



RIVEREAST

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East Hampton High School Class of 2019 members Justin Czeremcha and Alexis Ballard congratulated each other at the end of Wednesday's graduation ceremony as they walked off the athletic field with their boisterous classmates to the tune of Andy Grammer's "Back Home" – a song that promises they won't forget where they came from.

## Belltown Grads Ready for the Future

by Elizabeth Regan

East Hampton High School's 128 graduates on Wednesday took their diplomas, tossed their mortar boards into the gray sky and rang that big Bevin bell one last time to conclude their high school careers.

The energized graduates made their retreat from the outdoor stage in blue-and-white robes – a beach ball aloft in the background – to the country-pop soundtrack of Andy Grammer's "Back Home." The refrain lingered even after they were gone: "We won't forget where we came from; The city won't change us."

Members of the Class of 2019, most of whom were born the year the Twin Towers fell, had been reminded throughout the ceremony that the rapidly-evolving future is theirs.

Valedictorian Katherine Nikolov illustrated for her classmates just how much the world changed while they were growing up in East Hampton.

The 2001 world into which they were born had no iPhones, Facebook or Instagram, she said. Wikipedia was just getting started. A postage stamp cost 34 cents and a gallon of gas was about \$1.25 in Connecticut.

She also noted that wins by the Ravens in the Super Bowl and the Lakers in the NBA championship show a lot has changed since then.

"There have been unimaginable advances in technology and inflation caused by a growing economy," Nikolov said. "There have been countless moments that have left us speechless watching sports and new movies, and there have also been moments that left us speechless as our world was shaken by terrorism, gun violence, climate change and economic struggles."

It's their turn to change the world, she told the graduates: "We are now the ones on which the responsibility falls to do great things."

High School Principal Frank Rizzuto said a preliminary list of hopes and dreams he has compiled from among the graduates includes careers in teaching, law enforcement, medicine, engineering, music, and trades like cosmetology, carpentry, plumbing and automobile repair.

He also noted several students have plans to join the military. He singled out one graduate, Gabriel Slade, who was already enlisted in the U.S. Marines at the time of the graduation ceremony.

Slade, his mortar board topped by a cadre of plastic toy soldiers, stood up.

"On behalf of everyone here, I wish to thank you in advance for your service to our country," Rizzuto said. "We wish you safety, limitless strength and ask that you stay in touch and let us know how you are doing. At a minimum, we owe you a round of applause."

The students assembled on the high school athletic field were facing a school that looked radically different from the one they entered four years ago in the midst of an extensive building renovation.

Salutatorian Molly Conklin said the renovation was one example of the sweeping sense of change that came from moving from middle school to high school.

"We walked into the high school with no ceilings, no water and no clue what we were doing," she said. "As overwhelmed freshmen, we turned to each other to figure it out."

She said branching out from the hard-earned **See Belltown Grads page 2**

## Sun Sets on Portland Class of 2019

by Elizabeth Regan

The sun began its slow descent over the trees on the Portland High School campus last Friday, as 94 Highlanders followed a bagpiper to their seats on the hilltop dais for the 2019 graduation ceremony.

The wheezy notes of Pat Whalen's Pomp and Circumstance filled the front parking lot, where hundreds of friends and family members gathered to recognize the Class of 2019. Students will be setting off for institutions from Yale University in New Haven to Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah – and beyond.

Class President Morgan Tammaro said the class started forging its collective memory before the kids even entered kindergarten.

"The small, close-knit community that Portland provides has allowed all of us, many of us since we were in First Church Nursery School, to grow up with the same 100 kids," she said. "Even though we are all launching into our next steps in life, I know that each time I return home, I'll be able to reach out to Tyler Bordonaro or Max Thomas for a good laugh, Becca Tripp or Glenda Black for a deep, thought

provoking conversation, or Taylor Young or Alex Stevras for a hilarious Tik Tok or Vine reference."

The sun retreated behind the young women in red robes and young men in black as students, teachers and administrators took their turn at the podium to send off the class.

Mortar boards among the seated seniors featured an array of photos, names of universities and phrases like "And so the adventure begins" and "Did everyone see that? Because I will NOT be doing it again."

Superintendent of Schools Philip O'Reilly urged the graduates to keep moving forward.

"One of the things I often say to my six children is that trying something, doing something and making even the wrong choice is almost always better than standing still," he said.

He told the students only time will reveal whether a choice was the right one or not.

"So make your decisions – good ones, not-so-good ones – but make them. Only in this manner will you ever be able to use the freedom you have and not stay bound by indeci-

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Members of the Portland High School Class of 2019 do the traditional turning of the tassel at the end of last Friday's graduation.



In the photo at left, Qadro Salad receives her East Hampton High School diploma from Principal Frank Rizzuto at Wednesday's commencement exercises, as Board of Education Chairman Christopher Goff and Superintendent of Schools Paul Smith look on. Pictured right, Kimona Johnson joined 127 other graduates in tolling the ceremonial Bevin Bros. bell at the end of the ceremony to signify their transition to Bellringer alumni.



**Belltown Grads cont. from Front Page**

safety and security of their high school experience might be uncomfortable, but she urged her classmates to trust their upbringing.

"We've established our own comfort zone here based off of principles that we can bring with us to contribute to a new comfort zone wherever we land," she said. "These principles include kindness, empathy, tolerance, patience and a willingness to listen."

Board of Education Chairman Christopher Goff, who was able to hand a diploma to his youngest child during the ceremony, first addressed the graduates to bring attention to the school's five key principles: compassion, innovation, perseverance, collaboration and active learning.

He said a survey conducted with the help of science teacher and class advisor Andrea Giuliano asked the students to identify their proudest moment or accomplishment at the high school. He cited several of those students as examples of the school's principles in action.

They included Daniel Watkin, who was proud of being voted "Most Likely to Brighten Your Day" and Samantha Marston, whose greatest accomplishment was discovering who she is.

Goff also pointed to Matthew Fazzino. "Matthew, being innovative, found a way to not get on his teachers' bad side," he said.

The upbeat ceremony included a performance of the 1980s song "(I've Had) The Time of My Life," under the direction of choral teacher Ehren Brown. The group of senior and undergraduate singers finished with the the Alma Mater.

Superintendent of Schools Paul Smith told the *Rivereast* this year's diverse and talented graduates are well positioned for success in college, trades and the working world.

"There was a real slant toward science and technology and math, which is nice to see because that's where the competitive jobs are,"

Smith said. "It's nice to know they're getting into schools and majoring in something that's going to be almost a guaranteed job when they get out."

Slade, the newly-enlisted Marine, told the *Rivereast* prior to the ceremony that he chose the military simply to serve his country.

"It's just something I want to do," he said.

While acknowledging there's not a single member of the graduating class he doesn't consider a friend, he said he's eager to take the next step.

"I'm excited not to walk these halls anymore," he said. "As fun as it was, it feels freeing."

Scheduled to leave for basic training on Jan. 10, Slade said he's trying to get his departure date moved to August when his friends leave for college.

Student Coralin McDaniel told reporters she hopes to enter the U.S. Army through the "High School to Flight School" program.

Her mortar board told the story with the cut-out of a helicopter raised over Army Air Assault insignia.

She has already completed the necessary aptitude and physical testing through the fast-track program, which is also known as "Street to Seat."

"My arms were two centimeters too short, so I had to get a waiver for that," she said.

Now McDaniel, the daughter of Army parents who met at basic training, is waiting to find out if she'll be accepted as a helicopter pilot.

"I always knew I wanted to fly, but I didn't know I wanted to fly helicopters until this year," she said.

Other students gathered together to celebrate the start of their adult lives included Qadro Salad and Kimona Johnson.

The two have been close friends since Johnson came to East Hampton High School

from West Hartford two years ago, they said.

Qadro credited Johnson with making sure she got her homework done as soon as possible.

"There were days I would not do anything in class, and she'd be like 'Qadro, you'd better get on it,'" Salad said. "I know the word 'home-work' is for home, but she made it just school-work. There's not a single day I did homework at home. It was all in classes."

Johnson, who is debating joining the military or going to trade school, acknowledged serving as the honorary "school mom" who kept her friends in line academically.

"I want all my friends to succeed and to graduate," she said. "And we did it."

**Class of 2019 Graduates**

The members of the East Hampton Class of 2019 are:

Grace Jacquelyn Adams<sup>+</sup>, Ryan Christopher Adams<sup>\*</sup>, Caitline Jada Alfred, Nathan A. Alston, Alyssa Rae Thayer Anderson, Joshua Ronald Dean Anderson, Ryan Joel Arndt<sup>\*</sup>, Lauren May Baker, Hannah Maria Balda<sup>+</sup>, Alexis Marguerite Ballard, Meghan Helen Banack<sup>+</sup>, Leighanna Elizabeth Banning<sup>\*</sup>, Jonathan C. Barber<sup>+</sup>, Joshua Fredric Barrientos, David Alan Battit, Dylan S. Bernard, Travis J. Bevin, Drew Michael Bochan<sup>\*</sup>, Megan Laura Bosse<sup>\*</sup>, Shannon Nicole Bristol<sup>+</sup>, Irisa Brooke Burchsted-Glynn<sup>^</sup>, Jordan Michael Camp, Joseph Robert Caruso, Cody Alan Chaloux, Douglas A. Collisom, Molly Elizabeth Conklin<sup>\*</sup>, Megan A. Crotty, Liam Glenn Curtin, Nikolaus J. Czarnota, Justin Paul Czeremcha, Tyler Michael D'Anna<sup>+</sup>, Sebastião Teixeira De Freitas, David Elijah de Siqueira, Campos McLaughlin<sup>\*</sup>, Preston L. Decker, Isabella E. Del Orfano<sup>\*</sup>, Adrianna Jene Demoteses, Anthony Joseph DeZinno<sup>+</sup>, Enrique Rafael Diaz, Isabella Marie Diaz, Avery Austin Doyle, Cameron J. Dus<sup>\*</sup>, Lauren Pearl Dziekan, Patrick Christopher Farren, Zachary Thomas Fauvel, Matthew Aaron Fazzino, Kayla Marie Field, Keagan Jordan Fields, Jeffrey Michael Fitzgerald<sup>\*</sup>, Katherine Grace Flood, Erica L. Folta, Gabrielle Leone Gagliastri<sup>\*</sup>, Joshua Robert Gagné, Madeline M. Galtieri<sup>\*</sup>, Madison E.

Goff, Luis G. Gomez, Morgan Elizabeth Govoni<sup>+</sup>, Dean-Anthony Carlos Grano, Lance Roger Harbec, Alexis Christine Hennessey, Randy C. Hopkins, Joshua Frederick Hull, Joseph Dean Inlow, Jenna W. Jackson, Marissa Nicole Jedziniak<sup>+</sup>, Gabriel Najah Jerjies, Kimona Keneisha Johnson, Auberiana D. Joseph, Lauren Frances Kasperski<sup>^</sup>, Victoria Gayle Kelpen<sup>+</sup>, Naomi Eve Kennedy, Claudia Carina Krzeminski, Isabella Skye Morse Langton, Joseph Lawrence John Law<sup>\*</sup>, Benjamin John Lawton, Alexander William Link, Malachi Ross Lytle<sup>\*</sup>, Ani Vanyel Maratta, Alyssa Anne Marchi<sup>\*</sup>, Olivia L. Marsh<sup>^</sup>, Samantha Marie Marston, Ethan Thomas Martin, Alyssa Anne Maynard, Nicholas Dale Maynard, Coralin Kayla McDaniel<sup>\*</sup>, Shawn W. McGuigan, Meagan Karin McLaughlin, Jeromé Guillaume Ghislain Meertens, Daniel Gibson Miller, Nathaniel Paul Morrone, Michael James Nevico, Katherine Todor Nikolov<sup>+</sup>, Kylie E. O'Brien, Cole D. Olson<sup>\*</sup>, Lindsay Nicole Orbann, Emma Katherine Pawlak, Ryan Raymond Petocchi, Derek Bennett Phillips, Slawomir Andrew Piela<sup>+</sup>, Christopher Michael Rau, Jared Kevin Reed, Victoria Lyn Robida, Olha Romaniuk, Brandon Michael Romann, Jonathan Robert Roper, Jenna Rose Russo, Qadro Abdirahim Salad, Megan Rae Salafia, Thomas Robert Schaub, Lexie Marie Scrivano, Julia Danielle Shirley<sup>+</sup>, Nisha Sidana<sup>+</sup>, Gabriel Brett Slade, Michael Brandon Slade, Julia M. Smith<sup>+</sup>, Ruth Juliana Spooner<sup>\*</sup>, Sean Matthew Stoeckle, Frederick Jayson Swanton, Jared Alexander Thomas<sup>+</sup>, David James Thompson, Allyson Lee Tuxbury, Collin Raymond Twiss, Ethan Martin De Guzman Valencia<sup>^</sup>, Skylar Rose Vicino, Rachel Anne Vickery, Tristan Erik Wales, Daniel Taylor Watkins, Kristin Morgan Whitney and Demetrius Jason Yale.

- \*Top Ten Students
- +Ferrigno-Bell Chapter National Honor Society
- ^Tri-M
- Capstone Excellence

**Sun Sets cont. from Front Page**

sion," he said.

It's about both celebrating wins and lamenting losses, according to O'Reilly.

"Know that just by having made a choice, you have already grown immeasurably," he said.

Class salutatorian Glenda Black expressed a sense of urgency when she reminded graduates what Founding Father Benjamin Franklin meant when he said "lost time is never found again."

"In a world of dwindling non-renewable resources, the one most wasted is our time," she said. "We all have time, but once it passes by, so do its opportunities and possibilities, and we can never get that time back."

She acknowledged some wasted hours during her high school years, including those spent watching Netflix instead of sleeping or procrastinating instead of studying. But she said there was time well spent, too – and that's what brought her successfully to graduation.

"While we can't get that time back, what we can do is learn from this aphorism and use our resource of time wisely," she said. "Look at each day as an opportunity to learn something new, and take advantage of that opportunity."

Valedictorian Rebecca Tripp, who will be

studying physiology and neurobiology at the University of Connecticut, told her classmates their own decisions will benefit from always keeping in mind those who may not have a voice or who might not have the same opportunities.

She cited classmates who have already expressed plans to pursue careers as champions of the legal system, the environment and humanitarian issues.

"There is a tremendous amount of good in the world, and I urge everyone to find, share and celebrate it," she said. "But globally, there are gaps in equality, fault lines in our testimonies of good faith, and we have to be cognizant of hidden and blatantly abhorrent injustices."

Class advisor Cindy Laverty – whom Tamarro called the "ray of light" for the 2019 graduates – applauded the class's work ethic and school spirit.

"Because of the well-rounded lives you lead in and outside of school, so many of you are moving nonstop from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m.," she said. "And mind you, that doesn't include the homework, studying, projects, family time, dinner, Snapchat streaks, showers and sleep that still

needs to unfold before it all starts again."

After asking the graduates to take a moment to focus their thoughts on their classmates as well as the wider school community that supported them – and expressing some surprise when they all appeared to follow her directions – Laverty told the members of the Class of 2019 she's going to miss them.

But she also acknowledged it's time for them to go.

"I think Josh Perrotti summed it up perfectly a few months ago when he said 'It's kind of hard being 19 and still having to ask permission to use the bathroom,'" the teacher said.

**Class of 2019 Graduates**

The members of the Portland Class of 2019 are: Lisa Agogliati<sup>^</sup>, Brendan Albert<sup>^</sup>, Christina Aresco<sup>^</sup>, Ashley Benham<sup>+</sup>, Richard Bernard, Grace Berthiaume<sup>+</sup>, Benjamin Bials, Glenda Black<sup>+</sup>, Christian Bond, Tyler Bordonaro, Kelly Boutin<sup>^</sup>, James Brodeur, Kaitlin Capello<sup>^</sup>, Liam Carrier, Helen Cavanagh, Desmond Cleary, Aden Coleman, Bryce Cote<sup>^</sup>, Alyssa Couture, Carlton Craig, Cole Darby<sup>+</sup>, Austin Davignon, Olivia Delisle<sup>^</sup> Bryana Diaz, Pedro Diaz, Bethany Dillon<sup>^</sup>, Joshua Doncet<sup>^</sup> Caleb Doyle, Jillian Eiss, Stephen

Eiss, Lexus Fazio, Jaelyn Ferguson<sup>+</sup>, Brian Fickett, Olivia Fickett, Steven Fickett, Edwin Flynn, Aryanna Fontanez<sup>+</sup> Ashley Garen<sup>+</sup>, Taylor Garen<sup>^</sup>, Carter Graves, Katlynn Guibord<sup>^</sup>, Jason Hank, Lillian Hanks, Trevelle Harris, Liam Hassett, Brendan Hickey, Thomas Hodge, Brandon Howard, Dalton Hughes, Lucas Hurley, Nicholas Kelly, Emily Kerr<sup>^</sup>, Devon Kilham, Clara Kopacz<sup>^</sup>, Adam Koss, Taylor LaBella, Hazel Lammers<sup>+</sup>, Elijah Larson, Jenna Lastrina<sup>^</sup>, Richard Lawton, Bethany Leighton, Bryan Lockwood, Chase Lopes, Sydney Lord<sup>^</sup>, Matthew Major<sup>^</sup>, Mark Matera<sup>+</sup>, Abigail McNickle<sup>+</sup>, Nancy McQuade<sup>+</sup>, Jaxon Medvecky, Jennifer Morris, Elijah Muratori, Connor Murray, Madeline Myers, Nicholas Northgraves, Kayla Peralta, Joshua Perrotti, Cole Peterson, Christine Picard<sup>+</sup>, Veronica Poulin, Hannah Renner<sup>^</sup> Sabrina Rodriguez, Gabrielle Siena, Skyler Silvia, Justin Smith, Angelese Solis, Hannah Sroka<sup>+</sup>, Alexandra Stevas, Morgan Tamarro<sup>+</sup>, Apostoles Theodosopoulos, Brett Thivierge, Max Thomas, Rhiannon Thrasher, Kaitlyn Tran<sup>+</sup>, Rebecca Tripp<sup>+</sup>, Avery Turecek<sup>+</sup>, Devon Wilson, Reagan Waitowitz<sup>+</sup> and Taylor Young<sup>^</sup>.

- \*Top ten students
- + National Honor Society
- ^ Tri-M Music Honor Society

# Portland Resident, Officials Ponder Ways to Reduce Speed

by Elizabeth Regan

Efforts from both grassroots activists and town officials to reduce speeding in town have yielded some data about the scope of the problem and what's being done to address it.

The group of concerned citizens has been meeting for about a year, according to organizer Spencer Cabral. The Rose Hill Road resident has been working with the police department and town hall to monitor data coming from several dangerous areas of town.

He said the focus has been on the most heavily-traveled "pass-through" streets in town.

He described the amount of traffic on Ames Hollow Road and High Street as "jaw-dropping" and the speeds as "mind-blowing."

He said speeds maxed out around 75 mph on Ames Hollow and 65 mph on High Street. Both roads have posted speed limits of 25 mph.

The traffic count report, requested by First Selectman Susan Bransfield last year, showed the average daily traffic count on Ames Hollow Road was about 1,350. The average speed was 42 mph.

The counts were conducted last Oct. 9-15 by the Lower Connecticut River Valley Council of Governments at no charge, according to an email from the organization.

Statistics provided by the Portland Police Department show there were 865 traffic stops made throughout town from last July 1 through the beginning of this month. Police issued 126 tickets, 455 written warnings and 284 verbal warnings.

At a public informational session held earlier this month, Portland Police Captain Ron Milardo said it's up to officers to decide if a given stop warrants a ticket.

"I've talked to the officers about it, but I can't go in there and tell the officers, 'You have to give out 200 more tickets.' They have discretion," he said.

He said communication during a motor vehicle stop goes a long way toward affecting driver behavior.

"You walk up to the car, you talk to that person, you educate them a little bit. That plate goes into our system," he said.

That record will pop up in the system if that hypothetical driver is stopped again, according to Milardo.

"Now you give him the next step up," he said.

One woman at the session asked about the possibility of taking photos of each speeding offender in the same way that photographs are taken at some electronic toll gantries in the United States.

Cabral noted there are legal issues when it comes to taking photos of drivers.

Opponents to stoplight and speed cameras for decades have objected to such measures on constitutional grounds, citing due process and privacy issues.

"Trying to enforce speed that way, you could encounter legal issues that would cost the town so much money," he said.

Milardo brushed off the idea completely when asked by First Selectman Susan Bransfield if he had a response about the legality of speed cameras.

"No, it's not worth going into," Milardo said.

Cabral said the police department is one part of what must be a multi-faceted approach to reducing speeding in town.

He emphasized the force's 12 police officers "have so much more on their plate than traffic enforcement" as they serve the town's roughly 9,500 residents.

"We cannot say they're not engaged in doing their work. Those are significant [traffic stop] numbers, but it still does not mitigate the problems that we have," Cabral said.

The consensus among the concerned citizens is to focus on educating the public, according to Cabral.

He said the plan is to purchase solar-powered flashing radar signs that will be installed on Ames Hollow Road and High Street to let people know how fast they're traveling as they pass by.

First Selectman Susan Bransfield said this week that the traffic devices will be installed soon. The plan is to pay for the two units, totaling \$6,000, with capital funds freed up through the sale of surplus equipment. The allocation

will be going to town meeting on June 26 as part of a request for a \$100,875 additional appropriation covering several items for the public works department and schools.

The police department already owns one radar speed sign that can be carted from place to place.

Bransfield said data from the new radar signs that will be placed at Ames Hollow Road and High Street will be collected and analyzed to see if the signs made a difference in drivers' speeds. She said the units can be installed in other locations based on resident input.

Bransfield identified Middle Haddam Road as another likely site for sign placement and speed analysis.

Resident Elwin Guild at the informational meeting described Middle Haddam Road as a "racetrack" that people use to bypass traffic lights on Route 66 in Cobalt and at the intersection near the Winchester Café.

He said speeding in areas where the Air Line Trail crosses the road creates "a real hazard" for walkers, bikers and others using the rail trail.

Public works director and fire chief Robert

Shea acknowledged the importance of addressing the issue of unsafe practices like speeding and texting while driving.

"If you've ever been passed in a fire truck that's going to an emergency by a car, then you know people do drive fast. They pass you on the right because your fire truck's going too slow," he said.

But Shea reminded residents it costs money to buy and maintain equipment.

He said the town already replaces 20-30 street signs and traffic signs per year at a cost that can add up to \$5,000.

Shea remains hopeful the flashing radar signs will make people pay more attention to their speeds and will make some of them recognize that maybe they're "traveling a little too quick."

Milardo said he already received a call about the police department's radar speed trailer while it was sitting on Middle Haddam Road. The caller wanted the unit removed because it would flash at her every time she came around the corner, according to Milardo.

"So I said, 'If you slow down, it'll stop flashing,'" he recounted.

## Portland Motor Vehicle Stops

There were 865 traffic stops made in Portland from July 1, 2018 to June 2, 2019. Here's how they break down:

**Total stops:** 865

**Speeding Tickets:** 126

**Written warnings:** 284

**Verbal warnings:** 455

A majority of the stops occurred on several main roads or critical "pass-through" streets, according to officials. They were:

**Ames Hollow Road:** 102 stops

**High Street:** 113 stops

**Main Street:** 273 stops

**Route 66:** 228 stops

## RHAM Class of 2019 Graduates

**Editor's Note:** The list of graduates of the RHAM High School Class of 2019 was unavailable at press time last week. Here is the list in its entirety.

\* @ Zachary Joseph Aaron, \* James B. Abu-Rahmeh, Anjum R. Akhand, \*Brooke Mckenzie Almeida, Celia Lin Anderson, \*Gabrielle Mary Anderson, \* @ Tug Walter Arnold, Nicholas John Arruda, Jacob Matthew Arseneault, Aviana Baho, Steven D. Banis, Samuel Gutierrez Carter Bell, Anthony Leon Berzinskas IV, Emily Rae Biggs, \* @ Gretchen Marie Blume, \* @ Kaleigh Grace Bozzo, Matthew Thomas Brophy, Joseph E. Brosseau, Kara Lauren Brough, Michael L. Browning, Emily Anne Bunnell, Jeremy Thomas Burke, Jack Thomas Burton, Scott Ian Butler, Sarah Elizabeth Calderoni, \* @ Nicholas James Cancellaro, \* @ Sophie Louise Caplan, Sean Ryan Casey, Connor Richard Cavanna, Arin Andrew Chalastra, Kevin Ryan Clark, @ Amanda Ann Clifford, @ Meghan Elizabeth Clifford, Alex Wood Consadene, Lauren Melissa Costa, @ Trystin Cote, Hannah Grace Couture, + Kyle James Crosskey-Starr, Andrew Thomas Crowl, @ Joseph Thomas Czapiga, \* Madison Alexandra Czarnicki, \* @ Sydney Catherine D'Amaddio, Mason Damon, \* Tristin Avery Dapsis, Aubrianna Skye-Monique Darius, \* @ Austin Riley Davis, Carter Thomas Dean, Lillie Annabella Dean, Matthew Alexander Delgado, \* @ Danielle Marie Dempsey, \* @ Dylan James DePersia, \* @ Erica Rose Deskus, Kyle Peter Dickinson, Micah Aaron Dubitzky, Noah Giberson

Dubitzky, Cole Joseph Dumaine, \* Morgan Elizabeth Ennis, \* @ Abigail Lynn Erikson, Riley Marie Evingham, Thomas Vincent Fetta, \* @ Kayla Elizabeth Foley, Connor Brian Folkes, Michelle Mary Franklin, \* @ Samantha Nickse Freeman, Dylana Fusco, Joseph William Gagliardi, @ Ian Robert Gechas, Bajram Gjonbalaj, Jeremy P. Goddard, Caroline Ellen Gomez, Jared Laurence Gorbolino, Garrett John Lee Grannan, Nathan James Green, \* @ Daniel Brian Grenier, Jacob Tanner Gross, Jada Rachel Gunas, Michelle Renee Guppy, \* @ Skylar Elisabeth Haines, \* @ Justin Yong Han, Madeleine Grace Hartman, \* Emma Madeleine Hazel, @ Rosie Belle Henderschedt, Kyle Alexander Hewett, Wyatt Hill, @ Anthony Joseph Hoffman, Benjamin David Holbrook, Logan F. Holcomb, \* Isabelle Kayla Hudson, Kiera Huestis, \* Erin Marie Hughes, Vincenzo A. Ingenito;

\* @ Kelly Jean Jacobson, \* @ Laura Kate Jepson, Kyle Johnson, Grant Warren Kalkus, Weronika Gabriela Kaplon, David Richard Kasper, \* Nathan Bailey Keeney, McKenzie Lynnette Keith, Matthew John Keogh, Michael John Keogh, Ethan Joseph Kirkpatrick, Garrett Reilly Kleinhenn, Marisa Cella Krasusky, \* @ Jordyn Estela Krupp, @ Erin Olivia Kruse, @ Zoe Marie Lachut, \* @ Bridget Fitzgerald Lalonde, Tanner Joseph Lampugnale, Michael Thomas Landrey, Monique Chloe Lapierre, Clayton Anton Lavey, \* @ Caitlyn Elizabeth Ann Leahy, \* @ Gabriella Ann Leaming, Kieran Patrick Leary, Andy Lin, + Riley Steven

Litterio, @ Jenna Catherine Lord, \* @ Elizabeth Hope Lynch, Kevin Jacob MacDonald, Nicholas George Malgioglio, Elena Marie Manning, \* @ Alexa Rai Massey, Tylor Jane Mathieu, McKenzie Edward Mayo, Julia McAvoy, Jack C. McClurg, Sydney A. McMahon, @ Caroline Marie Meyer, Elisabeth Lynn Miano, \* John Barrett Miller, \* @ Katherine Leigh Milone, \* @ Austin Joseph Moreland, Elliot Morelli-Wolfe, Ciara Jaegh Morrell, Daniel John Mullaney, + Dayton William Mund, Emmalee Barrett Mund, Jacob Charles Mund, \* William J. Murray IV, Shawn Paul Nichols, Benjamin James Nome, @ Olivia Wolmer Nylene, Daniel John O'Connor, Ian Michael O'Reilly, Timothy Oleg O'Shea, \* Kathleen Viola Olmstead, Emily Yolanda Ortiz, \* @ Elisabeth Brooks Packer, Bailee Alexandra Palen, Steven Patrick Pampreen, Garrett James Pandolfi, @ Jessica Lynn Paradie, Autumn Frances Parker, Carolyn Kerrigan Parker, Nina Brianna Pasay, @ Deep Tikendra Patel, Jordan Alexander Pelletier, @ Erin Li-Ying Peng, Abigail A. Perrin, Sydney Elaine Peterson, @ Christopher Daniel Phelps, @ Delaney Brooks Pike, \* @ Abigail Ann Potticary, @ Julian Vincent Prieto, Michael John Provencher, Rachel Ann Purcell, @ Seamus William Queen, @ Megan Raimondo, \* Ariana Rajae, Ethan Craig Ramirez, \* @ Maura Grace Ramsay, @ Callum Thayer Redman, Mia Kate Rhodes, @ Harleigh Ann Roach, + John Francis Roache, Jeremy Roberts, \* @ Nicole Carolynn Rogers, Devon Saul Rojas, Cameron Scott Rose, \* @

Rachel Nicole Salamone, Christian Salvias, @ Saige Natalie Sanderson, \* Jaclyn Dai Santella, Benjamin A. Sarkis, \* @ Marie Elizabeth Sclafani, Emily M. Selbie, Max Thomas John Sendley, Liddy Faith Kala Siggia, Gianna Angel Silva, Nathan Jae Skopas, Drew S. Smith, @ Kenzie Elizabeth Smith, \* @ Lydia Kay Smith, Demetrius Tyrese Soto, Hannah Lauren Sousa, @ Julia Leslie St. Jean, @ Steven Roderick St. Pierre, \* @ Jacqueline Grace Stalega, Zachary Scott Steinbrecher, Sydney Ann Stone, Caden Curtis Talbot, @ Jack Edward Tarka, Joaquin Michael Teixeira, Brendan Stuart Tew, @ Devin Raymond Thiesen, Hannah Michele Tingley, Alexander Tofan, Ian Johnson Tomanelli, @ Gabriella Trombley, @ Maggie Elizabeth Veronesi, Carter Michael-Stafford Verrengia, Amy Frances Viens, Samuel Richard Walls, Brittany Anne Wharton, Derek Robert White, Caili Wilkinson, Xander Williams, \* @ Elizabeth Rose Wilson, Joshua James Wilson, @ Derek Michael Wood, Rachel E. Woodmancy, Nicholas Jason Xenophontos, @ Oksana Yavdoshnyak, Damon Thomas Yaworsky, Sebastian Jerzy Zyzdorf.

# Valedictorian

## Salutatorian

\* Member of National Honor Society in good standing

@ Green cord/100 or more hours of community service

+ Enlisted in the military

# Bacon Class of '19 Sent On its Way

by Allison Lazur

While gloomy weather conditions forced the Bacon Academy Class of 2019 to hold its graduation indoors last Thursday, June 13, the 180 members of the class were nothing but smiles.

Draped in blue robes, the Class of 2019 received sage advice and words of encouragement from their peers, faculty and administration.

Superintendent of Schools Jeffrey Burt shared that this particular class is “special” to him, as his daughter was also graduating from high school the following night.

He decided to bestow his wisdom on Bacon’s class as a father more than as an educator – but acknowledged the line between both roles is “blurred.”

“I hope that you don’t make any mistakes, that you don’t have any heartbreaks, or any financial trouble, or any difficulty with your own children one day,” he said. “While that is the hope of a father, it is still a mistake. It would be a mistake because it is experiences like these that will help shape who you will be.”

He continued expressing hope for a life filled with “contentment” for the outgoing seniors.

“Being happy is wonderful, but it is a state of being that just can’t exist all the time,” Burt said, adding that today individuals are “constantly bombarded by examples of people we should try to be or things we should try to have, setting an unrealistic version of life.”

“So, my hope for you is not perfection or constant happiness but contentment and I ask you to find this in things that give you every day peace of mind and the small joys in life,” he said.

Principal Matthew Peel compared the outgoing class to those of similar age from the 1960s.

“This group of young adults is more socially aware and politically involved than previous generations,” he said, adding that they are “very reminiscent of the youth of the late ‘60s.”

He complimented the class for excelling at sports, music, arts, academics and community service, as well as caring for one another, while also managing to graduate with “unprecedented amounts of college credits.”

“You are no longer little freshmen goobers; you are now grown adults,” Peel said. “Take the lessons you have learned and begin your life. You have made me a very proud principal.”

Board of Education Chairman Brad Bernier took the time to help the graduates realize simply, what they just achieved.

“Some worked hard for today. For some it came easy. Some of you probably thought you would never get here. Regardless of your path, you are all now in the same place as your class of 2019 peers, not just here at Bacon Academy but around the world,” Bernier said.

He reflected with students on just how crucial each school in the district was to getting them to graduation.

“CES instilled in you to care. JJIS taught you the importance of community. WJMS encouraged you to innovate – and, with no AC and sketchy heat, helped you develop grit!” he said.

Bernier outlined how the new graduates will use that background in the next phases of their lives.

“You stand out by sharing that you are a Bacon Academy graduate and that your education was much more than academic. You have developed character...As someone who is involved in employment decisions I can tell you that character truly matters,” Bernier said.

Words of guidance followed *The Star-*

*Spangled Banner* – sang by the Bacon Academy Chamber Choir – offered by both valedictorian Jessica Savage and Salutatorian Amber Deslaurier while Gilbert Lamb Essayist Madyson Park shared her thoughts on gratitude.

Park outlined how moving from four different states, six houses and living nowhere for longer than five years has made her thankful.

The reason for the frequency of moves was for no specific reason, Park said.

“I think parents recognize that they only get one life, and if they’re unhappy with something where they are, they can pick up and try again someplace else,” Park said. “And while I may not have always been happy about having to start over so often, now it’s something that I cherish and wish to continue throughout my life.”

As a result, Park said she feels she is “set apart from the vast majority” with a “wide bank to choose from” when asked about her life experiences and not having to “say that one specific place is home.”

Savage assured her fellow classmates she had discovered the meaning of life while working on her speech for the ceremony.

“I’m about to blow your mind and answer arguably the most important philosophical question of all time,” Savage said. “The meaning to life is... to find your life’s meaning.”

She cited a book titled *Man’s Search For Meaning*, read earlier in the year, and written by Holocaust survivor Viktor Frankl.

Savage said Frankl in the book questions why Nazi concentration camp prisoners, who weren’t necessarily the strongest or treated any better than other prisoners, survived.

“Frankl found that the reason the survivors were able to power through some of the cruelest forms of human torture possible was because...wait for it...they understood how their lives had meaning,” she said. “The moral of the story was that if you have a sense of meaning in your life, you can survive practically anything.”

She used Frankl’s conclusion to encourage her peers to find their meaning.

“My advice to you is simply this: try to find something in life that gives you purpose, something that gives you a reason for living,” she said.

Deslaurier reassured the Class of 2019 that being unsure about the direction of their futures is okay.

“Sometimes getting where you need to be is as simple as stopping trying to get there,” she said.

She reminded her peers to keep their passions “alive” and to “not forget to be mindful of the joys of the present.”

Deslaurier emboldened those listening to “live genuinely” and “apply passion where it counts.”

“Don’t worry about building a bridge to success,” she said. “Think simply about laying down the next stone.”

## Class of 2019 Graduates

The members of the Bacon Academy Class of 2019 are: Catherine Victoria Aldridge, Sarah Elizabeth Aldridge, Leonardo Amaro Jr., Anthony Albert Ambrosia, Bridget Cameron Anderson, David Scott Ashley, Caleb Baldauf, \*Mildred Fair Baldinger, Samantha Barter, Michael C. Bear, Jakob Christopher Behlke, Zachary Daniel Billiel, Maile Sabrina Blumberger, Evan Bruce Bordeau, Nicolas Paul Bouchard, Evan Marc Bradstreet, Shea-Lilly Katharine Bresnahan,\*Kyle Burzycki, Brittany Mae Byington, Corbin Reilly Capone, Mercedes Grace Caron, Kaitlyn Rose Chasse, Christopher Lee Ciarcia, Matthew A. Clark, Shaylynn Paige Clark,



The members of the Bacon Academy Class of 2019 joyfully threw their caps in the air at the end of last week’s graduation ceremony. The 180 students concluded their high school career with words of encouragement and advice from their peers, administration and staff.

Matthew Dawson Coleman, Kaitlyn Crowell, Sarah Noelle Csuka, Mary Cugno, Cameron Curtis, Abigail D’Elia, Mikayla Dalton-Boekweg, Jonathan Edd Dankiw, Stephanie Lynn Davis, Brian A. Dec II, Arianna Jasmin Dechalus, Amber Hope Deslaurier, Spencer Shane Dinsmoor, Will Thomas Dowd, Ethan Dubiel, Noah Cameron Elliott,\*Carrie Epstein, Sarah Emily Eslami, Jared Andrew Evans, Torrie Elizabeth Fitzpatrick, Taryn Alyssa Formanek, Scott C. Fries, Claire Elizabeth Fritz, Megan E. Gabriel, John Luke Gagnon, Mickayla Rae Gauger, Jacob William Gladding, Megan Victoria Glover, Alexis Marie Goliass, Nicole Marie Gorski, Alicia D. Grant, Benjamin Michael Grottole, Jordan Patrick Guerra,\*Olivia Rose Guinness, Abby Gustavsen, Cole Harmon Gustavsen,\*Ann Elizabeth Hageman, Autumn Rose Hannah, Zenaveve Ann Harrington, Bethany Erin Harrison, Riley Madison Hart, Dylan Heald, Fiona Corrie Hendricks, Alyssa Anne Herr, Katelyn Joyce Hickey, Alec Benjamin Holroyd, Joshua Salvatore Huesmann, Ian M. Humphrey;

Michael Phillip Islieb Jr., Jake Robin Jakubowski, Andrew P. Janus, Kathryn Rose Kauffman, Jenna J. Kiernan, Jibri Knighton,\*Ryan Anthony Konon, \*Yianni Koutsofavas, Joshua Richard Alexander Kowinsky, Quinn McKinley Kozak, \*Chelsea Michaela Kranc, Kyle Andrew Krystofik, Anna Maria Kukulka, Matthew Thomas Laliberte, Abigail Amy Langevin,\*Colin James Larkin, Olivia Rose Lenares, Abigail Rose Levine, Richard J. Linane;

Courtney Mary Losier, Samantha Lynne Lovering,\*Christopher Samuel Maffuid, Matthew Roger Mancini, Alexandar Manolev, Ryan Marinoccio, Nathan Moise Marks, Isabella Martin, Jonathan David Maurice, Conor Matthew McCourt,

Megan Grace McGowan, Alexandria B. McKenzie, \*Molly Anne McLoughlin, Jonah Sung McNaughton, \*Jakob Misbach, Noah C. Mocksfield, Breanna Lynn Moldoch, Ethan W. Moores, Brianna Eileen Murphy, Jon-Michael Shane Murray, Samantha Rosemarie Nadeau, Zachary Nair, Tristan Paul Naples, Bryan Scott Narducci, Spencer Andrew Naus, Jacqueline Sophia Navickas, Cassandra Jean Neudecker, Sean Robert Newton, Brady Walker Noniewicz, Kellie Renee Nudd, Cam Okarmus, Sasha Anne Okonuk, Kyle M. Olbrias, Matthew Aaron Oliver, Kaitlyn Olsen;

Joshua Pan, Dustin Raymond Paquette, Madyson Victoria Park,\*Sarah Elizabeth Praisner, Dominic William Prignano, Zachary Thanos Provost, Scott Alan Quine Jr., Dominick T. Ricci, Taylor Rae Rochette, Dylan S. Rosenthal, Christopher John Samek, Nicholas Sanchez, David Elliott Sardi, \*Jessica Jayne Savage, Alexa Susan Savidakis, Samuel Charles Schroll, LeAnna Gloria See, Lauren Siggins, Haylee Skoog, Alexis Anne Smelser, Avery Smith, Gage Smith, Gabriella Grace Snow, Natalie Stack, Joshua A. Stewart, Connor Lawson Sullivan, Sara Swift, Nicholas C. Tartsinis, Jessica Tinelle, Elizabeth Lynn Townsend, Jonathan Trusz, Vincent Kenneth Tufo, Alex Turner,\*Nicole Christine Tyler, Ariella Fallan Tyles, Victoria Marilyn Vaillancourt, Alibeth Valenzuela, \*Reynaldo Valenzuela, Ioannis Valkanos, Jamie Lee Ventura, Gregory Vilardo Jr., Grayson Waller, Isabella Walls, Hayley Nicole Waters, Kayla Waters, Zachary David Wilkins, Benjamin Atticus Williams, Jonathan Frederic Willson, Jasmine Wilson,\*Lillian Marcene Wonderly, Bradley Christopher Wright, Kelli R. Wrinn, Santiago Mateo Yanez Escobar.

\*Member of the National Honor Society

# Lawsuit Filed in Colchester Overdose Death

by Allison Lazur

Evan Bertrand, 29, died on June 7, 2017 following drug intoxication by injection of fentanyl. A lawsuit filed earlier this month is alleging Bertrand's death is "directly and proximately caused by the negligence and/or carelessness" of Dr. James G. Bucci of Colchester Internal Medicine.

The suit filed by attorney Keith Trantolo of Trantolo & Trantolo and on behalf of Bertrand's mother, Jill Bertrand, includes two counts of medical malpractice – one against Bucci and a second against Colchester Internal Medicine.

Evan Bertrand became a patient of Bucci in June 2014, who prescribed Oxycodone to Bertrand for back pain and continued to do so in the following years, the lawsuit states.

Fentanyl and Oxycodone are both types of synthetic opiates.

The United States Drug Enforcement Administration states Fentanyl is 80 to 100 times stronger than morphine.

The complaint states "[Bucci] continued to prescribe and increase his Oxycodone medication" and as a result Bertrand built a tolerance to Oxycodone and became highly dependent and addicted to Oxycodone.

The lawsuit alleges throughout his visits with Bucci, Bertrand exhibited "recognizable patterns of known complications with Oxycodone treatment and severe addiction that went unnoticed."

Bucci is alleged to have failed to: offer non-addictive treatments for chronic pain to avoid addiction, take appropriate life-saving action when Bertrand persistently overconsumed his medication, "reconcile over 150 excess dose medications representing nearly 5000 mg of Oxycodone," and properly evaluate Bertrand's back condition before administering and continuing to administer opioid pain medication.

The lawsuit also alleges that Bucci "lacked the requisite knowledge, skill and experience to adequately and properly care for, supervise and monitor Evan Bertrand" and that Bucci "generated foreseeable complication which included severe opioid addiction and foreseeable injury in the form of death by self-administered opioid overdose."

Colchester Internal Medicine office staff told the *Rivereast* Bucci and the practice had no comment.

A redacted written report by a "similar health care provider" was also included in the complaint against Bucci and Colchester Internal Medicine.

The two-page report is from a doctor licensed in the state of Washington whose credentials include Board Certification in Addiction Medicine in 2010 through the American Board of Addiction Medicine, Distinguished Fellow of the American Society of Addiction Medicine and past President of the Washington Society of Addiction Medicine.

Additionally, the report identifies the doctor's main focus as being primary care and the management of opioids in the primary care setting and outpatient addiction medicine.

After reviewing numerous pages of Bertrand's medical records, the unidentified doctor states, "Bucci's care fell below the standard of care leading to his death" for reasons outlined earlier in the lawsuit.

The report also reveals that Bertrand allegedly informed Bucci within his first few visits that he had overused medications on several occasions.

"The MD escalated the patient's dose of medication, further fueling his addiction," the report alleges.

A November 2016 *Hartford Courant* article reveals the Connecticut Medical Examining Board also placed a one-year probation on Bucci and required the hiring of a practice supervisor who would send quarterly reports to the Department of Public Health.

The article states "Records show that Bucci failed to meet the standard of care for four patients by inadequately documenting their use of opioid medications between 2005 and 2011 and again in 2015."

At that time, Bucci also chose not to contest and did not admit wrongdoing while also taking additional courses on pain management, the prescribing of opioids and medical documentation, the article states.

State medical examining board license database shows Bucci's medical license is still active.

Bucci's controlled substance registration is currently inactive for reason of surrender, according to the database.

# Marlborough Voters Approve Sale of Town Water System

by Allison Lazur

The sale of the Marlborough Municipal Water System to Aquarion Water Company was met with overwhelming support at a town meeting Tuesday night.

Only two of the roughly 45 residents in attendance voted against the sale.

Also at Tuesday night's meeting were Dan Lawrence, director of engineering and planning for Aquarion and a resident of Marlborough; Elizabeth Camerino-Schultz, Aquarion director of real estate; and Halloran and Sage attorneys Ken Slater and Ron Ochsner, who were involved in advising the town on the sale.

The water system includes approximately 6,650 feet of water mains, six wells, pump house and storage tanks and serves about 19 properties, including the library, Marlborough Elementary School and senior center.

The sale will total approximately \$572,427 and is based on a standard formula used by Connecticut Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA) to determine the value of water systems.

The sale is expected to be finalized in about the next eight months, First Selectman Amy Traversa said.

Funds from the sale will be used for future capital projects.

Aquarion already operates and maintains the system in return for a \$10,000 annual fee paid by the town, based on a 2017 agreement with the town.

Traversa said the sale of the system has been in the works since 2012, with both Aquarion and Connecticut Water Company involved in the discussion from 2012 to 2014.

She said initial plans to partner with Connecticut Water fell through when the company opted out of the partnership because "the system didn't fit into their business model."

Talks continued in 2017 with Aquarion, resulting in the 60-year operations and maintenance agreement.

"It was never the intent of the town to own this system," Traversa said.

The sale includes five of the system's six wells, with one remaining under the town's ownership because of its location inside Marlborough Elementary School.

The pump house building located on the school property and its associated parts, such as electrical, piping and controls, will be transferred to the ownership of Aquarion.

However, an associated 24,000 gallon storage tank built with state grant funds will remain on lease with the town.

"At the end of the 47-year lease, it will transfer to Aquarion Water Company for a dollar," Traversa said.

Water mains, including 1,200 feet on School Drive running from the school to the library and senior center, are also included in the sale.

A 60-year lease on 4,100 feet of water mains built with state grant funds will transfer to Aquarion at the end of the lease.

Per the town's 2017 agreement with Aquarion, the company will continue to maintain the assets of the system that are either under lease or unable to be sold – such as the elementary school well, said Aquarion director of public relations Peter Fazekas.

Aquarion Water Company also currently owns the Birchwood Water System which services residents on Sherwood and Roberts Road.

The Hillside water system, located on Hillside Avenue, Keirstead Circle and Hall Trail, and currently owned by Hillside Water Corporation, a private association, is in the works to be acquired by Aquarion, Traversa said Tuesday.

Fazekas said the sale is expected to close by mid-October.

"There are hopes and plans in place to interconnect the systems at some point in the future. What this will do is help provide a better quality water source and better supply of water to all of these areas and we have sufficient water to do that," Traversa said.

She added that the town still owns the land above the pipes and controls future developments and expansion, with the exception of the Hillside and Birchwood water systems.

Additional developments are subject to approval by the town's planning, zoning and conservation commissions, as well as local ordinances.

"We set the rules," Traversa said. "If there is something that we like, permitting can be very, very easy, and if there is something that the town doesn't want, we also have a lot of ordinances in place to prevent that from happening. So we maintain the control of what actually happens with the water system."

She said Wednesday the main reason behind selling the system is to "divest ourselves from the liability."

"Some of the reasons [to sell the system] include the fact that the town lacks adequate staff and the requisite experience in doing it," she said

As state regulations surrounding water become increasingly stricter, it becomes more difficult for the town to meet those rules, Traversa said.

"Right now in a current pricing structure we don't have any capital built in for repairs or maintenance. That's not going to last. The pump house itself is 15 years old. We're going to need to maintain the system that we have regardless of whether we expand any further. It's going to

need maintenance and when we do need maintenance it tends to be really expensive maintenance," Traversa said.

The town no longer has to budget for the \$250,000 to \$350,000 investment to develop new water sources because of Tuesday's sale, she said.

A total of \$50,000 was budgeted for the 2019-20 approved budget to drill additional wells.

The funds will now go to other capital projects.

Several residents spoke out in favor of the sale, including resident Roark McCutcheon, who is currently the president of the Hillside water system to be acquired by Aquarion.

"After running a volunteer water company for 20 years, I agree with the assessment that the need for a stable water system in town is overdue. Working out the details is always the devil, but I think it's a good move," McCutcheon said.

Mike Davis, a resident on the Birchwood Water System already owned by Aquarion, said service since entering into an agreement with Aquarion has "been great."

Sherwood Lane and Roberts Road residents years ago were in "dire straits for water" while operating their own system, according to Davis. He said problems included running out of water and, at one point, paying over \$200 a month for water.

"Every time we deal with you it's a pleasure and I just can't say enough. You were a god-send to us," Davis said of Aquarion.

The transfer of ownership must now be approved by PURA, who will also approve new water rates for residents. Traversa said residents will not see a change in rates for at least eight months.

# East Hampton Ambulance Association Seeks Benefits for Its Members

by Elizabeth Regan

The East Hampton Ambulance Association is seeking support for two proposals to ensure its volunteer emergency medical technicians are treated like other first responders in town.

The requests are emerging against the backdrop of increasing demands on volunteers, including those related to mental strain from especially difficult calls. In a roughly one-month period last summer, there were five traffic fatalities in three separate crashes.

John Tuttle, president of the association's board of directors, stood before the Town Council last week to ask the town to provide ambulance volunteers with mental health services available to town employees and firefighters.

He said the situation came to light after a two-car crash that claimed the lives of one man and two women last July 31. Officials at the time described the crash as "horrific." There were no survivors.

"We have people who put themselves in these horrific situations to go to a scene like that and deal with it and can't unsee things like that," Tuttle said.

Tuttle's first request involves the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) offered through the town's insurance provider. The framework is popular in public, private and nonprofit workplaces throughout the country as a way to give employees the resources they need to help resolve personal problems that may be affecting job performance.

"We offer it to our employees here in town," Tuttle said. "We offer it to our volunteer firefighters and we offer it to our police force. But we found out that we don't offer it to our ambulance corps volunteers."

Town Manager Michael Maniscalco this week said the town has purchased the Employee Assistance coverage for the ambulance corps earlier this year, but has asked the organization to reimburse the town for the roughly \$1,000

annual cost.

The East Hampton Ambulance Association got its start in the early 1950s, when members would deliver patients to Middlesex Memorial Hospital in an old Cadillac. Now, two modern ambulances and a first responder vehicle answer nearly 1,000 calls per year.

The self-funded association charges for transport based on a fee structure set by the state, according to Tuttle.

"That money goes to cover our expenses. But we also have about \$700,000 of equipment on the road that we've never had to stand here and ask you for a nickel," he said.

Tuttle said the ambulance association board of directors agrees the community should pay for the employee benefit program, which he said amounts to about \$40 per member per year.

"Our community benefits from these people coming into their homes at all hours of the night and helping them in the most difficult times they may ever have in their life," Tuttle said. "I feel as though we as a community should treat the ambulance association just like we treat the firefighters and the police force – our other first responders – and give them that resource."

Tuttle also asked officials to extend an existing program that gives a property tax break to emergency responders by making it available to the five volunteers who live outside the town borders in Haddam Neck.

The tax exemption went into effect in 2000 to recognize "the dedicated service" of the East Hampton volunteer fire department, ambulance corps and civil preparedness director. It gives full, active members a property tax break up to \$1,000 per year.

Haddam Neck is part of Haddam – but it sits adjacent to East Hampton on the opposite side of the river from the rest of Haddam's four sprawling villages.

"We have five active members who live in

Haddam Neck and serve our community," Tuttle said. "They don't just answer calls in Haddam Neck; they answer calls throughout East Hampton."

But Haddam does not provide a property tax abatement for its ambulance corps, according to Haddam First Selectman Lizz Milardo.

But she said in a phone call this week that Haddam just authorized a tax abatement for the town's volunteer firefighters as part of the newly-approved budget and is in the process of working out the details.

Milardo said she would be open to conversation with East Hampton officials about the idea of providing an incentive for the Haddam Neck volunteers.

According to the local ordinance that instituted the tax abatement – which is based on language in state statute – any town may "enter into interlocal agreements with other municipalities for the purpose of providing property tax relief to volunteers who live in one municipality but who volunteer their services in another municipality."

Tuttle said it would cost about \$95 per week for all five ambulance personnel from Haddam Neck to cover an annual tax break of up to \$1,000 per volunteer.

Tuttle said it's crucial to offer these kinds of benefits to volunteers who remain largely unpaid for their efforts – especially when many towns in the area are experiencing volunteer shortages.

"It's money well spent, versus having this thing crumble to where we have to go out and hire paid services," he said.

But some council members were leery about giving the financial incentive to people who don't live in town.

Maniscalco told councilors he would look into the legal issues associated with the idea.

This week, the town manager said he still has "no idea" if the town can give a tax abatement to residents of Haddam.

Tax assessor Gail Gwiazdowski, reached last week for comment and contacted again this week, had not followed up by press time with a response.

Vice Chairman Mark Philhower during the council meeting also worried about the precedent the council would be setting.

"State rules are very stringent on how you spend that money and where it goes. The minute you start giving non-residents money, they're employees. And that's a door I'm not willing to open," Philhower said.

But Philhower expressed support for giving Employee Assistance Program benefits to the ambulance association members.

"I have no problem with the EAP, I think we should do that, absolutely. Why they don't get it, I don't know. That was an oversight," he said.

Maniscalco this week appeared to backtrack on the town's request for reimbursement for the ambulance association's \$1,000 share of the employee benefit coverage.

"In this instance, we'll figure it out and find a way to make it work because they are so important to us," he said.

Council Chairman Melissa Engel said this week she is working with Maniscalco to research the tax abatement issue.

"I need more information," she said. "I need to know how we can make this happen legally, correctly."

She said the item will be added to a future council agenda, but it's unlikely she will have enough information to bring it up for discussion at the upcoming meeting on Tuesday.

"I thought John Tuttle made a very good case. I want to figure out how to make this happen for everybody," she said.

## For Belltown Budget, Twice is Nice

by Elizabeth Regan

East Hampton officials are ready to get to work now that voters have authorized \$31.18 million for education and \$15.22 million for general government with the passage of the 2019-20 budget.

Both sides of the divided spending plan passed at referendum Tuesday after failing on the first try about a month ago.

The education budget passed by a vote of 1,138-828; the town budget passed 1,155-813.

The newly-approved \$46.40 million budget represents an increase of \$953,531, or 2.1%, over current year spending.

The education budget is an increase of \$536,525, or 1.75%, over current spending.

The general government budget proposal comes in with an increase of \$417,006, or 2.82%.

The Board of Finance met in the middle school gymnasium after the referendum results were announced to set the mill rate at 33.14 mills – an increase of 0.93 mills over the current mill rate.

Voter turnout on Tuesday came in at 23.20% of eligible voters, up slightly from the 19.80% who showed up for May's failed referendum. That time around, the proposed government budget went down by 83 votes and the education proposal failed by 19 votes.

Town Manager Michael Maniscalco said it's now time to start projects that have been put off since 2018 due to budget constraints and timing.

Last year's drawn-out budget season, which didn't end until October, meant the town did not have the funding to secure contracts for the construction season. The continually-deteriorating roads caused a lot of complaints from residents over the course of the winter and spring, according to Maniscalco.

"Well, there's a real reason for that," he said. "We didn't get to do any road work last year."

He said the council at its next meeting will be set to authorize road repairs as one of its first orders of business.

Superintendent of Schools Paul Smith said immediately following the referendum that it's

a relief to be able to plan for the upcoming school year, albeit a little later than usual.

The education budget passed on the first try at last year's referendum, even though the general government budget didn't get approved until October.

"The last three budgets have passed in May, so it made it much easier for us to plan," he said.

This year, he said he had to send teachers home without knowing where they would be assigned in the fall; he also slowed down the hiring process to replace retired teachers.

"But now we can move full steam ahead," he said.

The Board of Education's initial \$31.58 million request was reduced by \$399,500 over the course of this year's budget season – not including capital education expenses – as it went through the Board of Finance and council on its way to approval.

Smith said the education budget maintains funding to bring popular choral teacher Ehren Brown to full time, adds several Advanced Placement courses, and incorporates a scaled-back Science, Technology, Engineering and Math laboratory into Center School.

Board of Education Chairman Christopher Goff called the vote definitive and "a win."

But he expressed disappointment the finance board chose not to transfer \$36,000 to the capital fund to pay for middle school tablet computers that were eliminated during the budget season.

The middle school program, which provides each student with a dedicated Chromebook to use throughout the school year, is currently in its third year.

Goff in a letter last week to the finance board and council asked officials to consider using an unexpected increase in education funding from the state to pay for the middle school Chromebook program.

Goff said the state budget recently approved by lawmakers is more favorable to municipalities than a proposal from Gov. Ned Lamont that was used as the basis of local revenue projec-

tions. That means what officials thought would be a \$263,925 decrease in education aid compared to the current year will actually be a decrease of \$108,622.

The finance board formally rejected a motion from Democrat Barbara Moore to authorize the funding during its meeting following the budget referendum. The 5-2 vote fell along party lines.

Moore told the *Rivereast* that transferring the funds to the capital budget would have resulted in a 0.96 mill increase instead of the 0.93 mill increase ultimately set by the finance board.

Fellow Democrat Ted Turner described the computer tablets as a critical part of education that is replacing pencils and paper.

"Chromebooks are for their homework, for their tests, for information between the student and the teacher. [They are] very, very important in a technology age," Turner said.

Moore emphasized the importance of fully funding capital needs instead of continually devising a plan and then scaling it back.

Critics at countless budget meetings for decades have blamed the town for "kicking the can down the road" instead of addressing needs as they arise.

The newly-approved capital plan comes in at \$911,500. The original request from the Capi-

tal Improvement Committee – with five members including Moore, Council Chairman Melissa Engel and finance board Chairman Richard Brown – was for \$1.36 million.

"I think we have a lot of work to do in capital," Moore said. "And when we do meet, we have to stick by what we said."

Parent and former school board member Tania Sones had similar concerns about the overall cuts to education capital projects, which also slashed video surveillance upgrades to all schools, the installation of shatterproof window laminate to the inside of large glass areas in the schools, and the replacement of worn floor tiles and carpeting.

"So what happens now? We're down \$300,000, and is it expected that that amount, or higher, [will be] added to next year's budget just so that it's slashed again before it reaches the voters?" she said to the *Rivereast* after the referendum.

Smith said the school board at its meeting Monday will discuss other options for funding the Chromebooks.

"I can find it in the budget by cutting \$36,000 of other things," he said. "And so it becomes a shell game. We slide things out, we slide things in. And I don't mean to sound bitter, but for a 0.96 mill rate [increase] as opposed to a 0.93?"

### Referendum Results

Voters at Tuesday's budget referendum approved the 2019-20 budget proposal at the second referendum. Here are the results:

Shall the town government annual budget for the fiscal year 2019-20, in the amount of \$15,223,214, as recommended by the Town Council be approved?

Yes – 1,167 No – 817

Shall the Board of Education annual budget for the fiscal year 2019-20, in the amount of \$31,176,193, as recommended by the Town Council be approved?

Yes – 1,150 No – 832

Is the general government budget of \$15,451,679:

Too high – 877 Too low – 325 Just right – 690

Is the Board of Education budget of \$31,253,693:

Too high – 892 Too low – 628 Just right – 398

# Hebron School Board Chair Resigns

by Sloan Brewster

The chairman of the Hebron Board of Education has resigned.

At last Thursday's Board of Education meeting, Erica Bromley said she would be leaving her leadership role on the board on June 30.

Bromley read her letter of resignation minutes after the board bid farewell to Schools Superintendent Timothy Van Tassel, who gave his resignation in March as he has taken a job as superintendent of Suffield Public Schools.

"Another milestone has come," Bromley said. "I have made the decision to make the announcement at the meeting tonight that I will be resigning from the Board of Education as of June 30."

Bromley said she had contemplated her resignation for a while and discussed it with her family – and said things occurring in her professional and personal life attributed to the decision. The decision, she said, had not been easy to make.

"My professional workload has been increasing over the last year or so and will continue to grow," she said. "That makes it hard to commit to events and meetings and when I do I sacrifice precious time with my family."

In addition, she said she had taken an administrative position with her son's hockey program for which she expects time commitments.

In her letter, Bromley spoke of accomplishments the board has made while she has been its leader including the budget passing each year.

"I've had an amazing journey over the past six years," she said.

Heather Petit, to whom Bromley passed the helm, added maintaining programs while being fiscally responsible and working with the town on a plan to hire school resource officers [SRO] for the two elementary schools to the list of accomplishments made under Bromley's leadership.

"It has been a pleasure to lead this group," Bromley said.

Bromley said she would be happy to participate in the search for a new superintendent and asked that she be included in the hiring of SROs as she is impassioned and experienced in the field.

"My experience will be beneficial moving forward," she said.

With all these changes coming, Bromley said now was a good time for her to go.

"I believe it is most appropriate if I leave before all that happens," she said.

On June 6, the board unanimously agreed to appoint Lynne Pierson of Glastonbury as interim superintendent.

Bromley said she thought Pierson "was super knowledgeable" and that, in addition to her other credentials, the board was impressed with her experience with building projects, which will come in handy as the district moves forward on a plan to replace pipes at Hebron Elementary School due to lead in the water.

Also on June 6, the Board of Selectmen decided to hire an additional school resource officer for about \$50,000.

Selectmen had originally planned to hire three more part time officers for the local force, one of which would have been an SRO shared by both schools and the others would pick up additional local patrol. The new plan reduces the additional patrol hours from 20 to 12 and will put two part-time SROs at each school, Selectman John Collins said. It increases the number of part time officers in town to four and brings the total police budget from \$130,297 to \$180,697.

Bromley said she was "thrilled" to have Petit take her place and that knowing someone with her "passion and drive" would be in the spot made it easier for her to go.

In a phone call Thursday, Bromley said as vice chair of the board, Petit transitions to chairman if that seat empties.

"I think she'll do a great job," Bromley said. "She's extremely passionate about the work and the kids."

Bromley said that once her resignation becomes effective on June 30, the Board of Selectmen will post the empty seat, asking for volunteers and then – after 35 days – decide who will take the spot.

The seat will be up for re-election in two years, she said.

In the call, Bromley reiterated that the decision to leave the board was "definitely bitter-sweet."

"I think they're in good hands and the district will continue to move forward," she said.

The board presented Van Tassel and Bromley with parting gifts.

"This is a night of emotions," Petit said as she gave a package to Bromley and thanked her for her leadership, which she said it was "second to none."

Van Tassel wished "Godspeed" to the board.

"This has just been an amazing journey for myself and I cannot thank you enough," he said. "The passage of time it's really... it's magnificent, and it's been wondrous and to think of all of the things that I have been able to do with you here is remarkable."

*From the Editor's Desk*

## Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

There's been an interesting debate going on in my town of Manchester for the past few weeks over whether to change the mascot of the local public high school.

Since the 1940s, Manchester High School has had the official nickname of the "Manchester Indians." Since referring to Native Americans as "Indians" has been rightly viewed as wrong for quite some time now, MHS students last year began campaigning for a name change.

According to the *Hartford Courant*, the students have, since last spring, conducted multiple surveys, circulated petitions and met with officials of the school system. At a Board of Education meeting earlier this month, students shared one of those surveys – in which 57% of the student body supported changing the name and only 14.5% opposed it.

Also, according to the *Courant*, the students at the meeting quoted Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center education director Chris Newell as saying that Native American mascots "misrepresent and caricature a living, breathing set of multiple cultures."

MHS Principal Katelyn Miner and Superintendent of Schools Matthew Geary have said they're both on board with a new mascot – and the school board is scheduled to vote on changing it at a meeting next Monday.

With students and administrators all on board, it sounds like it should be a pretty open-and-shut case. Ah, but welcome to 2019, where nothing is an open-and-shut case.

A few weeks ago, the topic started getting talked about on multiple Manchester-related Facebook pages. As a member of several of them, I can tell you things got pretty heated. Whenever the topic was brought up, what was a civil conversation would frequently turn ugly, as older folks would weigh in, attacking the name change, dismissing the students proposing the change as "snowflakes" and "liberals" and "stupid millennials." (Millennials are of course too old now to still be high school students – but I suppose that's beside the point.)

And more than one person said that the Indians name was good enough when they were at MHS in the '60s and '70s, so it should be good enough now.

Just.....no. That doesn't make it right.

Times change – and what is considered acceptable often changes right around with them. As a fan of old TV shows and movies, I'm often faced with that fact. I'm a huge *I Love Lucy* fan – but I physically cringe when I see those episodes in which Ricky turns Lucy over his knee and spansks her. (And then of course there are the non-stop threats of domestic violence on *The Honeymooners*.) A few weeks ago, I came across an old *Happy Days* episode in which Fonzie encouraged Richie to get over his nervousness by grabbing the first random woman he sees and just

planting a long, passionate kiss on her. Richie does just that, and the whole thing is played for laughs – but these days it would rightfully be called sexual assault.

What would now accurately be labeled homophobia and transphobia was rampant throughout movies and especially TV shows of days gone by. As shocking as it seems now, white people pretending to be black used to be a common form of entertainment. Heck, the plot of the very first sound movie, *The Jazz Singer*, revolved around a white singer who put on blackface before he performed. One of the most popular radio shows of the 1930s and '40s, *Amos and Andy*, starred two white actors who spoke in "black" voices.

None of the above would be acceptable now – so the "it was good enough in the '60 and '70s" excuse doesn't fly. We've known for quite some time now "Indian" is an outdated way to describe Native Americans. It's offensive as well – associated with those hurtful, often violent stereotypes that dominated art and culture for far, far too long.

I'm all for the name change – and at the same time, I really think it should be up to the students. It was students, after all, that voted in the 1940s for the "Indians" name in the first place.

Change can be difficult, believe me, but sometimes it's necessary. This, I feel, is one of those times.

Anyway, the whole thing got me thinking about RHAM High School and the Sachems. Is it time for that mascot to change too? The answer to that, in my opinion, is not as clear-cut. Yes, it's connected to Native Americans, but it isn't as bad as Indians or even Tomahawks (a tomahawk, while it may be a perfectly useful tool, still is associated with harmful stereotypes of Native Americans as a bloodthirsty, scalping bunch). A sachem is a chief of a Native American tribe, typically of the Algonquians or other northeast tribes.

So "Sachem" just doesn't strike me as being overly offensive. Now, I could see the school of thought that it might be better to just get away from any Native American-themed mascots as a whole. But I think each one should be examined on a case-by-case basis, and, like I said, "Sachem" doesn't seem that bad. It's a term of respect; it's not antiquated, or based in violence, or meant to be derogatory and insulting; it's certainly no Redskins.

But, at the same time, I'm not Native American. Nor, for that matter, am I a student at RHAM or a resident of Andover, Hebron or Marlborough. So I'd be interested to hear what some of those folks would have to say; send me a letter to the editor – 300 words or less, of course – and let me know what you think. Should it be changed?

\* \* \*

See you next week.

## Moodus Man Charged in Theft of Christmas Gifts

by Sloan Brewster

The Grinch who stole Christmas is behind bars.

According to state police, Clarence Braun, 33, of Moodus, is accused of the Dec. 6 burglary of Maria McKeon's Senate Brook Drive home. Braun is charged with third-degree burglary and third-degree larceny in connection with the break-in that resulted in the theft of every single Christmas present McKeon had purchased for a New London family and all her jewelry.

According to the state judicial website, Braun appeared in court on the charges on June 11. He did not make a plea and was not released from custody, the website states. His next court date is July 3.

The website also indicates the Hebron incident was one of several similar crimes Braun committed in December, in towns throughout the state. According to the site, Braun has various pending larceny and burglary charges stemming from incidents in West Hartford, Manchester, North Branford and Guilford. He has several burglary convictions on his record as well.

According to the April 17 warrant for Braun's arrest, on Dec. 6 police investigated a burglary at McKeon's 117 Senate Brook Drive home. Police said approximately \$67,077 worth of property was taken from McKeon's home, including a \$15,000 diamond necklace, a diamond tennis bracelet worth \$10,000 and a pair of diamond earrings worth \$2,500 that matched the stolen necklace.

In a phone call Tuesday, McKeon said many of the pieces of jewelry were less valuable and more sentimental. Some were from various trips to other countries, including China and Italy, where she purchased a piece of jewelry as a memento.

McKeon, who said she was on her way to Ohio when the alleged break-in took place, spoke to the *Rivercast* a few days after it happened. She said that while on the road she had received video security footage, which she shared with the *Rivercast*, from her Nest – an in-home security system – of a thief going into her house and taking all the Christmas presents she had and all her jewelry.

"He was so brazen about it," McKeon said in December. "He didn't care at all. He didn't even rush; he just went through the house tak-

ing everything he wanted. He took six trips in and out of my house."

With each trip, he carried away more packages.

The surveillance also shows the crook trying to open a locked jewelry box in McKeon's bedroom and then taking it when he fails to get it open.

According to the warrant, on Dec. 17 Christopher Ferreira – the state trooper who investigated the crime and arrested Braun on the connected charges – received a phone call from a Middletown probation officer who said he recognized a photograph posted on Facebook as Braun, who was one of his clients.

Two other anonymous callers also identified Braun as the culprit, according to the warrant.

The following day, Hebron Resident State Trooper Daniel Greenwood met with Braun, who said he would assist with recovering the property.

McKeon said while some of her jewelry was returned, all valuable and sentimental pieces are still missing.

"He didn't even give back the macaroni bracelets my kids gave me for Christmas," she said.

She said as much to police as well, according to the warrant.

Based on their investigation, police identified Braun as the person seen in the video and requested a warrant for his arrest.

McKeon said police asked her to give a witness impact statement, which she said she was happy to do.

In her statement, she said she told police that not only was all her jewelry taken in the crime, but her homeowners' insurance policy was canceled because of it. McKeon said she had a previous claim for \$1,200 from a few years ago when lightning struck her well. The insurance company told her it had the right to cancel her insurance if she had two claims within a three- to five-year period.

To make matters worse, the company shared her information with other insurance companies, who told her they would either not take her as a customer or would charge her \$10,000 a year for insurance.

"That's an added impact to me," she said.

## Obituaries

### Marlborough

#### Alfred H. Nericcio

It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of our beloved father; grand-father and great-grand-father, Alfred H. Nericcio Sr. (Poppy) Thursday, March 14, just two weeks short of his 86th birthday. He was the youngest son of the late Antonio and Marie (Grillo) Nericcio.



He served in the Navy during the Korean Conflict and was stationed on the U.S.S. John R. Pierce. He received the Korean Service Medal, the National Defense Service Medal and the Navy Occupation Service Medal. He loved to tell the story about the time that he and his buddy barely escaped death as a torpedo hit the door that they had just closed moments before.

He was a lightweight boxer in Hartford, and was rumored to have sparred with his friend, Willie Pep. Watching boxing was a hobby that he enjoyed for many years.

He worked for many years at the infamous G Fox & Company delivering packages in the Bloomfield area. He had many humorous stories about his daily runs.

In 1966, he moved his family to Marlborough and for many years enjoyed country living in a town with one traffic light in the center of town. We had many good times and had numerous family reunions there. His family was the most important thing in his life. During that time his greatest enjoyment was working with his horse, Tony, that he trained to do several tricks including taking a bow.

In 1974, he packed up his family and moved cross country to beautiful San Diego, Calif., for what we referred to as our one-year vacation. Soon we were all homesick and so we drove back to Connecticut – at which time he opened the Marlborough Variety Shoppe located in the Marlborough Commons. He was known as “Freddy the TV guy” until it closed in 1983.

He will be dearly missed by his children: Debbie (Fred) Wolf of Colchester; Donna Little of Cocoa, Fla.; Alfred H. Nericcio Jr. of Liberty, N.C.; and Mary (Steve) Boyce of Liberty, N.C., with whom he lived; his grandchildren and great-grandchildren, Heather (Derek) Little Gilbert and their children Sloan and Dane, Jenny Morton and Adrianna, April Wolf, Matthew and Stephanie Johnson, Kristal, Jesse, Dakota, Hunter, Kylan and Mason Boyce; and his former wife and mother of his children, Rosemary Peck; and many nieces and nephews.

In addition to his parents, he was predeceased by his brothers and sisters: Joseph, Carl, Rudy and David Nericcio; Margaret Bertolini, Pauline Plossay, Theresa Dziezynski, Rena Middleton and Jean Messino-Schoenbern.

The funeral will be held Saturday, June 22, at 11 a.m., at St. Andrew Church in Colchester, with visiting hours at 10 a.m. Burial will be in the Marlboro Cemetery in Marlborough at 3 p.m.

### East Hampton

#### Monica A. Kangley

Monica A. Kangley, 82, of East Hampton, died peacefully Thursday, June 13. She was the daughter of John and Elsie Kangley. Monica was born in Manhattan, N.Y., and grew up in the Bronx, the oldest of four children. She is predeceased by her mother, father and brother. She is survived by her sisters Maureen Kangley of Vermont and Elise Crout of Spain.



She graduated in 1958 from Mount St. Vincent University in Halifax, Nova Scotia, with a degree in history. She joined the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament, an order based outside Philadelphia, Pa. She earned her master's degree in library science in 1965 from Villanova University. She transferred to Xavier Preparatory School in New Orleans, where she taught and served as librarian. Two years later she was transferred to Santa Fe, N.M., to an Indian reservation. Then she moved on to a Navajo reservation in Arizona. She left the order in 1971, returning to Santa Fe to work at the public library.

In 1977, she moved to Connecticut and took a job as children's librarian at the East Hampton Public Library. Monica's talent for engaging children to read was astounding. In 2001 she retired; many of her young children in story time would come to her as adults to thank her and perhaps to introduce her to their children just beginning to read.

Monica enjoyed her retirement to the fullest. She was an avid traveler; she visited Spain, Iceland, Finland, England, Russia to name a few. In recent years she visited with her sister Elise, in Spain.

She was active with a variety of East Hampton community activities. She was a member of the Goff House, served on the Arts and Cultural Commission, and the East Hampton Housing Authority. She was the initiator of the Jingle Bell Parade. She enjoyed being involved with the community.

She volunteered at the Goodspeed Opera House, where she loved the theatre, the actors, the shows, and most importantly her friends she volunteered with.

She also actively participated at the East Hampton Senior Center, where she volunteered as receptionist for 18 years. She was dedicated to her exercise programs and routines. She always supported the center's programs.

Special thanks to the staff at Wadsworth Glen, especially Mary and Abigail. Their care and dedication made her life better. They knew her well and that made Monica happy.

Heartfelt thanks from Monica to Bev and Jo Ann for their love, and caring during the unexpected past months. Words are never enough. Thank you. You showed true friendship. See you all in the next chapter.

Friends may call at Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton, Wednesday, June 26, from 2-4 p.m.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to East Hampton Public Library or East Hampton Senior Center at 105 Main St., East Hampton, CT 06424.

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

### Hebron

#### Mary Jane Jackson

Mary Jane Jackson, 91, of Meredith, N.H., beloved wife of the late H. Everett Jackson, passed away peacefully Thursday, June 13, at Forestview Manor in Meredith. She was born on July 22, 1927, in Portland, the eldest of five daughters, born to Richard Paschal Penfield and Jeanette Sawyer Penfield.



After graduating from Portland High School in 1945, Mary Jane, affectionately known as Midge, went on to receive her bachelor's degree in child psychology from Wheaton College in 1949. In August of that same year, she married her high school sweetheart, Everett, to whom she was married for 48 years. They spent the first 28 years of their marriage in their hometown of Portland.

In 1977, she and Everett embarked on a new adventure as the proprietors of Oak Hill Golf Course in Meredith, N.H. A few years thereafter, they began spending their winters in The Villages, Lady Lake, Fla.

Midge was always amusing with her unique vocabulary and sense of humor. She made friends wherever she went. No day was complete without cookies after lunch or snickety-snacks at Happy Hour. She was a competent cook whose meals always “tasted terrible” in her opinion; though the creamed cod and canned peas really did. Her love of catalogs filled her cupboards with unused gadgets and her closets with clothes and shoes. For years she worked on her golf game. At age 80, on Everett's birthday, she got her first and last hole in one, later confessing she used her driver on an 80-yard par three where the ball “rolled, and rolled, and rolled and rolled.” Her skill, luck and competitive spirit at any and all games were renowned. She was a priceless treasure.

Midge is survived by her son, David Jackson and wife Linda of Hebron, their sons, Bryan Jackson and wife Tiffany of Melrose, Mass., Kevin Jackson and wife Rhianna of Quincy, Mass., and Paul Jackson of Manchester; her daughter, Susan Fitzgerald and husband Edward of Dover, Mass., their sons, Michael Fitzgerald and wife Justine of Sherman Oaks, Calif., and Matthew and wife Amber of Concord, Mass.; and daughter, Barbara Jenkins and husband Douglas of Meredith, N.H., their daughters, Nicole and Elizabeth both of Meredith, N.H. She was also blessed with three great-grandchildren, Graham, Silas and Nora. She also leaves behind her sisters, Elizabeth Ellsworth, Nancy Williamson and husband Jeff, and Martha Umba and husband Dave; sister-in-law Eleanore Knott and husband Walter; and many nieces and nephews.

She was predeceased by her sister, Patricia Dalglish; brother-in-law, Thomas Ellsworth; brother-in-law, Warren Jackson and wife Jewel.

A celebration of Midge's life will be held at Oak Hill Golf Course in Meredith, N.H., on Saturday, July 27.

The family would like to thank the nurses and staff at Forestview Manor of Meredith, N.H., for their love and assistance with Midge's care.

In lieu of flowers, take the time to have a cocktail and snack while sharing a memory of Midge.

Donations in her memory may be made to Forestview Manor Activities Fund, 153 Parade Rd., Meredith, NH 03253 or the American Diabetes Association, 2451 Crystal Dr., Suite 900, Arlington, VA 22202.

### Portland

#### Jean Elizabeth Gundersen

Jean Elizabeth Gundersen died Monday, June 10, at the age of 83. The daughter of Carl and Elizabeth Schweizer, she spent her formative years in West Hartford. She was a graduate of St. Joseph Academy and went on to attend Edgewood Park Junior College in New York.



On a visit to friends at the University of Connecticut, Jean was introduced to her future husband, Charles A. Gundersen, a pre-med student, who she married eight months later on Oct. 19, 1957, and then embarked on a full and happy adventure that was to span more than 61 years.

Jean was a longtime resident of Glastonbury (38 years), before moving to Portland 14 years ago, and spending winters in Naples. She enjoyed lively parties, playing Scrabble and bridge with friends, participating in water aerobics classes, attending local concerts, and art shows. Jean was an avid gardener and passed this interest down to her daughters and grandchildren. While spending winters in Naples, Fla., she enjoyed walking the beach, collecting shells (sand dollars in particular), and observing the wildlife, and never ceased to be mesmerized by the beautiful sunsets over the Gulf of Mexico.

But foremost, Jean was dedicated to her family, her parents before they passed, her husband of nearly 62 years, her three daughters, and six grandchildren. She was devoted to her husband, cherished her daughters, who she was very proud of, and very supportive of her grandchildren's education and accomplishments.

Jean leaves her husband, Charles; her daughters, Carolyn Kahrs and her husband Henry, Diane Bergan and her husband William, and Pamela Dahlgren and her husband Timothy; and her grandchildren, Alexander Kahrs, Samantha Herrscher and her husband Daniel, Dennis Bergan, Emily Dahlgren, Charles Kahrs and Christopher Dahlgren.

Jean will be remembered as a kind, caring, and fun loving person, adored by all; a wonderful daughter, wife, mother and grandmother. She will be sorely missed by all her loved her.

At her request, there will be no calling hours. Burial services will be private.

Online condolences may be offered at [Fuller Naples.com](http://FullerNaples.com).

### Colchester

#### Joan Marie Jansson

Joan Marie Jansson, 82, of Colchester, passed away Sunday, June 16, from injuries sustained in an automobile accident. She was born at home in Stuyvesant, N.Y., May 21, 1937, a daughter of the late Floyd and Emma (Bender) Ogden.



Joan married her husband Richard Paul Jansson May 19, 1956. The couple made their home in Colchester after raising their family in Waterford. Joan also built a hair dressing business in the family home, known as Joan's Hair Design. She retired several years ago. Joan enjoyed baking and cooking for her family. She loved to go to the library to see the new arrivals and look through the cookbook section for a new recipe or two. Joan will be remembered as a devoted family woman who put everyone's needs before her own. She never took any guff but she gave a heart full of love to her grand and great grandchildren whom she adored.

She will be sadly missed but remembered with love by her beloved husband Richard of 63 years, she leaves two daughters, Brenda Jansson of Valatie, N.Y., Deborah Jansson of Los Lunas, N.M.; a sister, Jean Ogden of Livingston, N.Y.; sister-in-law, Sondra Ogden of Hudson, N.Y.; six grandchildren, Terrence (Krystal) Brennan III, Richard Brennan, Amber Jansson, Jared and Jory Thompson, Brandon (Kristy) Jansson; 10 great-grandchildren, Ricky Jr., Brittany, Julian, Jennifer, Bentley, Logan, Serena, Jesse, Erica, Riley; and numerous extended family members and friends.

In addition to her parents, she was predeceased by a sister, Shirley Ringer, and a brother, Raymond Ogden.

A celebration of Joan's life will be held at a later date to be announced.

Donations in her memory may be made to the Cragin Memorial Library.

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

**More Obituaries on following page**



## Portland

### James Buchanan Innes

James Buchanan Innes, 29, passed away Tuesday, May 28, at Middlesex Hospital after a brief illness, surrounded by his loving wife and family. He was born Feb. 4, 1990, in Middletown, and lived in Portland.

He graduated from Xavier High School in 2008 and graduated *magna cum laude* from the University of South Carolina with a bachelor's degree in public relations in 2012.

He was a cherished and respected employee of Delmar Products in Berlin for many years where he worked as a Purchasing and Traffic Manager.

James was passionate about the New England Patriots, the Boston Red Sox, technology, building computers, politics and reading. He was an intense thinker and had a gift of eloquent communication which he used daily. He was proud of his Scottish heritage. He was also a lover of cats and had rescued several over the years.

James is survived by his loving wife and best friend, Jessica Innes of Portland; his parents, Michael and Debra Innes of Portland; his siblings, Maureen and Greyson; his maternal grandparents, William and Mary Hande of Killingworth; in addition to many aunts, uncles and cousins. James was the proud father of six cats: Roxsy, Babycat, Hunter, Cabrio, Scout and Zeus.

A private memorial service will be held by the family Saturday, June 22.



## Marlborough

### Wayne A. McNaughton

Wayne A. McNaughton, predeceased by his wife Elizabeth V. McNaughton, passed away peacefully Sunday, June 16, surrounded by his family and friends, after a courageous battle with cancer.

Wayne was born Jan. 26, 1946, in Damarscott, Maine, son of the late Fred and Claire (Vaillancourt) McNaughton. He was a lifetime resident of Marlborough, where he lived with his family in the log home he built himself, with a huge sense of pride – and where everyone always gathered to celebrate and revel in their company and giving nature. Their door was always open.

He was a great son, husband, father, brother and loving “Grampy,” not realizing how many lives he truly touched, and what a great teacher he was to so many – from serving as sergeant, and receiving a Wartime Service Medal, among others, and going back to serve a second tour. He was also a member of the Marlborough Volunteer Fire Dept. Post 197 American Legion.

He is survived by Wayne, Beth, and their children Amy, Ben, and Carrie McNaughton and husband Wade; granddaughter Ellie; his older brother Dave and wife Barbara; Linda, Ted and wife Candace, Jeff and husband Lou; and youngest brother Tim; sister-in-law Anne and husband John; and many, many friends.

Services will be held at the State Veterans Cemetery at 317 Bow Ln., Middletown.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be sent to the Sandy Peszynski Breast Cancer Foundation and the American Cancer Society.

## East Hampton

### Raymond John Kuritz

Raymond John Kuritz, 24, of East Hampton died tragically in a motorcycle accident Saturday, June 15. Born Oct. 23, 1994, in Bristol, he was the son of Tracy Ibbotson of Salem and the late William Kuritz.

Ray was raised mostly in the East Hampton and East Haddam area. He attended Vinal Tech High School and was a graduate of Hale Ray High School in East Haddam. Ray was a proud member of the Deuces Wild Motor Cycle Club and his club brothers will deeply miss him.

He is survived by his daughter, Madlien Kuritz; his mother, Tracy Ibbotson of Salem; maternal grandparents, John and Kathleen Ibbotson of Salem; great-grandmother, Edna Carlson of Moodus; his girlfriend, Alexandra Larrick of Colchester; and several aunts, uncles, nieces and nephews and many friends.

The family will receive friends at Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton, Saturday, June 22, from 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

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



## East Hampton Police News

6/5: Jeffrey Pierce, 51, of 7 Old Clark Hill Rd., was issued a summons for failure to carry minimum insurance, operating an unregistered motor vehicle, misuse of plates and failure to drive right, East Hampton Police said.

6/6: Patrick Burdo, 31, of 203 South Rd., Somers, was taken into custody pursuant to an active warrant for his arrest stemming from a 2011 incident and was charged with sixth-degree larceny, police said.

6/12: Trevor Michael Foster, 24, of 7 Main St., was taken into custody pursuant to four

active warrants for his arrest and charged with three counts of first-degree failure to appear and one count of violation of a protective order.

6/12: Diane Leiner, 52, of 64 Depot Hill Rd., was arrested for and charged with failure to drive right and driving under the influence, police said.

Also, from June 3-9, officers responded to nine medical calls, four motor vehicle crashes and six alarms, and made 39 traffic stops, police said.

## Colchester Woman Dies in Crash

State Police said crossing a double yellow line and subsequent collision with a tree killed 82-year-old Joan Jansson last Sunday.

At approximately 11:28 a.m., Jansson, of 747 Deep River Rd., was driving a Nissan Murano and traveling southbound on Route 354 approximately one-tenth of a mile north of Stanavage Road.

Police said the Murano crossed the double-yellow median line, driving off the left side

of the roadway and subsequently striking a tree at 5 Stanavage Rd.

Jansson died on scene and cause of death was determined by the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner to be injuries sustained during the collision to her head, neck and torso.

The investigation is currently ongoing, police said.

## Marlborough Police News

6/10: Gabriel Mercado-Santos, 24, of 239 Broad St., Apt. C, New London, was arrested and charged with second-degree failure to appear, State Police said.

6/15: Anthony Czapiga, 29, of 539 Main St., Apt. 1, Torrington, was arrested and charged with violation of protective order, State Police said.

## Portland Police News

6/4: Sarah Chamberlain, 45, of 67 Meriden Ave., Meriden, was charged with traveling unreasonable fast and operating a motor vehicle under suspension, Portland Police said.