in a civil action in the name of the Town, as provided in the CGS.”

Other sections of the charter address the

matter of special appropriations.

Section 6.6.3 states “all requests for special appropriations over \$10,000 shall require a public hearing called by the Board of Finance.”

The charter also states that special appropriations are defined as “items not listed in the approved town budget.”

Shea encouraged the selectmen to take this approach, as he was concerned spending in excess would “set a precedent that in the future might allow any Board of Selectmen to do that with almost any budget account.”

“I think there's a mechanism in the town charter that allows us to approach the Board of Finance and allows them to discuss and vote and have a public hearing and then a simple town meeting that would qualify the funds properly with voter input,” he said.

Selectwoman Evelyn Godbout said although she agreed with some of Shea's statements, the tree removal involves matters of public safety, and thus makes it “somewhat of a different nature.”

“If we didn't take action on something that needed to be done and somebody got hurt, certainly I feel like we would be liable because we didn't do something to ensure public safety that we should do,” Godbout said.

Section 6.9 of the town charter states that emergency appropriations can be made by a selectmen vote if the lives, health or property of the citizens are threatened, but cannot exceed \$10,000.

Traversa noted, “We don't have an amount to request at this time.”

“Everyone is in agreement that at the end of the winter we'll see where we stand financially,” Traversa added, “and if we need to request it, we will request it.”

Shea pushed for acknowledgement of the charter's 6.11.2 section by asking “What's your interpretation of 6.11.2 then?”

Traversa responded, “I don't know that I've bothered to interpret it.” She explained that her interpretation might be different from Shea's, but both could be considered valid.

Traversa told the *Rivereast* Wednesday that

her interpretation of the charter indicates that line items can be exceeded, but not the overall town budget and that this specific instance didn't qualify as a special appropriation.

“We are not knowingly going over budget,” she said. “We are making reasonable and customary adjustments like we do throughout the year.”

Traversa said there is \$100,000 in contingency funds built into the town budget which could possibly be utilized to cover being over the allotted tree removal funds, as well as the possibility of having leftover money from the snow removal fund to put towards the excesses – pending a mild winter.

At the end of the tree discussion at the selectmen's meeting, Shea made a motion to “forward to the Board of Finance – for their approval – an appropriation in the amount of \$100,000 to allow us to continue the removal of dangerous, dead or dying trees along Marlborough's rights of way.”

The motion failed 2-1.

Knowlton said Wednesday there are several “gray areas in the charter,” and said he felt the matter of obtaining additional funds should go to a public hearing and then a town meeting.

“I can see an argument that says we appropriated enough money in the budget [for tree removal] and we can handle [the excess] with transfers, but there's a limit of \$10,000 with transfers,” Knowlton said. “If you go out to a town meeting and the town approves it, all the gray areas are removed.”

Knowlton said going to a town meeting saves “time and energy” and allows the selectmen and finance boards to focus on other pertinent aspects of the town.

“Let's get on with taking care of the needs of the town,” he said.

Traversa and Knowlton both said the tree removal will likely happen beyond this year's budget.

Knowlton said further discussion of the topic will be on the agenda at the next Board of Finance meeting scheduled for Wednesday, Oct. 10, at 7 p.m. at Town [Hall](#).

## Raise a Glass and Awareness for HD in Marlborough

by Allison Lazur

The Connecticut affiliate of the Huntington's Disease Society of America will hold its first music, food and wine fundraiser – Music on the Vine – on Sept. 29 from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. to raise money for research, education and advocacy for Huntington's Disease.

The festival will take place at the Chateau le Gari winery, where attendees will be able to enjoy local musical acts, raffles, family and children's activities, food and wine while contributing to a non-profit organization dedicated to bringing awareness and funds to the disease.

Susan McGann, president of the national organization's Connecticut affiliate group, said “100 percent of donations go to improve the lives of people affected by Huntington's Disease and their families.”

McGann, of Colchester, started volunteering with the organization in 2006. She said a history of Huntington's Disease in her husband's family, combined with her experience working with nonprofit organizations, prompted her to get involved.

The Huntington's Disease Society of America website states the non-curable and

fatal genetic disorder causes the “progressive breakdown of nerve cells in the brain [and] deteriorates a person's physical and mental abilities during their prime working years.” The site said the condition is known as “the quintessential family disease” because every child of a parent with the disease has a 50/50 chance of carrying the faulty gene.

McGann said even though her husband's mother was diagnosed with the disease, they didn't really think about the possibility that her husband would have it, too.

“It was just a thought in the background,” she added.

However, McGann's husband tested positive for the disease in 2009 at the age of 57. He began showing “involuntary movements (chorea) and some cognitive issues with multitasking and focusing around age 60,” she explained.

Bringing awareness to the disease is a challenge, McGann said.

“Families don't like to talk about it,” she said, adding that most people aren't even aware of the disease.

Unlike other, more well-known diseases, there's no famous person diagnosed with the disease to head the initiative for awareness, according to McGann.

“We need a famous person to take up the lead and say ‘let's do this,’” she said.

According to the website, about 10 percent of Huntington Disease cases affect children and juveniles.

There are lot of negative aspects, but “there's always hope,” she said.

The 12-year-old volunteer-run affiliate group holds an annual education day at Backus Hospital where professionals, caregivers and families can learn more about the disease, as well as a walk in May to raise further awareness. The organization also has support groups in Norwich, North Haven and Fairfield.

The local affiliate, which operates with no bank account, relies on event items to be donated, McGann explained.

“It's a national organization that really depends on volunteers to do all the work,” she said.

Chateau Le Gari donated the use of the barn space behind the winery and has also agreed to contribute a portion of the profits from wine sold during the event to the organization, McGann said.

Performance Physical Therapy and Sports Medicine of Hebron and Colchester donated the audio system, while all four musical acts have donated their time.

Fox 61 News anchor Tim Lammers will be serving as emcee for the day, she said.

Captain Scott's Food Truck will be providing savory seafood for purchase while Four Flours Baking Company's Chillwich Truck will provide ice cream sweets.

“We are keeping ticket prices lower because people will have to purchase their food and wine separately,” McGann said.

All ticket purchases are tax deductible and can be purchased at [hdsa.donordrive.com/event/CTTF18](https://hdsa.donordrive.com/event/CTTF18) or at Chateau le Gari. Those who have questions or would like to volunteer for this event can contact [cthdsa@gmail.com](mailto:cthdsa@gmail.com) for more information.



# Man Charged in Alleged Andover Lake Assault

by Sloan Brewster

A Hebron man was arrested last week for allegedly punching a man in the jaw and breaking it in two places.

According to Connecticut State Police, Timothy Butterfield, 25, of Hebron, was arrested on September 12 and charged with second degree breach of peace and second degree assault.

The arrest stems from an incident that allegedly occurred on June 3 at Andover Lake in Andover.

The arrest warrant affidavit said state police were initially notified by a woman who said she was the mother of the victim of an assault. Her son, Seth McCann, the woman allegedly told police, was in surgery for injuries to his jaw as a result of the incident.

Because McCann could not speak at the time, Trooper Jared Avery of the Colchester barracks scheduled an interview to meet with him on June 14, according to the document.

In a sworn written statement, McCann told police he and his cousin, Nathan McCann, had been swimming and fishing in the lake with Butterfield when he and Butterfield began to discuss jobs.

McCann said the conversation escalated to an argument after he insulted his friend, the

affidavit said.

"I told him he doesn't have a job or pay taxes and that he was a lowlife because he sells drugs," McCann said, according to the document.

The argument continued with Butterfield moving closer and closer to McCann until he "sucker punched me twice," McCann recounted in this written statement. He went on to say he was not sure if he lost consciousness, but he remembered falling to the ground and being shaken awake by his cousin.

McCann told police his cousin told him that he saw Butterfield hit him and kick him, the document said.

"He told me Tim was 'curbstomping' me in the head when I was on the ground and that he jumped in to break it up and that's when Tim stopped kicking me," McCann said in the affidavit. "I was in a lot of pain and could feel my jaw was hanging out and I couldn't close it all the way."

McCann told police his cousin brought him to Manchester Memorial Hospital, where hospital staff performed CAT scans and found two breaks in his jaw but did not mention head or neck injuries.

McCann said he had not spoken to or texted with Butterfield since the incident but showed troopers some texts he had received in which Butterfield had allegedly offered to help pay McCann's medical bills as soon as he had "extra cash," according to the document.

"I hope your (sic) okay bro," Butterfield allegedly wrote in the text, with a sad faced emoji. "I've been super bummed out for the past week."

In the alleged texts recounted in the affidavit, Butterfield admitted to swinging his leg to kick McCann but said he missed, "barely" skimming the top of his head.

Avery's interview with Butterfield on August 1 resulted in a different version of events.

Butterfield, according to the affidavit, said he knew what incident they were referring to but that he didn't think it was an issue.

The affidavit said Butterfield was reluctant to give a written statement but told police verbally about the morning of June 3. Butterfield said he had been hanging out with the two McCanns and that Seth McCann wanted to drink so they had bought alcohol and went to the lake, the document stated.

Butterfield told police Seth McCann became heavily intoxicated, the affidavit said. They had taken a boat to an island on the lake and were hanging out there when Seth McCann became belligerent, shouting at Butterfield and saying he was a "piece of sh-t."

McCann got louder and moved towards Butterfield "until they were nearly face to face," Butterfield said in the affidavit. He went on to state he was trying to get away from McCann, who kept moving toward him and ultimately punched him.

Butterfield told police he ducked and the punch grazed his forehead and that he then struck back, clipping his assailant in the jaw. He said McCann fell and he "instinctively" went to kick him but missed and that Nathan McCann then grabbed him.

Butterfield refused to provide a written statement, according to the document.

Police said Nathan McCann agreed in a phone call to make a written statement but had not done so by the time Avery submitted the arrest warrant application.

Butterfield is scheduled to appear at Rockville Superior Court on September 27.

## East Hampton Police News

9/6: A 17-year-old juvenile of East Hampton was issued a summons for speeding, East Hampton Police said.

9/8: Blair Ocelik, 36, of 85 N. Main St., was taken into custody on a warrant and charged with sixth-degree larceny, police said.

9/8: Marcy White, 49, of 225 W High St., East Hampton was issued a summons for operating a motor vehicle with a suspended license, operating an unregistered motor vehicle and operating a motor vehicle without insurance, police said.

Also, from Sept. 3-9, officers responded to 18 medical calls, five motor vehicle crashes and five alarms, and made 20 traffic stops.

## Colchester Police News

9/12: Colchester Police said Margarita C. Robida, 29, of 12 Balaban Rd., Apt. 608, was arrested and charged with drug paraphernalia and possession of less than half an ounce of cannabis.

## Portland Police News

9/10: Joshua Botelho, 30, of 208 Main St., Apt. 69, was charged with second-degree breach of peace and second-degree threatening, Portland Police said.

9/10: Adam Doran, 21, of 59 Freestone Ave., was charged with operating too fast for conditions and reckless driving, police said.

9/11: Dina Fullerton, 52, of 5 Maple Rd., Middletown, was charged with traveling too fast for conditions, operating an unregistered motor vehicle, operating a motor vehicle without insurance and misuse of license plate, police said.

9/13: A 17-year-old male was arrested and charged with second-degree threatening, police said.

## Hebron Police News

9/10: State Police said Robert K. Bishop, 31, of 20 Mile Level Rd., Apt. 2620, Land O' Lakes, Fla., was arrested and charged with DUI, failure to drive right and operating a motor vehicle without a license.

## Two-Vehicle Crash on Route 6 in Andover

State Police said a Honda Civic was rear-ended on Route 6 last week, leaving the driver with possible injuries.

At approximately 6:16 a.m. on Sept. 10, a Honda Civic, driven by Lucas A. Mcentire, 27, of 74 Windrush Ln., was traveling east on Route 6 in the area of West Lake Road. The Honda stopped for traffic traveling in the opposite lane to wait for an opportunity to turn into the XtraMart parking lot.

However, a Sanfrey Freight Services truck, driven by John M. Logston Jr., 54, of 357 War-

ren Ave., Niles, Ohio, traveling behind the Civic, did not stop and rear-ended the Honda Civic, police said.

The Civic subsequently came to an uncontrolled final rest off the left side of Route 6 in a grassy area and the truck came to a controlled final rest just east of the collision at Lake Road on the right shoulder, police said.

Mcentire was transported to Windham Hospital by Andover Ambulance Service with possible injuries, police said.

## One Injured After Marlborough Crash

State Police said a collision with a cable barrier and bridge support left one man with minor injuries.

At approximately 11:40 p.m. on Sept. 10, an Acura Integra, driven by Eric S. Schiffer, 56, of 277 Tremont St., New Britain was traveling east on Route 2 near the exit 13 onramp when the vehicle traveled off the road and left shoulder, subsequently striking a cable barrier and traveling through it, police said.

The vehicle then spun 180 degrees as it con-

tinued off the road and struck a bridge support for the Johnson Road overpass with its rear bumper, police said.

Schiffer was transported to Middlesex Hospital by the Marlborough Fire Department with minor injuries and was issued a misdemeanor summons for operating a vehicle under suspension, operating a motor vehicle without minimum insurance, operating an unregistered motor vehicle and failure to drive in the proper lane, police said.

# Obituaries

## Portland

### Mary E. Fiddler

With a heavy heart, we announce the passing of Mary E. (McMurrer) Fiddler, 89, on Friday, Sept. 14. She was born in Swansea, Mass., daughter of the late Mary E. (Clark) McMurrer and John J. McMurrer. She was raised in Fall River, Mass., and graduated from Sacred Heart Academy in 1947. Mary greatly enjoyed attending many Academy reunions.

She was the beloved wife of the late Joseph Norman Fiddler for 60 years, whom she met while roller skating at Lincoln Park in Massachusetts. She worked for the New England Telephone Company until the family moved to Portland in 1966. Mary worked as a reading aide at St. Mary School in Portland and then as a reading paraprofessional at Bielefield School in Middletown for more than 20 years, where she worked until her retirement in 1993.

Mary was an active member of St Mary parish in Portland, where she served on the Ladies Guild, the Century Club, and other various committees. She was an exceptional knitter, avid reader, cribbage player and bowler. Her greatest joy was spending time with her family and watching the games, recitals and concerts of her grandchildren.

She was a wonderful mom to Michael and Karen (Len) Fiddler of Middlefield, Edward and Marie (Diaz) Fiddler of Scituate, Mass., and Lori and Simon St. Amand of Rockfall; a loving grandmother to Jennifer and Michael Fiddler Jr., Andrew and Matthew Fiddler, and Eric and Meghan St. Amand; a devoted sister of Michael McMurrer of Swansea, Mass., and a loving aunt to numerous nieces, nephews, grandnieces and grandnephews.

Besides her parents and husband, Mary was predeceased by her brother, John McMurrer, and sisters, Loretta Furze and Madeline Gagnon.

The family would like to thank the wonderful Middlebrook staff at Middlesex Health Care Center, and the Middlesex Hospital Hospice Care team for your unending compassion and kindness.

The funeral was held Tuesday, Sept. 18, from the Portland Memorial Funeral Home, 231 Main St., Portland, followed by a Mass of Christian Burial in St. Mary's Church, Portland Burial was in the State Veterans Cemetery, Middletown.

## East Hampton

### Curtis G. Strong Sr.

Curtis G. Strong Sr., 77, of South Glastonbury, formerly of East Hampton, husband of Susan C. (Applegate) Strong, died Friday, Sept. 14, at Hartford Hospital. Born March 30, 1941, in Hartford, he was the son of the late Milton and Ruth (Goldstone) Strong Jr.



Curtis had been vice president of operations

at American Distilling in East Hampton. He had been a member of the Hartford Engineering Club, the former East Hampton Kiwanis Club, The North-South Skirmish Assoc., Northeast Steamboat Society, Strong Families of America, CT Woodturners, life member of the NRA and recently the Elks Club of Glastonbury. He was a past member of the East Hampton Bible Church.

Besides his wife, he is survived by his three sons, Curtis Strong Jr. and friend Kathleen Waldie of East Hampton, Donald Strong and wife Julie of Bellow Falls, Vt., Stephen Strong and wife Joslyn of East Hampton; a daughter, Molly Haroskewicz and husband Alan of Watertown; a sister, Ruth Ann Strong of Wethersfield; 10 grandchildren in whom his legacy will live on; and many, many dear friends that he considered family.

He was predeceased by a brother, Douglas Strong.

Curt's vast knowledge and sense of humor will be missed by all. The Strong family would like to thank the hospice team at Hartford hospital for their gentle loving care.

Friends called at Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton, Thursday, Sept. 20. Funeral services will be held today, Sept. 21, at 11 a.m., in Hope Church, 230 East High St., East Hampton. Burial will follow in Lake View Cemetery.

Donations can be made to Hartford Hospital Hospice care, the NRA or The Gideons International.

To leave online condolences, visit [spencerfuneralhomeinc.com](http://spencerfuneralhomeinc.com).

## Colchester

### William McPheters

William McPheters, 84, of Colchester, beloved husband of Sharon (Carlson) McPheters, passed away Sunday, Sept. 16, at Middlesex Health Care. He was born in Middletown, son of Albion and Victoria (Joseph) McPheters.



Bill was a veteran of the Korean War serving with the U.S. Marine Corps. He was a machinist having worked for Jarvis Air Foil, Pratt & Whitney and J.P. Slocum retiring at the age of 81.

Besides his wife Sharon, Bill is survived by his sons, John Dubois of Colchester, Michael Dubois (Charlene Hall) of East Hampton; a daughter, Victoria Pond (Harvey) of Lebanon; a brother, James McPheters of Florida; five grandchildren, Michael Dubois, Haylee Pond, Melinda Dubois, Landon Pond, William Pond; and great-grandson Seamus Pond.

He was predeceased by his brother, Douglas McPheters.

A graveside service with military honors was held at Pine Grove Cemetery.

To share memories or express condolences online, visit [biegafuneralhome.com](http://biegafuneralhome.com).

## East Hampton

### Patricia Tansey Clark

Patricia Tansey Clark, 63, of East Hampton, beloved wife of William Clark, passed away Monday, Sept. 10, at Middlesex Hospital. Born Oct. 15, 1954, in Hartford, she was the daughter of Roger and Gloria (Nelson) Tansey. Patricia was a 1975 graduate of Middlesex Hospital School of Nursing.

Besides her loving husband she is survived by her two sons, Ryan Clark and wife Britney of New Britain, Christopher Clark of Northampton, Mass.; her daughter, Corinne Barney and husband Steven of East Hampton; three sisters, Bonnie Sullivan of Florida, Pamela Tansey of California and Shay Deforge of Ellington; many nieces and nephews and great nieces and nephews.

She was predeceased by her brothers, Brian and Scott Sullivan.

Pat loved to spend time with her family and could often be found in the kitchen baking up a favorite family meal or sharing a treasured family recipe. She enjoyed a long career as a registered nurse and even in retirement carried on her passion for helping others and caring for the sick. She loved to travel and many of her fondest trips were to the beaches of Cape Cod, Rhode Island or the mountains of Maine.

Pat enjoyed genealogy and spent time gathering data to update ancestry websites as well as mapping out her own heritage and Irish roots. Pat also enjoyed the quiet moments at home watching UConn basketball, reading, knitting or visiting with her grandpups.

Pat will be sadly missed by Billy and her family. It is their hope that, you too, have been blessed with a Pat in your life.

A private burial and celebration of life will be scheduled at the family's convenience.

In lieu of flowers memorial donations can be made to the Rheumatoid Arthritis Foundation at 8815 Conroy Windermere Rd., Suite 309, Orlando, FL 32835 or at [arthritis.org/about-arthritis/types/rheumatoid-arthritis](http://arthritis.org/about-arthritis/types/rheumatoid-arthritis).

## Haddam Neck

### Chester Harris

Chester (Chet) Harris, 62, of Haddam Neck, husband of Karen (Hallberg) Harris, left his wheelchair behind and was joyfully received in heaven by his savior Monday, Sept. 17, at Yale New Haven Hospital.

Chet lived a lot of different places and touched many lives in his time on earth. He was passionate about encouraging people to study the word of God and to pursue righteousness.

In addition to his wife of 19 years, Chet is survived by his sister Vivian and her husband Kurt, brother Jim and his wife Diane, and many nieces, nephews, and their children.

Services will be held at Hope Church in East Hampton at 11 a.m. Saturday, Sept. 22, with a reception to follow.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Christian Aid Mission, a ministry that Chet was passionate about. Visit [ChristianAid.org](http://ChristianAid.org) or call 800-977-5650.

## Portland

### Lena Ruitto

Lena Ruitto, 87, a lifelong resident of Portland, died Saturday, Sept. 15. She is survived by her son, Joseph Ruitto Jr. of Portland.

Funeral services and burial will be private. Portland Memorial Funeral Home, 231 Main St., Portland, is in charge of arrangements.

## Colchester

### Michael Peter Gut

Michael Peter Gut, 63, of Colchester, formerly of Marlborough, passed away at home Thursday, Sept. 6. Born in New Britain July 11, 1955, and growing up in Berlin, he was a son of the late Matthew and Evelyn (Koczera) Gut.

Michael was a graduate of the University of Hartford with a master's degree in business administration. He retired several years ago after a 32-year career with The Hartford as a controller for personal lines. Michael was active in the community of Marlborough, serving for a time on the Board of Finance and also as Second Selectman. He was also very actively involved with the Marlborough Youth Athletic League. Michael will be remembered most fondly by his family for his love of fishing, especially times they spent fishing in the Salmon River together.

He is survived by his children and their spouses, Matthew and wife Rebecca Gut of Agawam, Mass.; Melissa and husband James Wilcox of Johns Island, S.C.; two brothers, Robert Gut and his companion, Lynn Boyan of Cromwell, David Gut and his spouse, Roy Saucier of Newington; his former wife, Deborah Ellis of Lebanon; his aunt, Jennie Koczera; several cousins, many extended family and friends.

Funeral services will be held privately, according to his wishes.

Donations in his memory may be made to Double Dog Rescue, P.O. Box 435, Unionville, CT 06085, or to MYAL, P.O. Box 124, Marlborough, CT 06447.

The Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home of Colchester has been entrusted with care of arrangements. For online condolences, visit [auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com](http://auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com).

## Hebron

### Lorraine Auclair Gelinis

Lorraine Auclair Gelinis of Columbia, formerly of Hebron, was taken from the loving arms of her family and delivered into the hands of her heavenly father Tuesday, Sept. 18. Lorraine is now reunited with the love of her life, her late husband of 50 years, Conrad Gelinis.



Lorraine was born and raised in Sacre Coeur de Marie in Quebec, Canada, moving to the United States in 1962. She was a lady of great faith who loved and appreciated simplicity, finding peace in the practicalities of daily life. This did not, however, keep her from making a cleverly sarcastic remark on occasion, revealing her wry sense of humor.

What brought her the most happiness was the loving time she shared with her family. Most recently, her great-grandchildren brought her an authentic sense of joy during the most difficult times of her illness.

Lorraine is survived by her daughter Nicole Bernier and husband Edgar, with whom she made her home in Columbia for several years, and her daughter Louise Sparveri of North Carolina. Also left to mourn her loss are her grandchildren, Cherise (Bernier) Buckley and husband Tom, Karina (Bernier) Babcock and husband Tim, Danielle Sparveri and fiancé Donnie Wand, as well as her beloved great-grandchildren Ava Claire, Thomas Mason, Banks Edgar, Nicholas Joseph and Lydia Lorraine.

Family and friends will come together to celebrate a Mass of Christian Burial this

Saturday, Sept. 22, at 2 p.m. at The Church of the Holy Family, 185 Church St., Hebron. There are no calling hours. Private burial will be held in Canada at the convenience of the family.

In lieu of flowers, contributions in Lorraine's name can be made to The Alzheimer's Association, 200 Executive Blvd, Suite 4B, Southington, CT 06489 or to Church of the Holy Family, 185 Church Street, Hebron, CT 06248.

The D'Esopo Memorial Chapel of East Hartford has been entrusted with the funeral arrangements. For online expressions of sympathy to the family, visit [desopoech.com](http://desopoech.com).