

RIVEREAST

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Thank You, Eric... Colchester Lion and Past District Governor Eric Jacobson (center) received quite a surprise last Friday morning when there was a knock on the door and in walked District Governor Laura Rowe (right) and Past International President Jimmy Ross from West Texas along with a small contingency of Lions that was accompanying them. Ross was in the state for a gala for the Middletown Lions on Friday night and a special statewide Lions banquet on Saturday at Saint Clements Castle. In appreciation of Jacobson's dedication to Lionism, Ross presented him with an International President's Certificate of Appreciation. Jacobson was unable to attend the festivities so Ross wanted to make a special visit to make the presentation.

Doubts Expressed on School Regionalization

by Elizabeth Regan and Allison Lazur

From parents at bus stops to local officials at public meetings, people all over the state are repeating education buzzwords like "consolidation" and "regionalization" now that the controversial terms have made their way into proposed legislation at the state Capitol.

Some lawmakers, like state Sen. Cathy Osten, D-Sprague, are emphasizing the general bill concepts coming out of Hartford are meant to do just that – get people talking.

"All bills are designed to generate conversation on issues," Osten told the *Rivereast* this week.

One of the bills promoting regionalization was proposed by Osten and Senate Majority Leader Bob Duff, D-Norwalk. It would require any school with fewer than 2,000 students to "join a new or an existing regional school district" unless granted an exemption by the State Department of Education.

Another bill proposed by state Senate President Pro-Tempore Martin M. Looney, D-New Haven, would create a commission with the goal of realigning school districts in municipalities with fewer than 40,000 residents "in manner similar to the probate districts."

The preliminary and unpopular proposal using probate districts as an example could mean separate regions encompassing East Hampton, Portland and Marlborough; Hebron and Glastonbury; and a swath of expansive but sparsely-populated towns extending from Colchester to Chaplin.

Looney on Monday told *The Connecticut*

Mirror his bill is not about consolidating schools, but about consolidating administrative functions to reduce overhead and reach "economies of scale."

Osten distanced herself from Looney's version of regionalization when she said her bill "is not the bill being posted all over the place that is talking about aligning schools with probate districts."

But she echoed some of Looney's sentiments when she said her bill is also not about merging actual schools.

Osten said her proposed legislation would "grab the administrative costs" repeated throughout each town so more money can be spent "on programs for children at the local level."

She pointed to high-level administrators as candidates for this regionalized approach. Examples include superintendents as well as directors of curriculum or special education.

Her proposal "does not envision moving children around," she said.

Osten cited increased transportation times as a driving force in her commitment to consolidate administrative functions without sending students to schools in different towns. More time on a bus, with less time for after-school sports and activities, is not helpful to educational systems, according to Osten.

"I'm not interested in that right now," she said.

Osten acknowledged her bill lacks an en-
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Increase Proposed for Marlborough School Budget

by Allison Lazur

The Marlborough superintendent of schools last week proposed a \$7.41 million operating budget for the 2019-20 fiscal year – a spending package that would be 1.55 percent, or \$113,000, higher than the current year, despite eliminating one of the elementary school's teaching positions.

Superintendent David Sklarz on Wednesday also presented a \$123,000 capital improvement budget to the Board of Education. That package, which features such items as replacing a roof and replacing exterior doors, is considered, and voted on, by school board members separately from the operating budget.

"Tonight is the first time you get to look at the budget," Sklarz said last week, as he addressed the school board. "It's difficult because everyone wants to see our budget decrease by 20 percent over a period of time, not realizing we still have all of the same programs and all of the same square footage."

Board of Education Chairman Ruth Kelly said this week she thought the budget was "very fair [and] includes what we need."

"I don't think there is any fancy stuff in [the proposed budget]," she said. "My initial feeling is that it's a good budget and I'm hoping

we won't have to cut capital items like we did last year."

Last budget season the school board begrudgingly cut its entire \$118,000 capital improvement budget to satisfy a request by the Board of Finance to further reduce overall school spending by a total of \$132,000.

Due to declining enrollment, specifically in the sixth grade, the budget includes one less teaching position than the current year. No one is being laid off, however, as the school is simply opting not to replace a teacher that is retiring.

According to Sklarz's presentation, contractual obligations – including salaries, benefits, electricity, sewer, water, student transportation, magnet school tuition, diesel, gasoline, propane and heating oil – account for 91 percent of the total budget.

Salaries and benefits occupy 84 percent of those contractual obligations, or \$6.13 million.

Sklarz said last week when you look at the total budget by categories as it relates directly to services to students "there's not much flexibility."

He said while salaries can be negotiated and positions can be reduced, the items included in

contractual obligations are a budget requirement.

Teachers saw an average general wage increase of 2 percent over the current year and an estimated 10.2 percent increase in health insurance costs.

The proposed budget also includes \$237,940 for purchased professional services such as AHM Youth Services and legal and audit fees, and \$214,689 for supplies and materials which includes textbooks, heating oil and gasoline – up 3.10 percent over current year spending.

The 2019-20 proposed spending plan also consists of \$11,740 for capital outlay, up from \$3,160 in the 2018-19 budget.

In his presentation, Sklarz also noted that the district will continue to rely on alternative funding sources such as various grants, rental fees paid by the Marlborough Elementary Child Care Association (MECCA) and Medicaid and excess cost reimbursements to achieve cost savings.

Sklarz also addressed declining school enrollment. A total of 420 students are projected for the 2019-20 year down from the current year enrollment of 449 students.

While overall enrollment is decreasing,

Sklarz said the projected number of kindergarteners for the 2019-20 year is 54 students, up from current year enrollment of 45 – "that one keep us up at night," he said.

"As of two days ago [enrollment] was 49 students, but we haven't done the January enrollments yet," Sklarz said. "All we need is a handful of students that we weren't projecting and we are into four sections of kindergarten."

The average class size would be 18 students in the 2019-20 year, according to Sklarz's presentation.

Declining enrollment has led to a significant reduction in the number of classroom teaching positions in recent years, with the school going from 31.5 in the 2011-12 school year to 23.8 in the current year. School enrollment during that time has gone from 672 in 2011-12 to 449 in the current year.

Sklarz's capital budget proposal presented Wednesday night included projects that would span over several budget seasons to complete such as paving the school's four parking lots, boiler replacement, roof replacement and replacement of the building's exterior doors – a

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Regionalization cont. from Front Page
 enforcement mechanism to compel municipalities to comply.

“There’s no stick to it,” she said. Reiterating that the proposal is a conversation starter, she urged people to provide written or verbal testimony when the topic of regionalization makes it to a public hearing at the state capitol. She said they can also contact her office.

The state legislature Education Committee met Tuesday to endorse a list of “concepts” they will be raising as bills this session, according to the *The Connecticut Mirror*. Among them was one about the voluntary regionalization of education services.

According to a 2018 report from the CT School Finance Project, which describes itself as nonprofit and nonpartisan, the state is unusual because it does not have a layer of regional government with the authority to provide services and levy taxes. The group said all states except Connecticut and Rhode Island have county or parish systems of government through which services like health care, education and public safety are addressed.

The report said Connecticut abolished its county system of government in 1960, leaving control of public services and the ability to assess taxes in support of them up to each of the state’s 169 municipalities.

Previous Experience

In Marlborough, Board of Finance member Ken Hjulstrom and Board of Finance member Louise Concodello voiced opposition to the regionalization proposals based on Marlborough’s experience back in the mid- to late-1990s.

With 934 students in Marlborough – including not just those in the town’s elementary school but Marlborough students at the RHAM middle and high schools – and a total population of 6,397, Marlborough would qualify for regionalization under both Looney and Osten’s proposal.

Both Hjulstrom and Concodello were members of their respective boards in 1995-98, when Marlborough’s elementary school was part of a regionalized administrative approach with Hebron and Andover.

The central office at the time included a superintendent and two assistant superintendents, as well as a number of directors and assistants shared between all four entities; each had its own board of education.

Concodello said William Davies, who was the superintendent at the time, was in charge of 35 school board members.

“It was difficult to even get heard,” Concodello said of being a part of the COC. “Marlborough and Andover were put to the side.”

While the towns ultimately pulled the preschool through grade six program from regional oversight – known as the Central Office Compact – the middle and high schools remain consolidated in Hebron on the RHAM campus.

According to Hjulstrom, the central office gave more attention to “certain entities” than others.

“All the focus from the central office was on RHAM and Hebron,” he said.

Hjulstrom recounted that Marlborough and Andover decided to withdraw from the compact, subsequently facing legal backlash from the remaining entities that argued the two towns had no right to opt out of the agreement.

After Marlborough withdrew, successfully won the legal battle and was able to establish its own superintendent, Concodello said the district could finally update items that had been neglected such as the policy manual, curriculum and infrastructure.

She also supplied the *Rivereast* with a chart of cost savings achieved by Marlborough in the years immediately following the town’s withdrawal from the COC. She said the documents were compiled by the Marlborough Board of Education.

The cost savings for subsequent years was roughly \$29,000 per year.

Ruth Kelly, the current school board chairman and a teacher at Marlborough Elementary when the school’s administration was regionalized, said the idea to do so again “would be terrible.”

“It didn’t work for us,” she said. “We weren’t getting the support we needed from the central office to do the initiatives for Marlborough.”

Kelly said residents in Marlborough “pay taxes to have a good school system and the money they give should go to their own school system.”

The issue of regionalization was also a topic of conversation at the RHAM Board of Education meeting Monday night. The school board governs the regional middle and high school.

School board member Judy Benson-Clarke asked Superintendent of Schools Patricia Law if the board should look into the concepts being floated at the state Capitol.

“It’s out there,” Benson-Clarke said. “This is happening to some [districts], at least in conversation.”

Law said superintendents in EASTCONN, a partnership of school districts and educators in northeast Connecticut, were developing responses to the proposed legislation. The group will have a document completed in March, according to Law.

“I don’t know if there’s anything that we need to do as a district,” Law said. “We’re being proactive as our group of superintendents.”

Amy D’Amaddio, who was elected board chairman in December, said the program subcommittee will be discussing the matter.

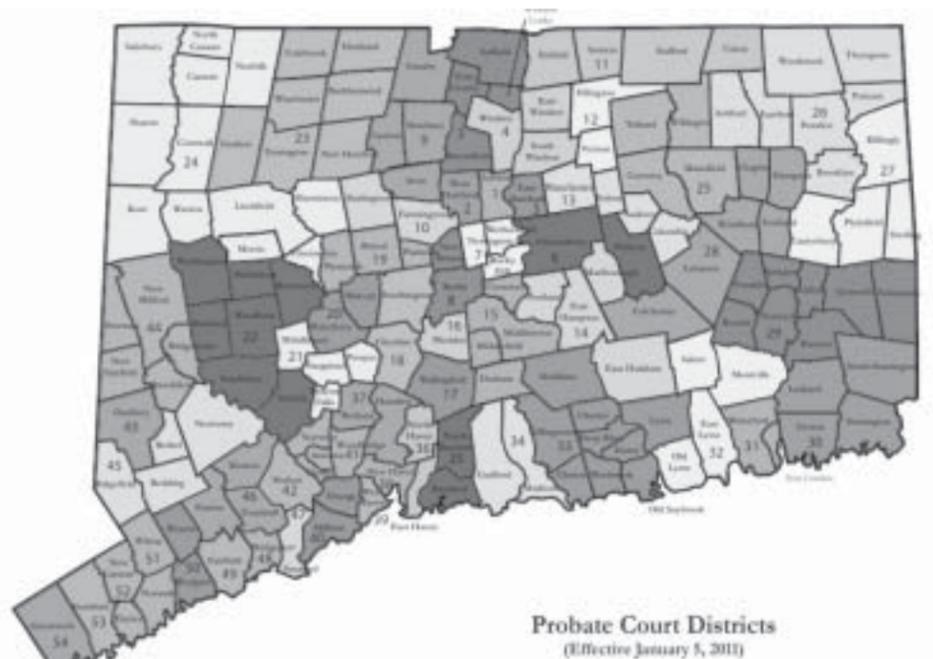
But she added that discussions and decisions like these are made at the town level.

“If the towns want to have discussions about the incentive of regionalization, that’s up to them; it’s not up to this Board of Education,” D’Amaddio said.

Lots of Questions

East Hampton Superintendent of Schools Paul Smith said there’s been talk of regionalization by lawmakers in the past, but it hasn’t “gone anywhere” yet.

“New governor, new concerns – maybe it goes somewhere,” he acknowledged. But he said the only bill he can see passing is one that



This map shows the current probate districts referenced by state Senate President Pro-Tempore Martin M. Looney in his education regionalization bill, which would create a commission with the goal of realigning school districts in municipalities with fewer than 40,000 residents “in manner similar to the probate districts.” Looney has said he envisions consolidating administrative functions rather than the schools themselves. Photo courtesy of State of Connecticut.

does not force the issue.

“I think calmer forces at the state level are saying ‘Let’s give some incentives to towns that regionalize,’” he said.

The East Hampton school district currently has 1,964 students, according to Smith; data from the U.S. Census Bureau puts the total town population at 12,901.

Smith emphasized the difference between regionalizing services and regionalizing schools.

He said his district has already collaborated on a host of shared services, including an alternative learning center for students from both East Hampton and East Haddam who do better in smaller environments. The program has five students from each town.

That partnership with East Haddam spawned a joint food services program, with the two districts sharing a food services director and business manager.

The idea of regionalizing schools – especially at the early stages of the conversation – opens up a whole host of questions, according to Smith.

If two districts decide to combine high schools, for example: “Then whose mascot do you use? Whose colors? Whose team name do you keep?” he asked.

And if schools decide to “run with” the state’s focus on regionalization by merging administrative functions, then what?

“You’ve created an umbrella of oversight, but then you need one or two more people to run it and you haven’t necessarily saved any money,” he said.

Despite his reservations, he described himself as willing to reach out to other nearby school districts to have those kinds of conversations – if the East Hampton school board wants him to.

“Is it worth regionalizing? Do we have too much tradition within our own district to become one [regionalized] district? Do we want separate districts but shared oversight? I think there’s a lot of different ways to regionalize. But it really begins with boards of education being willing to come together and say what works best for us,” he said.

Colchester is the largest of the *Rivereast* towns with a population of about 16,000 and a district of about 2,500 students. Board of Education Chairman Bradley Bernier said the town would be more significantly impacted by Looney’s bill if the state decided to regionalize.

The bill qualifies towns for regionalization

based on populations under 40,000.

Because Colchester’s district population is greater than 2,000, Osten’s bill wouldn’t directly apply, but could result in the town “taking on some services for other districts” with fewer than 2,000 students, Bernier said.

The school board chairman said Colchester fully utilizes all the services it currently has in district and makes the most of its full-time superintendent.

“Our superintendent works a 40-hour week managing the district,” Bernier said. “Maybe in smaller districts where the superintendent is part time, [regionalization] might be a possibility.”

He agreed with other state and local leaders that there is still extensive discussion to be had on the topic.

“We are absolutely working with the legislature to make sure they understand our concerns and help them fully understand the implications these policy changes would have on our town,” Bernier said.

But having the conversation is “positive,” according to Bernier.

Portland First Selectman Susan Bransfield said it’s imperative that mayors, first selectmen, managers and other chief executive officers from the state’s municipalities “be at the table” during discussions on regionalization.

“Certainly we can always look at how we share services – something I do all the time,” she said.

She cited cooperation within town as well as outside Portland’s borders. Some finance and groundskeeping services are shared between the town hall and school district, while municipal services like emergency services dispatch and animal control are shared with Middletown.

If you ask Bransfield, it all comes down to data.

“You don’t just say ‘we’re going to regionalize.’ It doesn’t make sense,” she said. “You need to really look at the data. You need to see if there’s cost savings.”

A regional collaboration through the Chatham Health District has saved the town money over the years, according to Bransfield; the consolidation of the probate courts has not.

“You’re talking a few thousand dollars’ difference,” she said of the increase in probate court expenses to the town after consolidation. “But when you say you’re regionalizing, it doesn’t always result in saving money.”

Reporter Sloan Brewster contributed to this story.

School Budget cont. from Front Page

total of \$123,300.

“I know I’m preaching to the choir how badly we need this,” Sklarz said of the capital improvement plan.

With no capital budget in the current spending plan, the board mulled over the items that were most likely to be approved by the Board of Finance later in the budget season.

Sklarz laid out two options for the hefty undertaking of paving the 15-year-old parking lots – a multi-phase plan or paving the parking lots all at once.

The multi-phase would require \$93,300 in the proposed 2019-20 budget, \$128,736 in the 2020-21 budget and finally \$84,000 in the 2021-22 – a total of \$306,036. If all lots were paved at once, a cost savings of 5 percent or \$15,300 would occur, Sklarz said.

“The longer we wait, the more expensive it’s going to be,” he said.

But some board members questioned whether the parking lots were the responsibility of the school or the town. Board member Sue Rapelye said she would like to know for sure before a final capital budget is presented to the Board of Finance, and Kelly agreed – and also called the lower of the four parking lots a “safety issue.”

Two of the four boilers at Marlborough Elementary are about 15 years old and will need replacing, Sklarz’s presentation reveals.

A total of \$70,000 spent over three budget seasons would pay for the replacement, with \$20,000 in the 2019-20 budget proposal.

Other items included funds for a roof replacement totaling \$10,000.

According to Sklarz’s capital budget presentation, the roof was assessed to be in good condition, but \$10,000 should be set aside annually “in preparation for major repairs or replacement over the next 10 years.”

The exterior doors on the school are over 15 years old, the presentation states, and are beginning to show wear from regular use and weather. While the price tag has not yet been determined, the presentation advises replacing all doors at once to achieve cost effectiveness and maximum safety.

Board of Finance Chairman Doug Knowlton and board member Ken Hjulstrom were also in attendance of Wednesday’s meeting and encouraged the school board to bring all project options to the Board of Finance for consideration.

“I’d like to see everything laid out in capital,” Knowlton said.

The Board of Education expects to adopt a budget at the Thursday, Feb. 14, school board meeting. That meeting will begin at 7 p.m., in the school library.

Former Marlborough Pastor on List of ‘Credibly Accused’ Clergy

by Allison Lazur

A former pastor of St. John Fisher Church was included on the Archdiocese of Hartford’s list of 48 Catholic clergymen “credibly accused” of sexual abuse of a minor dating back to 1953 – the year the archdiocese was established.

The list, released last week, identified the Rev. Felix Maguire as an accused priest who once served at St. John Fisher. While the archdiocese declined to specify his dates of service, a website that tracks allegations of abuse in the Catholic Church said he was in Marlborough from 1972-84. The site, bishopaccountability.org, described him as the founding pastor of St. John Fisher.

Maguire was removed from ministry in 1992, according to the archdiocese, and died in 2008.

A press release issued last week by the arch-

diocese states that, to date, \$50.6 million has been spent to settle 142 sexual abuse claims against 32 of the 48 clergymen – with 98 percent of settlements “for allegations of abuse of a minor that occurred before 1990.”

The archdiocese stated interview requests will not be granted at this time.

According to bishopaccountability.org, accusations against Maguire were included in an October 2005 settlement of \$22 million between the archdiocese and 45 people alleging abuse by 14 priests.

The Archdiocese of Hartford includes all towns and municipalities in Hartford, Litchfield and New Haven counties. Marlborough is the only *Rivereast* town included in the archdiocese.

While the Archdiocese of Hartford would not release any further information regarding the specific accusations brought against Maguire,

a 2002 *Hartford Courant* article states that claims of sexual assault made against him spanned more than 27 years, and occurred in several parishes.

Among the accusations, the *Courant* reports, were those by Jeffrey Marsden, who met Maguire in 1982, at the age of 15, while he was hitchhiking in Marlborough. The article states Marsden went back to Maguire’s home where he drank beer and watch pornographic videos, and then allowed Maguire to perform “a sex act” on him.

The *Courant* reports the relationship continued for “months,” with Marsden claiming he took money in return for sex.

The *Courant* states that Maguire “emphatically” denied the allegations. The newspaper also says a police investigation of the allegations made against him was halted after detec-

tives were “ordered by superiors to drop the investigation.”

* * *

A statement released by Archbishop Leonard P. Blair states, “There are no Archdiocese of Hartford priests currently in ministry in the Archdiocese of Hartford who have had credible allegations of child sexual abuse asserted against them.”

The press release also states that retired Judge Antonio Robaina has been retained by the archdiocese “to conduct an independent investigation to provide a comprehensive and transparent accounting of sexual abuse of minors by clergy in the Archdiocese of Hartford.”

The release states the investigation will span from 1953 to the present. Any additional offenders uncovered will be added to the website ArchdioceseofHartford.org.

East Hampton Boards Stress Need for Budget Consensus

by Elizabeth Regan

A joint meeting of the Town Council, Board of Education and Board of Finance convened Monday in an effort to bring cohesion to the 2019-20 budget planning process following four fractious referendums last year.

The current 32.21 mill rate, which is typically approved prior to the start of the fiscal year on July 1, wasn’t set until November.

Town Council Chairman Melissa Engel’s agenda called for “consensus building” around two main questions: What services do taxpayers expect their government to provide and what are they willing to pay for them?

“I think we would all agree that four referendums was not a good idea – not that we planned it,” Engel said. “It was expensive and we had so many people that were confused when they got their [supplemental] tax bill in January.”

Board of Education Chairman Christopher Goff described a need for “dialogue and a common goal” among the three boards going forward.

“I think that’s what’s expected of us,” he told fellow town officials.

The members agreed on main priorities including public safety, education, infrastructure, an expanded public water system, the health of

Lake Pocotopaug and economic development.

Finance board Democrat Barbara Moore emphasized public safety and education.

“Our children are our biggest, biggest, biggest asset,” she said.

Republican Councilman Mark Philhower cited maintaining the town’s buildings and roads as one of his priorities.

For school board Republican Nancy Oakley and Democrat Joanne Barmasse, capital planning and a strategic planning were key areas of focus.

Barmasse said officials need to enact a proactive approach that includes saving over multiple years for long-term needs and big-ticket purchases.

“And when you put that money aside, you don’t touch it,” she said.

Barmasse, a real estate agent, also brought up Lake Pocotopaug as an important asset to the town and a driver for property values all around the 512-acre water body.

“People that want to enjoy the lake, when they find out it’s in not such great shape, they might look at Marlborough or Columbia or somewhere else that has a nice, clean lake,” Barmasse said.

Potentially toxic algae blooms have plagued

the lake for decades. A 2016 watershed management plan prepared by the town’s lake consultant, George Knoecklein, included a series of recommendations that he said would cost roughly \$460,000 to \$1.4 million to implement.

Engel identified an expanded public water system as one of her priorities.

Town Manager Michael Maniscalco is in discussion with multiple water companies as well as officials from Portland to address the town’s long standing water woes. One plan under consideration would create a pipeline along Route 66 to carry water from the quasi-public Metropolitan District Commission water utility from Portland into East Hampton.

Discussion among the town leaders about how much taxpayers might be willing to pay for the identified priorities did not yield any specific numbers, but did result in agreement that future budget ballots should include advisory questions to determine if voters think the proposed budget is “too high, too low or just right.”

The so-called “Goldilocks” questions were instituted at the final referendum last October. The general government budget, which finally passed after four attempts, was described as too high by 800 voters, too low by 411 voters and

just right by 546 voters. Feedback on the previously-approved school spending plan showed 845 voters thought the budget was too high, 648 thought it was too low and 289 thought it was just right.

Last year’s contentious season was marked by complaints from education supporters who decried the failure of the Board of Finance and Town Council to restore several lost teaching positions despite about \$700,000 in unexpected funds from the state combined with a higher than anticipated 2017-18 budget surplus. A compromise forged prior to the fourth and final referendum ultimately restored three teaching positions to the education budget.

Democratic council member James “Pete” Brown said educating the community about the budget process and the needs of both the schools and the general government is crucial to getting public support for any proposed budget.

Taxpayers will be willing to spend money if they fully understand and appreciate how it’s being spent, according to Brown.

“But there is a limit,” Brown said. “The town can only afford so much. There’s only so many dollars in that pocket. And we have to be mindful of that.”

Brainerd Place in Portland Project Nears State Approval

by Elizabeth Regan

The Brainerd Place project at the corner of routes 66 and 17A is close to securing one of the last major bureaucratic approvals as part of ongoing efforts to revitalize the former Elmcrest Hospital campus.

In a preliminary traffic investigation report from the state Department of Transportation received by town officials this week, the agency recommended the issuance of a certificate that gives the state’s blessing for the roughly 15-acre project with 350,367 square feet of gross floor area and 801 parking spaces.

The agency’s Office of State Traffic Administration (OSTA) determined the project “will not imperil the safety of the public” based on a site layout plan revised on Jan. 2 and two roadway plans dated Jan. 11.

First Selectman Susan Bransfield must sign off on the report.

The developer must post a \$1.67 million bond before a certificate is issued. According to the state DOT, the bond ensures compliance with the conditions of the certificate. If the project is not completed to the state’s satisfaction by the developer, the bond could then be pulled so the state could complete the work.

The Brainerd Place development is a venture of the DiMarco Group and BRT General Corporation, of Danbury. BRT’s Dan Bertram

has been the project’s public face through years of interaction with town officials and at public meetings.

Bertram did not immediately return a call for comment.

The site plan for the \$30 million mixed-use development includes two residential buildings comprising 238 units and 108,510 square feet of commercial space that blends new construction with renovation of the 1852 Erastus Brainerd Jr. House and the 1884 John H. Sage House. The 1830 Hart-Jarvis House is slated to be moved from its current spot on the property to the southwest corner, where it will be restored and operated by a formative nonprofit organization.

Bertram said back in August 2017 he hoped to have shovels in the ground by spring of 2018. Since then, he has emphasized construction cannot begin until the project is approved by OSTA.

The Planning and Zoning Commission approved the project just under one year ago; a demolition permit was issued by the building department in May.

Bransfield said this week that the developers have since been working with the state to finalize the traffic plan.

She described the state’s preliminary en-

dorsement of the traffic plan as “key” to the project’s future.

“This means things will proceed very well at this point. We have been waiting for this. The developer has been waiting for this.”

Bransfield, who serves as the town’s local traffic authority, said she will be responding to the state’s report with a few questions compiled by town staff about the list of 31 conditions detailing necessary safety parameters and administrative details included in the state traffic report.

The conditions include a new driveway and traffic light on Marlborough Street, a right-in only driveway on Main Street, modifications to the right-turn-only lane from Main Street to Marlborough Street and the widening of Main Street.

The report specifies the state will “assume ownership and ordinary maintenance” once the required traffic signal is installed at the new driveway entrance on Marlborough Street.

Economic Development consultant Mary Dickerson said the state’s traffic report has been reviewed by Building Official Lincoln White, Public Works Department Director Bob Shea, Fire Marshal Ray Sajdak and Chris Taylor of the town’s engineering firm Nathan L. Jacobson and Associates.

Dickerson said staff has prepared a list of comments asking for clarification on a few issues, largely in order to make sure “it can’t be misinterpreted” who is responsible for maintenance of items like sidewalks and pavement markings.

State Department of Transportation Spokesman Kevin Nursick said the department is awaiting the town’s sign-off on the report. Questions or comments from the town are typically “squared away” prior to this stage of approvals, according to Nursick.

He said any additional questions from the town will restart the process of reviewing the report, making adjustments, sharing it with the town and then sharing it with the developer before a certificate can be issued.

Dickerson said demolition will begin on the site once the state certificate is issued. The town issued a demolition permit last May.

Under the terms of a tax abatement agreement between the town and the developers, BRT DiMarco PPT will be paying approximately \$2.60 million over the life of the tax abatement on the two-phase project, based on finance department projections.

With no tax incentive at all, the developers would pay \$6.24 million in property taxes over 14 years.

Chatham Health Sets Hearing on \$1.11M Budget

by Elizabeth Regan

The Chatham Health Board of Directors last week set a public hearing on a \$1.11 million 2019-20 budget recommendation that includes an additional sanitarian position to help address lingering frustrations with customer service.

The public hearing will be held Feb. 12 at 1 p.m. at Portland Public Library, 20 Freestone Ave., Portland.

The additional sanitarian position would cover nine months of the upcoming fiscal year.

The district is in the process of hiring a new director as part of a reorganization around outgoing director Don Mitchell's planned retirement. Once the new director is in place, Mitchell will take on field duties as the district's sixth sanitarian until he is eligible to retire in October. He would then be replaced at a lower pay grade by a new hire starting in January.

The health district has been working to regain stability in the wake of the forced resignation of its previous director, Thad King, in late 2015. Mitchell is credited by some board members with putting the district back on the path to fiscal sustainability, with the most recent audit showing a healthy fund balance of \$207,202, or 21 percent of total operating expenses.

The district covers the *Rivereast* towns of Colchester, East Hampton, Hebron, Marlborough and Portland, as well as East Haddam.

The staffing proposal in the recommended budget is a compromise between bringing on a full-time sanitarian once Mitchell leaves and bringing on a part-time employee to replace him at either 19.5 or 25 hours per week.

Chatham Health District is one of 20 regional health departments across the state. Its sanitarians are responsible for public health functions including plan reviews and inspections for building projects, restaurant inspections, and education on public health issues ranging from safe drinking water to flu shots.

Current staffing levels mean the district is only able to complete about 75 percent of its food inspections, according to officials.

Board of Health member Susan Bransfield, who serves as first selectman of Portland, recommended hiring a sanitarian to start in January – instead of immediately after Mitchell's departure – as a way to meet in the middle. She made the recommendation at a special meeting of the Chatham Health District Board of Health last week – a meeting whose date and agenda were made public a scant 26 hours before it

started.

Members acknowledged the move would leave the district without a sixth sanitarian from October through Jan. 1, but decided it was the best way to keep a full-time staffer on for most of the year while keeping down costs.

"I think we have to balance [each town's] ability to pay with the needs the district has," Bransfield told the *Rivereast* this week. "When we look at adding a position, we need to be aware of that."

The discussion comes after complaints of inadequate service, most recently from the towns of East Haddam and East Hampton. Concerns from East Haddam included a lack of experienced staff members, insufficient staff coverage in the East Haddam town hall and delayed inspections. East Hampton Town Councilor Mark Philhower, an HVAC contractor, complained at a council meeting of delayed inspections and poor customer service.

Officials in both towns were convinced by Chatham Health District Board of Health Chairman Andrew Tierney that conditions will improve.

The town of Haddam withdrew from the district in 2016.

At last week's meeting, Tierney, who also serves as the Hebron town manager, argued a new sanitarian with sufficient hours is necessary in order to address the complaints that have been raised. Foremost among the priorities is providing consistent office hours in each of the six towns served by the health district.

Board of Health member Peter Hughes, the Marlborough town planner, spoke strongly about making sure there's another sanitarian to work a full week for at least a majority of the year. Anything less would be setting up the new director to fail, according to Hughes.

"This is getting really tiring," he told fellow board members as they debated the options. "Either we step up to the plate and give this new director a chance, or we're going to be back here in a year, [and] another town is going to threaten to leave. It's stupidity."

But board member Michael Maniscalco, East Hampton's town manager, said if the cost to towns keeps increasing at the same or higher rate, it could become time to look at other options.

Maniscalco said options could include starting an independent health department in East Hampton. Options weighed last year in East

Haddam included opting out of the Chatham Health District in order to join another health district in the area.

Maniscalco cited salary and cost of living increases "year over year" that have not yielded marked improvements in service.

"Yeah, there's a cost of doing business, but it doesn't seem like we're benefitting a whole lot from doing them. You can't continuously throw money down a hole hoping it's going to get filled up," Maniscalco said.

The proposed budget brings the share borne by each resident in the district – known as the per capita rate – from \$11.11 to \$11.95.

An increase of 7.56 percent means Colchester would go from paying \$179,204 in the current year to \$192,754 next year, East Hampton would go from \$142,852 to \$153,653, Hebron would go from \$106,123 to \$114,146, Marlborough would go from \$71,437 to \$76,839, and Portland would go from \$104,334 to \$112,222. East Haddam would go from \$100,890 to \$108,518.

Members of the district's board of health decided against bringing on a full-time sanitarian for a full year at a per capita fee to \$12.38. They also rejected a part-time sanitarian that would have brought the per capita fee to \$11.64.

Budget documents specify the sanitarian hired after Mitchell leaves will be paid \$30,000 for six months or \$40 per hour, and will not receive benefits.

The proposed budget numbers showed Mitchell will receive \$21,500 for the three months between July and his October retirement. Mitchell will also receive benefits, according to Tierney.

Tierney told the *Rivereast* this week that Mitchell will be paid a salary similar to the chief sanitarian when he assumes the sanitarian role upon the hiring of a new director. The funding was included in the current budget, Tierney said.

"Because he has all the credentials and was a supervisor, we're going to bring him down to the chief sanitarian salary for those months," Tierney said, referring to the time between the arrival of the new director and the end of the current fiscal year.

Mitchell currently makes \$107,871 as outlined in the current budget. The chief sanitarian makes \$83,905.

Tierney said the board will be devising a list of specific duties for Mitchell that do not conflict with the existing chief sanitarian.

Mitchell said this week that line-by-line salary figures in the proposed spending plan will not be provided in the budget document available on the health district's website prior to the public hearing.

He cited employee sensitivity about making salary information widely available, which has been the health district's practice in previous years.

Releasing the individual salary information to the public in advance of the hearing "is not really necessary," according to Mitchell. He said people simply want to know the salary totals.

The information may be obtained through a Freedom of Information request.

Health insurance costs are another driver in the proposed increase, rising 28.97 percent over the current year.

Tierney attributed the high cost to a lack of "buying power" from the district's pool of four employees.

Mitchell told board members last week that joining the state health insurance pool would have cost about \$20,000 more than staying with the current provider. The state partnership allows municipal employees to become part of the same plan offered to state employees.

The district currently pays the full premium for its employees, according to Mitchell. Budget documents show the plan includes a health savings account and dental coverage.

Tierney said the employees pay the deductible and large co-pays.

Mitchell described the current plan as "better than some, [but] not as good as others."

Tierney told the *Rivereast* this week that Mitchell was unable to come up with a cheaper alternative after looking into options through the state, a small business association and the company Hebron uses. He said the director will continue to investigate ways to keep down the rising cost of insurance.

"Everything's on the table," he said.

At last week's Board of Health members including Maniscalco and Colchester Selectman Stan Soby asked Mitchell for specific metrics to illustrate the value of the proposed increase to the district.

"It would be really helpful at budget time in Colchester town hall to be able to explain this in a way that people will say, 'Oh, that's reasonable. That makes sense. I get that. I can support that,'" Soby said.

RHAM School Board Approves Plan to Redesign Parking Lots

by Sloan Brewster

The RHAM Board of Education Monday moved forward on a plan to redesign the high and middle school parking lots, with the hope of completing the work before the start of the next school year.

The plan comes nearly five years after the death of a teacher who was struck by a car in the middle school lot.

Before the vote to approve the design – which passed unanimously – Superintendent of Schools Patricia Law briefly updated the board.

She said she and her office have been working with Luchs Consulting Engineering on applying to the state Department of Transportation for final permits to allow for alterations to traffic cuts on Wall Street, she said.

"We have this process moving forward as quickly as we can," Law said, adding that the plan is to complete the summer.

The \$1.09 million project is being funded by a state Department of Transportation grant secured by Hebron in 2015, following the death Dawn Mallory, a teacher at the middle school.

Mallory, 65, who had taught seventh- and eighth-grade math at the school, was walking through the middle school parking lot around 7 a.m. on March 14, 2014, when she was struck by a vehicle. State police said the driver, Elizabeth Everett, 50, of Hebron, backed up and ran into Mallory after she realized she had driven into the bus lane.

Everett was later found guilty of misconduct with a motor vehicle by criminal negligence and unsafe backing, and sentenced in February 2017 to 20 months in prison.

At Monday's meeting, school board member Robert Schadle commented that there wasn't any opposition to the design at a public hearing on the project held Jan. 14.

"I got the feeling everyone was happy," he said.

The design includes about a dozen alterations from the current parking situation, including a one-way parent drop off loop to separate parking from moving traffic, Luchs project manager and principal Ron Dagan said at the public hear-

ing. The new driveway would bring parents exclusively to pick-up and drop-off locations, with pavement markings to manage traffic flow. It will also provide longer lanes for dropping off and picking up children.

"The main purpose is to get parents to drop-offs without crossing any parking lots," Dagan said.

Additionally, there will be a separate parking lot dedicated exclusively for staff.

The plan includes fixes at the middle school and the main entrance.

The design creates a "safer and more efficient main entrance by installing a rapid flashing beacon, removing a crossing on Wall Street – leaving a single crosswalk – and incorporates a fence to make sure students go to the proper crossing location," according to the PowerPoint presentation at the public hearing.

Dagan said the engineers agree it is safest for the kids to cross at only one location.

Dagan also recommended installing an un-

derground conduit to provide power so a traffic light can be added in the future. Since the pavement will already be torn up, it will be a good time to add the conduit, he said.

Sidewalks will be added from the main entrance toward Ridge Road, with the initial plan to bring them as far as funding allows and stretch them further at a later time, Dagan said. The sidewalk would be behind a stone wall to keep students further away from traffic.

At several education board and Board of Selectmen meetings last year, parents spoke about the need for sidewalks on Wall Street for the safety of students who walk to and from school and cross country runners who run on the busy road.

The plan provides for a handicapped-accessible drop-off at the entrances of the high school and middle school that will conform to the Americans with Disabilities Act, Dagan said.

In addition, the temporary speed bumps currently at the school would be made permanent.

Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

It wasn't with the Mets, as I'd hoped, but congratulations to Marlborough native A.J. Pollock for signing his first big-money free agent contract.

The very talented centerfielder had spent the last several years with the Arizona Diamondbacks, but their control of him ended with the 2018 baseball season, so he's been on the market, available for anyone to sign.

I've written about Pollock here before, and have also interviewed him twice for the paper. He's great both offensively and defensively, and while it's true he's suffered some bad-luck injuries during his time in Arizona, I figured that some team would reward him handsomely this winter.

That team was the Los Angeles Dodgers. Pollock, 31, and the Dodgers last week agreed on a four-year, \$55 million deal, according to ESPN. The contract also includes a player option for a fifth year, at \$10 million, though the option can be bought out for \$5 million.

It's been so cool to watch Pollock's rise over the years. A star for the RHAM High School baseball team, he was taken by the Diamondbacks in the first round of the 2009 Major League Baseball draft. He made his big-league debut in 2012.

After an injury-marred 2014 – Pollock was hit by a pitch in late May and wound up missing three full months of the season – he bounced back big-time in 2015, hitting .315 with 20 homers and making the All-Star team. He even took home a Gold Glove for his defense that year.

Suddenly, the small-town kid from RHAM High School was becoming a household name in baseball circles. It was a lot of fun to watch.

Unfortunately, injuries continued to follow Pollock. In 2016, he missed all but 12 games after fracturing his elbow on a slide into home plate in the last exhibition game of the spring. In 2017 he missed nearly two months with a groin injury, and in 2018 he missed close to two months again after breaking his left thumb.

Even with the missed time this past year, Pollock slugged 21 home runs, drove in 65, and swiped 13 bases – making it clear, in case 2015 left any doubt, that he's something special, and would be a star for someone when free agency came calling.

I often listen to MLB Network Radio when driving into work, and they'd occasionally talk about Pollock – again, very cool and kinda surreal – and wonder if his injuries would prevent him from getting a big contract. I didn't think they would – at least ways, they shouldn't. Yes, he's missed significant time each of the last three seasons, and four of the last five seasons, but they were bad luck injuries. Aside from the groin strain, they all involved broken bones; they weren't indicative of him not conditioning himself well to play the game, or of him having chronic hamstring or elbow issues. If anything, they came about because he played the game *too* hard, or, in the case of the hit by pitch, was simply in the wrong place at the wrong time.

Still, in the sports world you can sometimes develop a reputation of being bit by the injury bug, and there was speculation the missed time might limit his suitors – and perhaps maybe even limit him to a one-year deal. Fortunately, they didn't.

According to *USA Today's* Bob Nightengale, Pollock's deal breaks down thusly: \$13 million in 2019 (\$12 million of which is a signing bonus), \$12 million in

2020, \$15 million in 2021, and that aforementioned \$10 million option, or \$5 million buyout, for 2021.

Pollock can also opt out of the contract after the 2021 season, Nightengale reported, if he notches 1,000 plate appearances between the 2020 and 2021 seasons, or a total of 1,450 from 2019-21.

If he does opt out, maybe the Mets can come calling then. They certainly should've come calling this year. He was the perfect fit for them, especially since they need another outfield bat. But the Mets are opting to tread water in the outfield until Yoenis Cespedes comes back at some point in 2019. That's a big 'if,' by the way, as Cespedes is coming off major surgery on his heels. Yes, the Mets are once again playing the "if everything goes right, we'll be great" game that never seems to work out for them.

But, that's all beside the point. I'm very happy for Pollock. Like I said, I've had the good fortune of interviewing him a couple of times for the *Rivereast*, and he's a great guy. He's worked hard, and he deserves all the success he's getting.

Congratulations, A.J. I wish you loads of luck as you don the Dodger Blue.

Speaking of baseball, I got word this week that Manchester-based Connecticut Mayhem, a travel baseball program, is looking for interested 13U players from eastern Connecticut to hop on board and help fill rosters. A good number of people from Hebron play with Mayhem already, I'm told, so organizers are reaching out to see if anyone else from Hebron, or other towns in *Rivereast*-land, wants to join.

Connecticut Mayhem's 13U teams play more than 50 games a season, with several tournaments mixed into league play. The program said its "hands-on approach by trained coaches has given each and every one of our teams a competitive advantage and our results speak for themselves."

It's never too early to start thinking warm weather, and the boys of summer. If you're interested in signing up, contact Connecticut Mayhem at 860-214-6975 or ctmayhembaseball@aol.com, or visit ctmayhembaseball.com. But act fast; rosters are capped at 13 players per team.

It's super short notice, but got any plans tonight? If not, the East Hampton Lions would sure like it if you could head over to the East Hampton High School auditorium, as the Lions at 7 p.m. are hosting a performance by the United States Coast Guard's Dixieland Jazz band.

Why such short notice? Well, according to the Lions, the concert had been planned for quite some time but, with the federal shutdown, everything was up in the air and the Lions weren't even sure it was going to happen – so they of course didn't want to advertise it if in the end it wasn't going to take place. Fortunately, though, we're in between shutdowns right now, so the show is a go.

The concert is free, and will be preceded by a special Connecticut Veterans Wartime Service Awards presentation at 5:30 p.m.

It sounds like it should be a fun night, so if you don't have plans, swing on by the high school! East Hampton High School is located at 15 North Maple St.

See you next week.

Portland Police News

1/22: William Bressler, 29, of 70 Hillside Ave., Middletown, was charged with operating a motor vehicle under suspension and following too closely, Portland Police said.

1/23: Anthony Zimmerman, 19, of 71 Free-stone Ave., was charged with disorderly conduct and criminal mischief, police said.

Colchester Police News

1/23: State Police said Santos B. Lucero, 46, of 500 Strong St., East Haven, was arrested and charged with performing occupational electrical work without a proper license on a residential home last year.

1/26: State police said Ricardo Rosado-Cintron, 26, of 136 Cameo Dr., Willimantic, was arrested and charged with failure to respond to a payable violation.

East Hampton Police News

1/17: Brandon Pearson, 30, of 37 Leesville Rd., Moodus, was arrested and charged with disorderly conduct, third-degree assault, violation of a protective order, interfering with an emergency call, second-degree burglary, and interfering with a police investigation, East Hampton Police said.

1/17: Anthony Robinson, 22, of 6 Edgerton St., East Hampton, turned himself in pursuant to an active warrant for his arrest and was charged with violation of probation, police said.

1/17: After an investigation into a car vs. tree motor vehicle accident in the area of 188 White Birch Rd., the sole occupant of the vehicle, Jessica Greenwood 40, of 6 Elmwood Dr., was arrested and charged with driving under the influence and failure to drive right, police said.

Also, from Jan. 14-20, officers responded to 12 medical calls, six motor vehicle crashes and seven alarms, and made eight traffic stops, police said.

One Injured in Three-Car Crash in Andover

State Police said a three-vehicle collision on Route 6 left one woman with minor injuries.

At approximately 5:20 p.m. on Jan. 22, a Pontiac Bonneville driven by Roger Sirois, 53, of, 925 Pucker St., Coventry, a Volkswagen Jetta, driven by Matthew Crosthwaite, 37, of 110 Brookside Ln., Mansfield Center, and a Honda Accord driven by Danielle N. Levasseur, 24, of 378 Church St., Amston, were all traveling east on Route 6 near the intersection with Wales Road, police said.

Police said the Volkswagen Jetta was traveling behind the Pontiac when both vehicles

slowed for traffic. The Honda Accord was traveling behind the Jetta and failed to stop in time resulting in a rear collision with the Jetta. The Jetta was subsequently forced into striking the Pontiac as a result of the collision, police said.

The passenger of the Jetta, Jennifer L. Newsch, 41, of 100 Brookside Ln., Mansfield Center, was transported by the Andover Fire Department to Windham Hospital with minor injuries, police said.

Levasseur was found at fault and issued an infraction for following too closely, police said.

Two-Car Crash on Route 16 in Colchester

State Police said a two-vehicle collision on Jan. 20, left one of the drivers with possible injuries.

At approximately 5:01 a.m., a Chevrolet Colorado, driven by Benjamin C. Patterson, 41, of 101 Thames St., Apt. 3, Groton, was stopped westbound on Route 16 near Westchester Road, awaiting a tow truck after being involved in a previous accident.

A Ford truck, driven by Kenneth H. Blandina, 57, of 23 W. Ridge Rd., was also traveling westbound on Route 16 when the

vehicle lost control, spun out and subsequently collided with the metal beam guardrail lining the eastbound shoulder and then collided into the rear of the Chevrolet, police said.

After the collision, both vehicles came to an uncontrolled final rest in the eastbound traveling lane.

Patterson was transported by the Colchester Fire Department to Middlesex Hospital Marlborough Medical Center with possible injuries.

Obituaries

East Hampton

Carl B. Haftel

Carl Benjamin Haftel, 91, of Venice, Fla., formerly of East Hampton, husband of the late Sandra (Schindlinger) Honig-Haftel, passed away on Wednesday, Jan. 23, at Portland Care & Rehab.

Carl left high school before graduation to serve in the United States Navy during the end of World War II. After the war ended, he started a construction company called Monarch Builders and Developers. He served as president of the company until its closing. He took pride in building sturdy, long-lasting homes in the greater Middletown area and enjoyed the creative problem solving that went along with the business. He had a love for the outdoors and a hard day's work. It was very common to find him outside doing landscaping and upkeep on his home well into his late 80s.

Carl also owned a gravel pit in Cromwell that's now the TPC golf course. Along with the Middletown and Cromwell area, he also lived several years in Kansas. Carl was a member of Congregation Adath Israel Synagogue in Middletown. In his free time, Carl liked to travel with Sandy to places like Antarctica, Alaska, Hawaii and Budapest and loved going to Bar Harbor, Maine, where he liked hiking up Cadillac Mountain with Mike. Along with the landscaping, Carl loved to tinker, always having many projects going and always trying to make everything better. He fancied himself as an inventor.

Carl is survived by his son, Michael J. Haftel of San Francisco, Calif.; stepdaughter, Cathy LaBella and her husband Michael of Cobalt; two stepgrandchildren, Hannah and Coby LaBella; two brothers, Seymour Haftel and his wife Sylvia of Sarasota, Fla., and Arnold Haftel of Middletown; a sister, Joan Myers of Oakland, Calif.; and many nieces and nephews.

Along with his wife and parents, Carl was predeceased by a sister, Mary Anne Haftel.

A graveside service was held Sunday, Jan. 27, in Adath Israel Cemetery, 714 Pine St., Middletown. Please omit flowers; donations in Carl's memory may be made to Congregation Adath Israel, Chevra Kadisha Fund, P.O. Box 337, Middletown, CT 06457.

To share memories or send condolences to the family, visit doolittlefuneralservice.com.



East Hampton

Laureat Lavigne

Laureat (Larry) Lavigne of East Hampton fell asleep in death peacefully at home with his loved ones by his side Tuesday, Jan. 15. He was 96 years old. He was born in Brunswick, Maine, to Francis and Marie Lavigne.

He was predeceased by his loving wife Cecile of 43 years. He was also predeceased by his siblings: Maurice, Ludovic, Annette, Berce and Theresa.

He is survived by his sister, Lorraine Boulet and her husband Raymond of Maine. Larry is survived also by two boys, Gary Lavigne and his wife Linda and Frank Lavigne and his wife Jo Ann with whom he made his home. He enjoyed six grandchildren and three great-grandchildren, who lovingly knew him as Pepe.

Because of the Depression he was made to quit school after the eighth grade to find work. He picked potatoes and worked in a brickyard. In 1938 he joined the Connecticut Civilian Conservation Corps camps. He stayed with the CCC for three years, went back home to work in the brickyard once again until it closed, then went to work for the shipyard in South Portland, Maine. He stayed employed there for a year, then Uncle Sam called; Dad was 21 years old.

He was stationed in the South Pacific, then Guadalcanal, Bougainville in the Solomon Islands, New Guinea and the Philippines. He was able to come home after two and a half years. Larry moved to Connecticut a few years later with his wife to the town of East Hartford and started a job at Pratt & Whitney. He retired in 1983, and made the most of that retirement. He loved the Red Sox and time with family.

Larry was active with the VFW and Elks Club, traveling and cruises. After moving to East Hampton with his son Frank and his daughter in law Jo Ann he was very active with the East Hampton Senior Center, where he was a big part of the lives of all who went there.

The family would like to thank the staff of Middlesex Hospital Home Hospice for their loving care, also all the staff and friends from the Senior Center. We would also like to thank the many friends and family who visited him through the years.

Please make all your loving donations in Larry's name to the East Hampton Senior Center.



From courant

Colchester

Mildred Kashkin

Mildred (Molly) Kashkin, 92, a lifelong resident of Colchester, passed away at Apple Rehabilitation Thursday, Jan. 24. A graduate of Bacon Academy in the Great Class of 1944, Molly spent her work life as a senior associate first at the former Schuster's Express and later at S&S Worldwide.

She leaves to mourn her loss a host of nieces and nephews, as well as their children and grandchildren, all of whom loved and adored her. They all enjoyed her stories of the family from years gone by, and they could always count on her famous "Mollycake" for a special birthday celebration. She was a bright light, a warm and trusted friend, and she knew how to keep a secret. In later years, she traveled extensively, bringing back treasures for her youngest family members.

Molly was the family photographer for generations, and always had kisses ready, both the real ones and Hershey's. Now her memory is ours to treasure. It will be for a blessing.

Graveside services were held Monday, Jan. 28, at Congregation Ahavath Achim Cemetery on Taintor Hill Road in Colchester. Donations may be made in her name to any worthwhile cause that honors children.

Arrangements have been entrusted to Weinstein Mortuary.

From courant

Hebron

Alden Talcott Warner

Alden Talcott Warner of Hebron passed peacefully from this life at Marlborough Healthcare Wednesday, Jan. 23, at the age of 88. He was born the last of seven children, to Norman and Mabel Warner on April 29, 1930. Thus, the story goes "she was all-done" having children!



Alden was born and raised on a farm in the Gilead section of Hebron. He was in a band with some of his siblings "The Barnstormers." He was in the Air Force Band from 1950-54. Alden met Barbara Jaycox at a square dance, fell in love and married in 1955 and had five children. He worked at Pratt & Whitney for 37 years as a machinist. He was a member of Gilead Congregational Church and previously in the choir.

Alden had a second chance at love when he married Anne Gurnon. They had 25 wonderful years dancing, socializing and family gatherings. They loved to sing at the Tolland Senior Center and he was bandleader of "The Old Rubber Band."

He was a happy, hardworking, dedicated father and husband. He loved a good laugh, music, gardening, woodworking and his family, the simple things in life.

He is survived by his loving children, Scott (Joan) Warner, Bonnie (Bill) Ducharme, Gale (Brian) Doyle, Alison (Mike) Doherty, as well as many grandchildren and great grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by his parents Mabel and Norman; wife Barbara; son Mark; wife Anne; siblings, Norton, William, Olive, Allene, Charlotte and Jean.

There will be a memorial service at 11 a.m. Saturday, Feb. 2, at Gilead Congregational Church, 672 Gilead St., Hebron. Burial will be private.

In lieu of flowers donations can be made to Gilead Congregational Church.

To leave a message of condolence, visit holmeswatkins.com.

Marlborough

Ingrid Vikstrom Traber

Ingrid Louise (Lovisa) Vikstrom Traber, formerly of Marlborough, born Feb. 28, 1923, in Jukkasjarvi, Sweden, died Monday, Jan. 21, at Middlesex Hospital in Middletown. She was the daughter of the late Johan Erik and Syster Febe Ingeborg (Jacobson) Vikstrom.



Ingrid came to the United States at age 2 with her mother and older brother Carl and lived in Michigan. She was preceded in death by her ex-husband Melville C. Traber; son Carl W. Traber; brothers Carl Erik, John Arthur, Fritz Bertil, Sven Herbert; and sisters Svea Margaret Heinrichs and Ruth J. Meyers.

She is survived by brothers Robert Vikstrom and his wife Sandy, Dennis Vikstrom and his wife Dorothy, and sister Mary Zurakowski. She is greatly mourned by her surviving children, Mel Traber Jr. and his wife Debra, Todd Traber (and his dear friend Laura Donovan) and her only daughter, Margaret (Maggi) Traber. She adored her grandchildren, Heidi, Justina and her husband Chad Reel, their children, Elsa, Emma, Abby Ingrid and Justin Reel; her grandson, Joshua Traber, his wife Brendi and their son, Jacob.

In 1969 she moved to Marlborough, and remained an active member of the senior community for many years. She had a wicked sense of humor, a zest for life and all its adventures. She loved her Lord and gave thanks to him daily for his support and blessings. She will be sorely missed.

At her direction, no public services will held.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to her favorite charity, the Marlborough Food Bank, P.O. Box 29, Marlborough, CT 06447.

Colchester

Sheila D. Dowd

Sheila D. Dowd, 78, of Colchester, formerly of Clinton, passed away Thursday, Jan. 24, at the Middlesex Hospital Hospice, with her beloved family by her side. Born Sept. 5, 1940, in Middletown, she was a daughter of the late Wilifred and Ann (Hannon) DeRagon.



She lived in Clinton for most of her life but retired to Colchester in 2006. Sheila retired several years ago after a career as an office worker for the school bus company in Chester. Sheila loved cooking, going to the casino, gardening and going on cruises with her family.

She will be sadly missed but always remembered with love by her children and their spouses, Michelle (Rick) Miller of Colchester, Lisa (Mike) Turner of Manchester, Donna (John) Brazee of Rutland, Vt.; three stepchildren, Rick (Carol) Dowd of Westbrook, Bruce (Sherry) Dowd of Killingworth, Marsha (Wayne) Abrahamson of Old Lyme; four grandchildren, Brittiany, Aaron, Russell, Sarah; four great-grandchildren, Braiden, Dimitris, Reilly, Kalessi; and numerous extended family members and friends.

Calling hours were held Sunday, Jan 27, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. The funeral service was held Monday, Jan. 28, at the funeral home. Burial followed in St. Mary's Cemetery in Clinton.

Donations in her memory may be made to the Middlesex Hospital Hospice, middlesexhealth.org/hospice-care.

For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.