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Big Fish... Hunter Steiner of East Hampton, 8, recently caught another trophy Carp and released it immediately back into Lake Pocotopaug! This fish is over 30 pounds and was landed on a 4-pound test line.

Saint Clements Again Pushes for Banquet Hall

by Elizabeth Regan

Saint Clements Castle officials are back before the East Hampton Planning and Zoning commission in their latest effort to obtain permit approval for a banquet facility shut down two years ago in the aftermath of a fire.

The blaze broke out during a June 2017 wedding in a 49 Oakum Dock Rd. banquet hall that had been approved by the town as a storage facility. Investigation by local, regional and state officials revealed the business had been holding banquets on the site for years without the proper permits and licenses.

The fire was ruled accidental by the East Hampton fire marshal's office. Investigators found the blaze likely emanated from an unattended propane cooker being used on the back deck to boil water.

Peter Callan, of Roncalli Institute Inc., submitted the June 14 application to change the site's residential zone to commercial and to get special permit approval for a two-story, 10,781-square-foot "assembly hall" that would sit on the same footprint as the building damaged by fire.

Roncalli Institute encompasses Saint Clements Castle as well as numerous commercial entities, nonprofit organizations and trusts. The Secretary of the State's business database lists Callan as the secretary of the company. The chairman is Edward Doherty.

A public hearing on the application is scheduled for Sept. 4.

While the property was grandfathered into the current residential zone as a marina, the requested change would give the business more flexibility to hold non-marina-related events, such as wedding receptions and business conferences, on the premises.

In an audio recording of the July 3 meeting, Callan alleged that revisions made to the zoning map in 1990, which included shifting 49 Oakum Dock Rd. from industrial to residential, weren't done "properly in the first place."

He submitted a 10-page memorandum from Roncalli Institute attorney Melissa S. Harris, of West Hartford-based Stanger Stanfield Law, that said the zoning map update was "not properly done" and that there were "no notices, documents and/or minutes indicating that it was the intent that the property be changed to residential."

Questions about the accuracy of zoning maps also arose in 2017 in connection with an application for the Dollar General on Route 66. That's when officials discovered the Planning and Zoning Commission had zoned that parcel commercial decades earlier – yet the zoning map was not updated to reflect the change.

The discrepancy was the basis for a lawsuit after the commission initially rejected an application from a Dollar General developer to change the property's zoning from residential to commercial. The commission ultimately approved the Dollar General project.

See Saint Clements page 2

Dog License Signs Cause Consternation

by Allison Lazur

Signs posted throughout Marlborough stating residents could expect a possible door-to-door visit by officials looking for unlicensed and unvaccinated dogs received backlash from residents on social media calling the tactic an intrusion of privacy.

Close to two dozen people took to Facebook to express their outrage over the notices, which were placed on a shared post with stop signs on South Buckboard Road, Heritage Drive and Hemlock Drive.

A photo of the yellow octagon sign was shared by Hemlock Drive resident Susan Duva, who questioned the location of the signs and called the act "yet another government intrusion."

"I am expecting to see these signs posted on every sign throughout Marlborough. Otherwise don't come knocking on my door," she told the *Rivereast* Tuesday.

First Selectman Amy Traversa said this is the second year these signs have been employed – and she and Animal Control Officer Gerald Cloutier both said they were created at no cost, from recycled stop signs.

Traversa added that, despite the warnings issued by the signs, to date not a single door has been knocked on.

"The signs were placed by public safety and

the animal control officer during the month of June in a well-intentioned attempt to remind dog owners of their responsibility to license and vaccinate their dogs," Traversa said. "The licensing and registration of dogs is required by law each year."

The cost to register a spayed or neutered dog in Marlborough is \$8; the fee for an unaltered dog is \$19. Residents are charged an additional \$1 for every month past June the dog is registered late.

According to Traversa in 2018 there were 583 licensed dogs, but since June 1 – the month to relicense – only 489 dogs have been licensed.

She said complaints about roaming dogs, stray dogs, dumped dogs, barking dogs, and unleashed dogs could be better addressed if all dogs were licensed.

Traversa said it's not about the town receiving the fees, but rather "about protecting people and other pets from rabies, helping to reunite lost animals with their owners and holding owners accountable for their pets."

If a dog is licensed, it can be looked up by its breed or location in town, Traversa said.

Cloutier said he believes making sure dogs are up to date on their rabies vaccination is more of a concern than the licensing.

The fine for having an unlicensed dog is \$75,

while having a dog without a current rabies vaccination costs \$136.

Both Cloutier and Traversa said there is no intention to utilize manpower to knock on the doors of residents.

Cloutier said the warning on the sign of a door-to-door survey came directly from state statute.

Statute states, "A door-to-door search for unlicensed dogs shall be conducted within the town and a record of such search shall be kept by" the town's animal control officer.

Aside from the fact that actually visiting residents door-to-door may never occur, Duva told the *Rivereast* Tuesday she had other concerns.

"We have a bright yellow sign putting perpetrators on notice to start knocking on doors," she said.

Duva said residents will also have no way of determining if a town official is the person actually knocking on doors.

Cloutier said he was unsure who specifically would be responsible for the door-to-door survey if the time ever came to conduct such a checkup, but for now residents can expect to see the signs moved throughout the town.

"It's being done for people's safety and it's unfortunate they classify this as an intrusion," Traversa said.



Signs such as this one on South Buckboard Road have irritated some Marlborough residents.

Saint Clements cont. from Front Page

Planning and Zoning Official Jeremy DeCarli told the commission that the Saint Clements site on Oakum Dock Road was initially resi-

dential, was rezoned industrial, and was then zoned back to residential. And while he said he did not have “all the details on what was or wasn’t part of the hearings” when the commis-

sion debated the zoning changes, he added that he didn’t find record of any objections when the zone changed to residential on the map.

“I think at this point, the applicant has acknowledged it’s on the map as a [residential] zone,” DeCarli said.

A previous zone change request from Saint Clements was denied by the commission in November 2017. Residents and some staff members expressed fears about traffic concerns on the small road, the possibility of setting a precedent that would allow even more commercial development in the area, and the organization’s documented failure to follow the rules.

Then-public works director Dean Michelson wrote in a 2017 memo that “past experiences with St. Clements have not resulted in compliance with Town of East Hampton regulations, but more circumventing and disregarding them.”

There were also concerns about the impact of the project on two high-yielding wells that are at the crux of the town’s plans for a centralized water system (see sidebar).

Several months after the commission rejected the zone change, Saint Clements officials submitted an application to build what then-Roncalli Institute president Dan Loos called a “non-denominational church.”

Churches are allowed in a residential area with a special permit.

The application was withdrawn in April 2018.

The drawings for the defunct “church” and the currently-proposed “assembly hall” are identical in square footage and similar in layout. Both include an open hall with a balcony in the front of the building and two floors in back, with a large kitchen, several bathrooms and numerous smaller rooms.

When Callan was asked by a commissioner

if the two designs were “substantially similar,” he said he didn’t know.

Callan discounted the previous objections from the public by saying 100 events were held prior to the fire with no complaints.

“Only afterward was there hostility,” he said.

Callan emphasized the proposed banquet facility is an economic development driver.

“This is a conduit for greater, smarter commercial development,” he said. “That’s how this has to be looked at.”

The memo from Harris said Saint Clements employs 162 people in town, including 44 East Hampton residents. Approving the zone change and special permit would add about 49 new full- and part-time positions, according to the lawyer.

Callan said the application also has the support of the Middlesex Chamber of Commerce’s subgroup covering Portland and East Hampton.

Callan, who lives in East Hampton, told commissioners that more visitors coming to town for Saint Clements events would be a boon for the Village Center.

“We have 40,000 people coming to Saint Clements. We plan on going for 50,000 people a year. These people come from Fairfield County, Westchester County, Boston, Newport. They’re coming with money,” he said.

Callan pledged a room full of supporters at the public hearing.

Callan acknowledged the organization must do a better job letting the public know that Saint Clements is “a good neighbor” – especially in light of what he described as unfavorable media coverage in the aftermath of the fire.

“I didn’t read the articles that went out there, but I don’t think they were presented in a favorable light. I think it was very uncharitable how the organization I know intimately was presented,” he said.

Water Leads to Concerns with Proposal

by Elizabeth Regan

Members of the Planning and Zoning Commission last week expressed concern about a proposal from Saint Clements Castle officials to rebuild a banquet hall near two high-yielding wells that are at the crux of the town’s plans for a centralized water system.

Commission member Rowland Rux urged caution at the July 3 meeting as members discussed setting the date for the public hearing on the application, according to an audio recording of the meeting.

“We have to be extremely prudent on this one issue,” Rux said. “A lot of responsibility is laying on our shoulders right now.”

Members ultimately set the public hearing for September instead of August. They said they wanted the extra time to give staff members an opportunity to gather more information and to make sure all local, regional and state entities with a role in the town water system are aware of the proposal and its implications.

The Saint Clements application was presented by Roncalli Institute Inc. Secretary Peter Callan, of East Hampton. The Roncalli Institute encompasses Saint Clements Castle as well as numerous commercial entities, non-profit organizations and trusts (a related story appears on the cover).

In 2010, East Hampton paid Roncalli Institute Chairman Edward Doherty – who was operating at the time as Saint Clements Marina LLC – \$673,000 for the rights to use two wells on the property as part of a public water system that has not yet come to fruition. The town also paid to remove several buildings within the sanitary radius and to remediate contaminated soil.

The Saint Clements application to rebuild the structure – which was operating without the appropriate permits and licenses when it was damaged by fire in 2017 – comes at the same time local officials are ramping up efforts to bring the centralized water system to town.

The head of the state Department of Health (DPH) drinking water section, Lori Mathieu, told the East Hampton Council late last month that helping the town establish a centralized water system is a top priority.

The need for cleaner and more plentiful water in town goes back to the 1960s, when the first referendum to fund the system was shot down by voters. Historic industrial contamination in the Village Center combined with high iron and manganese levels in aquifers throughout town have led to water quality concerns since then.

The public water supply easement agreement between Doherty and the town of East Hampton precludes construction or improvements in the easement area and its protective radius.

Planning and Zoning commissioners at last week’s meeting expressed concerns that the proposed building would infringe on the protective radius.

Planning and Zoning Official Jeremy DeCarli said staff members will look into the issue.

“It’s a little bit gray, because we’ve had a couple different surveys and a couple different maps over the years, and they show that

line a different location from one to the next,” DeCarli said.

The question about whether or not the proposed footprint is within the town’s easement area would have to be reviewed by the new public utilities administrator Scott Clayton, according to DeCarli.

Clayton replaces former administrator Tim Smith, who left recently for a job on the west coast.

Chatham Health District Chief Sanitarian Steve Knauf, who will be overseeing water and septic system aspects of the application for the regional health district, said he is not allowed to approve an encroachment on the sanitary protective radius of the wells.

“The well radius is regulated by DPH,” he said. “I cannot approve anything within. If I see anything inside, I have to send it to [the state public drinking water section],” he said.

The Saint Clements site plan also includes a new well to serve the proposed banquet facility. The state in early June gave preliminary approval for a well with a withdrawal rate of less than ten gallons per minute.

Knauf said the facility’s existing well was not approved by DPH, which is why a new well site had to be located and approved.

Time and Money

Multiple reports outlining options for a centralized water system have identified a price tag of at least \$80 million to either build out the Cobalt wellfield on Oakum Dock Road or bring in water from the Metropolitan District Commission through Portland.

More recent proposals from two private water companies put the price tag for the initial phases of a public water system from \$12.5 million to \$42.88 million. The latter proposal from Aquarion Water Company includes provisions to use the Cobalt wellfield.

But Aquarion said it could take a few years to resolve concerns about the wellfield. They cited the need for remediation to address “contamination from the marina” in order to “bring the site to appropriate groundwater standards.”

Aquarion also said issues related to the wellfield’s location within a 100-year floodplain will need to be mitigated.

Rux at last week’s meeting repeatedly cautioned members to proceed carefully through the application process.

“In the very near future, that wellfield might be put into service to supply water for the town of East Hampton,” Rux said. “We as an agency – us guys – do not want to ruin the possibility of using this as a source of water.”

State statute gives members 65 days to set a public hearing upon receipt of the application. Once a hearing is opened, members have 35 days to close it. They then have 65 days to make a decision.

There’s also the opportunity for an extension of up to 65 additional days at the applicant’s request.

Planning and Zoning Commission Chairman Kevin Kuhr expressed gratitude to Callan.

“You guys have worked with us, and given us that easement for those wells. So you guys obviously did that for a reason, and we appreciate that,” Kuhr said.

Colchester Huntington's Chapter Wins National Awards

by Allison Lazur

The Colchester-based Connecticut chapter of the Huntington's Disease Society of America (HDSA) walked away from the annual HDSA convention last month with two prestigious awards.

The 12-year-old chapter won Affiliate of the Year and Best New Fundraising Event for its September Music on the Vine event held at Chateau Lé Garí in Marlborough.

The organization went from affiliate to chapter status in February. But, because the Connecticut chapter prepares a budget in October for the following year, the organization is still operating financially as an affiliate, said chapter president Susan McGann of Colchester.

"We are basically a name-only chapter until next year," she said, adding, "The difference between a chapter and an affiliate is you get your own bank account and you're responsible for submitting financial reports to the national organization."

The chapter currently has about 20 members and is run by the efforts of volunteers and sponsors.

McGann said part of why the organization won Affiliate of the Year is because of the creation of the Music on the Vine event last year, as well as an additional Huntington's disease

support group in Fairfield.

According to the HDSA, the non-curable and fatal genetic disorder causes the "progressive breakdown of nerve cells in the brain [and] deteriorates a person's physical and mental abilities during their prime working years." The society said Huntington's is known as the "quintessential family disease" because every child of a parent with the disease has a 50/50 chance of carrying the faulty gene.

The society said there are approximately 30,000 symptomatic Americans and more than 200,000 at risk of inheriting the disease.

Efforts made by the state's chapter include holding an annual education day at Backus Hospital where professionals, caregivers and families can learn more about the disease, as well as a walk in May to raise further awareness. The organization also has support groups in Norwich and North Haven.

The second award won at the convention was Best New Fundraising Event and was received about two months before the second annual Music on the Vine event.

Through the sale of food and wine, as well as the appearance of local musical acts, raffles and family and children's activities, the state's chapter raises money for research, education

and advocacy for Huntington's Disease.

"It's not just how much money you raise, its other components," said McGann of winning the award, adding that how people participate in the event is a factor.

Last year Music on the Vine raised \$3,000 – a figure McGann called "just a drop in the bucket."

"We would love to raise at least \$5,000 this year," she said.

The 34th annual HDSA Convention in Boston was the most widely-attended to date with 1,225 guests from the United States, as well as Australia, Canada and the United Kingdom.

As for the future of the state's chapter, McGann said she has a number of goals, including the establishment of another support group in the Danbury area, collaborating with more long-term care facilities to develop Huntington's-specific care and continuing to educate, advocate and raise awareness.

Anyone with questions or who is interested in volunteering with the chapter can contact cthdsa@gmail.com for more information.

This year's Music on the Vine event is scheduled for Sunday, Sept. 29, from 2:30-7 p.m. at Chateau Lé Garí, located at 303 S. Main St., Marlborough.



Susan McGann, president of the state's chapter of the Huntington's Disease Society of America (HDSA), holds one of two awards the organization won at the recent HDSA convention.

Hebron Celebrates Generations of Freedom

by Sloan Brewster

Ancestry was given a salute at this year's Hebron Fourth of July festivities.

Judith Podell, president of the Town Center Project, decided to embrace the diverse places that folks' families called home before they made the journey to the United States. Using 300 color-coded push-pins on a 6.5-foot world map, Podell indicated where Hebron residents, their parents and grandparents were born.

She displayed the map at an Independence Day ceremony in front of the Old Town Hall.

The idea was born out of a love of July 4 and a desire to celebrate people's varied backgrounds.

"The Fourth of July is my favorite holiday," Podell said. "I mean it's got food, parades; what's not to love?"

In advance of the Fourth, Podell put boxes at businesses around town, the library and Town Hall. With the boxes were papers for people to place in the boxes after identifying the country or state where they, their parents and their grandparents were born, along with the instructions "No names please, just birthplaces."

According to Podell, 240 people responded and 36 states, and 33 different countries were represented in the responses.

Podell is from a family of Jewish immigrants from Europe who came during the second World War.

"If they hadn't come here they would've been rounded up and been murdered like all the other Jews," Podell said. "I'm here today because America is generous and open."

In December 1940, while eight months pregnant with Podell and with two small daughters in tow, her mother fled France to escape the Nazis. During the flight across Europe, Podell's three-year old sister carried a teddy bear, inside which jewels had been secreted for safe keeping. They boarded a ship headed to Cuba that turned around when anti-Semitic riots broke out in the country. The family ended up arriving in New York and Podell was born in a Harlem hospital.

"I could've been Cuban," she said.

A week later, her father – who was born in Poland, raised in Vienna and worked in a shoe factory his brother owned in Germany's Saar Valley – met up with his wife and children.

Thinking it was important to highlight all the

varied countries that form a foundation for the U.S., Podell decided to create the ancestry map, she said.

"What other country has been built out of such a variety of people?" Podell said.

In addition to the map, Hebron's July 4 ceremony included music. The National Anthem was sung by RHAM High School student Danielle Golden.

"She was fabulous," Podell said.

Florence O'Sullivan, of Hebron, led the singing of American songs with Don Hollandeck, of East Haddam, on keyboard. Larry Zimmerman, another local, read a poem he wrote for the occasion. Tom Brancaco, a member of the American Legion, gave remarks, talking about the country and what it stands for, Podell said. There was also a reading of the Declaration of Independence by David Rose, a Hebron resident from England.

Accompanied by Eagle Scouts James Abu-Rahmeh, Ben Sullivan and Tristin Emmons, and dressed in a period costume with a wig and powder horn, Rose introduced himself as William Williams, a Connecticut signer of the document, and read it with meaning, Podell said.

During the event, some attendees broke off into discussions about where their families came from, Podell said. There were many people who said they had Irish and Italian backgrounds, and some who said their families have been in the area since the 17th century.

Among those with a long local history was Mary Ann Foote.

In a phone call Wednesday, Foote shared some tales of her ancestry.

On her father's side, her history stretches back to 1694, when one of her ancestors – who came from England – was one of the first nine settlers of Wethersfield. Her grandmother's family was also from England and was among those who first settled in Colchester.

As was the custom in the day, they had professions but were also self-sufficient farmers, Foote said.

"They were all vitally involved in town affairs," she said.

Her grandmother's family – the Hutchinsons – arrived in Hebron in about 1720 and lived in Gilead, Foote said. Many generations are buried in the Gilead cemetery.

Annie Hutchinson Foote, Foote's grand-



A Fourth of July event hosted by the Town Center Project included a world map with 300 push-pins indicating places that ancestors of local folks once called home.

mother, grew up in Gilead. When she graduated from the one-room school house, she wanted to go on to high school, so her family sent her to Bacon Academy in Colchester. Every week she traveled to Colchester from the train in Amston, which was then called Turnerville. She would board in Colchester and return home on the weekends.

She graduated as the valedictorian of her class and wrote a poem that became the school's alma mater. "They still sing it," Foote said.

Annie Hutchinson Foote ultimately became the first woman from Hebron to acquire a four-year college degree, Foote said. Initially upon graduation from high school, Hutchinson Foote

passed up on a scholarship to Mount Holyoke to care for the children of her dying sister-in-law. She later went to Alfred University in western New York, where she was again valedictorian.

Hutchinson Foote served in the Connecticut legislature and sponsored a bill to consolidate one-room schools to a centralized location, Foote said. In Hebron, that first centralized school was Hebron Elementary.

The Town Center Project will be holding weekly concerts Thursdays from July-September from 6:30-8:00 p.m. in the town center. In October, the project will hold the second annual Harvest Moon Festival.

'Best Town Manager' in East Hampton Sent on His Way

by Elizabeth Regan

Town Manager Michael Maniscalco was lauded Tuesday by Town Council Chairman Melissa Engel as "the best town manager" the town has ever had.

Maniscalco, his wife, Sabohat, and their daughter, Isabella, are leaving East Hampton as he prepares to take the helm at the South Windsor Town Hall next week.

Finance Director Jeffery Jylkka will serve as East Hampton's interim town manager.

While a tongue-in-cheek proclamation read by Engel following Maniscalco's final council meeting got many laughs, she became choked up when she got to the end.

"[W]e the undersigned officially declare Mike Maniscalco 'better than good' – truth be told, he ranks as the best town manager we've ever had – and we wish him and Sabo and Isa good things as they embark on their next adventure," Engel said.

Engel's audience included a range of local officials, volunteers and businesspeople who attended the meeting to send off the 7-year town manager.

The proclamation praised Maniscalco for a litany of accomplishments, including honing his survival skills early on by "serving a council that preferred Friday night referendums and daily micromanagement," wearing "funky socks" as a coping mechanism, improving morale among staff "ten-fold with his professionalism, his sense of humor and his creative thinking," and sitting on the receiving end of "many a good prank."

"Remember his bubble-wrapped office?" Engel asked.

She also credited him with overseeing more serious tasks like road repairs, expansion of both natural gas and the Air Line Trail, police and fire department equipment upgrades, and the approval and construction of a new town hall.

The acknowledgement came after Maniscalco's final report to the council, which he presented in the form of a status update on the town.

"From 2012 to today, we have paved well over 20% of the town roads and rebuilt two bridges. We have negotiated and seen through

to reality the largest natural gas expansion in the last 30-year history of the state of Connecticut. We led the expansion of the Air Line Trail through the only village center, offering economic development opportunities for our small shops," Maniscalco said.

He cited systematic efforts to update emergency services in town, including the purchase of several large pieces of fire apparatus and the modernization of an expanded police force.

"During my first ride-along in 2012, I was appalled to find that there were no computers in any of our police cars, causing officers to spend countless hours off the road finishing paperwork," he said.

The town has since added two officers, purchased computers for every cruiser, and is cycling out the last of the outdated Crown Victoria cruisers, he said.

He also pointed to the "careful stewardship of public funds" that led to the town's AAA credit rating.

"This community is fortunate to have some of the most dedicated and talented staff and volunteers working for it," he said. "I am confident that as the community faces challenges, they will rise to the occasion, providing East Hampton with the best solutions possible."

Engel's proclamation was followed by cake, which was cut by Maniscalco, his wife, and daughter.

Well wishers included former council Chairman Patience Anderson. She told the *RiverEast* that the town manager, who was the youngest in the state when he was hired in 2012, was adept at handling a "tremendous amount of change" in a political environment that included three political parties and four different councils.

"I think he stayed out of the political conversation and he stayed focused on what was best for East Hampton," she said.

Anderson described a "much-needed" team approach that Maniscalco fostered with town hall staff members.

"He came in at a rather unsettling time, and he managed to kind of calm the seas," she said.

Maniscalco's arrival on the East Hampton



Outgoing Town Manager Michael Maniscalco, his wife, Sabohat, and their daughter, Isabella, cut a cake that was presented in his honor after his last town council meeting this week. He reports to the South Windsor Town Hall next week to replace longtime Town Manager Matthew Galligan.

scene came as the town was still reeling from the departure of Town Manager Jeffery O'Keefe two years prior.

O'Keefe resigned amid controversy related to the firing of Police Chief Matthew Reimondo. Four interim town managers came and went before Maniscalco signed his \$115,000 contract as the town's permanent town manager.

One of those interim town managers was Jylkka, who will again serve until a replacement is found. The finance director also filled in for Maniscalco during vacations over the years.

Engel said Jylkka's experience means the town is in good hands as the council conducts

its search.

A field of 33 candidates was whittled to 10 by Joellen Cademartori, of the search firm GovHR USA. The council then narrowed the list to four candidates, who will be interviewed Tuesday.

Engel anticipates scheduling second interviews for the candidates that council members are "particularly interested in." If there are none, the council will reach out for more applicants.

She emphasized that the council shouldn't rush to a decision just because members "feel pressure" to fill the position as soon as possible.

"With Jeff Jylkka here, and his experience, we don't have to," she said.

Taking Another Ride for Agent Orange in Andover

by Sloan Brewster

Vietnam veteran Gerry Wright is on another ride for Agent Orange.

Last Friday, Wright set out – on his 2007 Honda Goldwing trike motorcycle pulling a black trailer – for the Vietnam Veterans of America National Conference in Spokane, Washington, where he will speak about Agent Orange. Along the way, Wright plans to make some stops to meet veterans' groups and discuss his efforts to get treatment for more veterans exposed to the toxin.

"What I'm trying to do now is to get [the Agent Orange Exposure Fairness Act] passed," Wright said during an interview at his house last Monday. "We had no support last year and we had to reintroduce everything this year. They were so fixated on the Blue Water Navy Bill that this kind of took a backdoor."

Last July, Rep. Joe Courtney (D-2nd District) introduced to Congress the Agent Orange Exposure Fairness Act. If passed, the bill will remove the one-year manifestation period required for Vietnam veterans to receive treatment for certain ailments associated with Agent Orange.

Then, in August, Sen. Richard Blumenthal introduced the bill to the Senate.

In the end, however, it did not get enough support and did not pass, so when the new Congress was sworn in in January, Courtney and Blumenthal reintroduced the bill, Wright said.

Many Vietnam veterans, including Wright and fellow Andover resident Ed Fortin – who accompanied Wright on part of a cross-country journey he made last year – ended up with health issues and diseases connected to the herbicide, they said. In order to receive treatment or to be put on partial disability for three ailments, which include skin problems causing lesions, rashes or blistering and nerve disorders, the Veterans Health Administration (VA) requires that veterans registered their exposure within one year of separation from the war, Wright said.

Agent Orange is an herbicide or defoliant that contains the contaminant Dioxin and was sprayed over Vietnam by the U.S. military.

Wright spent two tours in Vietnam and was exposed to the toxin and has health issues because of it.

Wright, who sprayed the contaminant, did not register his exposure within a year, and said he did not learn he was required to do so until eight years after his tours ended.

"They didn't tell me about it for eight years," he said. "So how the heck can we be treated?"

The "Blue Water," on the other hand, unanimously passed and, according to an article by the American Legion Legislative Center, was signed into law by President Donald Trump on June 26.

The bill extends treatment to U.S. Navy veterans with Dioxin connected ailments previously denied care because they were not on the ground in Vietnam, Courtney has said. Agent Orange was transported on U.S. Navy ships and Navy veterans were exposed and have resulting health issues, including heart, respiratory and skin conditions.

Wright is drumming up support for the Fairness Act.

"So far, the American Legion has written a letter and they support the house and senate bill," he said.

The Veterans of Foreign Wars [VFW] has also pledged support, as have the Disabled American Veterans, he said.

"I've been to Washington twice now," he said. He anticipates support from the Vietnam Veterans of America but they first want him to speak about it at their July 15 conference, he said.

"I'm going to sit on the resolution committee and hope they pass the resolution in support of the bill," he said. "I'm sure they will, but they want me to sit there and talk about it."

In a July 4 email to constituents, Courtney said he was celebrating Independence Day in Willimantic. He mentioned that he had stopped to visit Wright before he headed out on his trip.

"Gerry is a tireless advocate for his fellow vets and their families, who have been waiting for decades to receive earned benefits for the injuries they sustained during their service," the congressman wrote. "I can't thank him enough



Gerry Wright has headed out for his second motorcycle trip in support of increasing treatment for Vietnam veterans exposed to Agent Orange.

for his efforts and his friendship, and it was great to see him off on his cross-country ride on this week in support of the Agent Orange Exposure Fairness Act."

Stops Wright is planning on the trip include one, likely on the way home, at the National Museum of the U. S. Air Force in Riverside, Ohio, near Dayton to see a C123 aircraft that sprayed Agent Orange in Vietnam. Wright said he's hoping to get his trike and trailer next to the plane and get a picture.

Called "Patches," the aircraft has 600 bullet holes. "They kept patching her up," Wright said.

Eventually a shell ruptured the tank, leaking Agent Orange into the plane and making the entire crew sick, Wright said.

"They had to shrinkwrap it and then they welded the doors shut because that plane today is so toxic that you can't even breathe in it," he said.

He also plans a stop in Minnesota to meet with legislators and in Fargo, N.D., and Mon-

tana, where he said he will find the local American Legion and talk to members.

Wright said he rides the trike to draw attention so he can spread his message. It's painted with a skeleton pouring orange fluid from a can that says "Agent Orange" and the words "Death followed us home. Sprayed & Betrayed" are written in bright orange below the creepy figure.

"I've had people follow me right off an exit to a truck stop," he said.

Last May, Wright went on a six-week 10,357-mile motorcycle journey to 32 states seeking signatures on a petition to get treatment and disability for veterans exposed to the contaminant, but whose ailments have been all but ignored.

Since last year's cross-country journey, Wright's quest for signatures on the petition has persisted and as of last Monday, July 1, he said he had gotten 6,800.



Three parcels on Brownstone Avenue are at the center of a proposal to further revitalize Portland's prized riverfront. One property at 248 Brownstone Avenue, visible from a drone in the photo at right and from a boat in the photo at left, was a petroleum storage and distribution site before it was vacated about ten years ago. Dates for a public hearing and town meeting on the \$385,000 property purchase will be set later this month, according to First Selectman Susan Bransfield. *Photos courtesy of Jim Tripp.*

Portland Officials Push for Brownstone Land Buy

by Elizabeth Regan

Portland officials are engaging in a public relations campaign to tout the benefits of a Brownstone Avenue property purchase they say will bolster longstanding efforts to revitalize Portland's riverfront.

First Selectman Susan Bransfield signed a purchase agreement for the contaminated, three-parcel site on over a year and a half ago for \$385,000. The sale is contingent on approval by taxpayers at town meeting.

Officials have been working since then to assuage concerns about the pipeline, which previously carried oil from river barges to the tank farm. In May, testing was conducted to ensure there are no leaks in the pipe.

"The results were good, and therefore the town is proceeding with additional information sharing," Bransfield said.

She said selectmen later this month will set the dates for a public hearing and town meeting.

Bransfield said project funding will come from the town's Open Space and Recreational Acquisition Fund, which was established by a local ordinance in 1999 to allocate at least \$50,000 each year to pay for properties that will be used for preservation, public space, or active recreation.

The fund currently totals \$368,359, according to Bransfield.

She noted a \$19,000 deposit was made to the seller as part of the \$385,000 purchase and sales agreement during the last fiscal year.

The open space fund helped pay for the former Keegan property that now serves as the trailhead for Portland's section of the Air Line Trail; it was also used to purchase the Goodrich property on Route 17 where the town is currently constructing a \$6 million recreational complex.

The town's efforts to promote the Brownstone Avenue property purchase so far have included two forums held adjacent to the site in late June and lengthy informational sheets available at the town hall and on the Portland, CT First Selectwoman Facebook page.

The brownfield site was a petroleum storage and distribution site operated by Port Oil Company before it was vacated about a decade ago, leaving five conspicuous oil tanks on the site. The Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) through its Office of Brownfield Remediation and Development has

authorized almost a million dollars to support cleanup and reuse of the site.

A brownfield is identified in state statute as an abandoned or underutilized site where redevelopment, reuse or expansion has not occurred due to the presence or potential presence of pollution. Remediation projects are eligible for federal and state funding.

Possibilities for the 222, 230 and 248 Brownstone Ave. site, if purchased by the town, include a waterfront restaurant operated as part of a public/private partnership. An example of a similar model is the Brownstone Exploration & Discovery Park that operates on a separate piece of town-owned property near the river.

The town purchased a 40-acre swath of riverfront property and the adjacent quarries in 1999 for \$1.05 million. Officials said the Discovery Park owners have paid the town \$3.1 million in lease fees since the park opened in 2005.

Land use and economic development coordinator Mary Dickerson said other improvements on town-owned land near the riverfront since then include the designation of the Brownstone Quarries as a National Historic Resource by the National Park Service, the construction of a public park, and the addition of water and sewer services to the area. The comprehensive focus was developed through several studies over the past 20 years that identified long-range goals for downtown and riverfront redevelopment.

Other possibilities for the three parcels now being considered for purchase include retail shops, marina and transient dock space, a fishing pier, riverfront promenade, public and fee-based parking, and special event space, according to Dickerson.

The town must take ownership of the property before it can access a \$750,000 grant from the DECD already set aside to remediate the brownfield site. According to reports from the environmental engineering firm Tighe and Bond, that's how much it will cost to mitigate soil and groundwater contamination on the site.

The Tighe and Bond report was funded by a previous grant from the state that gave the town \$200,000 to conduct an environmental assessment of the properties and develop a remediation plan.

Dickerson said the plan includes dismantling

and removing the storage tanks, disposing of the soil offsite, and capping some of the material on site.

The state Department of Energy and Environmental Protection allows for some contaminants to be "capped" with buildings, pavement or layers of clean soil, according to Dickerson. She said the capping must be recorded in land records in the town clerk's office and "procedures and protocols must be followed when working in an area of contaminated soil." She added that capped contaminants can be permanently removed from the property if a future owner decides to do additional remediation.

The grant application for the \$750,000 remediation grant cited a 2010 spill of 690 gallons of fuel oil as the cause of some of the contamination. It said another home heating fuel spill "may have occurred historically."

Asbestos, lead and PCBs were found in buildings, storage tanks and piping on the property.

The purchase agreement originally specified the town has 90 days from the signing to inspect the property and review any existing easements, liens or encumbrances. But a town meeting originally scheduled for February 2018 to allow the public to vote on the proposed purchase was postponed after a public hearing yielded questions about who is responsible for removing and/or remediating the pipeline. Numerous extensions have been granted by the seller since then.

The property is in estate after the death of the company's owner. Bransfield said the estate has since paid to empty the pipe of oil, transport the oil for disposal, and rinse the pipe. Selectmen subsequently ordered pressure testing of the pipeline to see if there were any leaks; the results came back this May stating the pressure test "passed the established criteria," according to Bransfield.

Selectmen authorized the purchase of a roughly \$3,000 ground penetrating radar as part of the pipeline analysis, according to Bransfield.

A contract with Langan CT Inc. for a land survey of the property was signed by Bransfield last month, following the results of the pipeline pressure test, for \$9,700.

Financial Considerations

Dickerson said the town would have two options once the site is remediated: redevelop

the site or resell it.

Either way, she said establishing a seasonal public parking lot on the two parcels adjacent to Brownstone Exploration and Discovery Park would add "significant additional revenue" for the town.

Dickerson in a memo to Bransfield suggested outfitting the parking lots with centralized, solar-powered kiosks that bolt into the ground but do not require any electrical wiring or connection. Everyone who parks in the lot must go to the kiosk to enter their license plate number and expected duration of stay and to pay with cash or credit.

Start-up costs for a kiosk are about \$15,000, according to Dickerson.

She said the town would lose approximately \$16,415 in property taxes being paid currently if it purchased the property. But she said the town could reap \$63,000 per year in parking fees over the eight-week summer season.

"Smart meters ensure when motorists leave a space, the leftover time cannot be used by the next motorist, as the time is sold to a marker plate, not a space, increasing revenue," she wrote.

She said tickets for violators, typically ranging from \$25-40 each, would generate additional revenue through an online violation payment system.

The pay parking could help bolster redevelopment efforts if the town chooses to maintain ownership and work with developers interested in leasing the site, according to Dickerson; or it could drive up the value if the town decides to sell the property.

She estimated a possible sales price of \$685,000 for two parcels with parking kiosks installed. She did not factor the third parcel into the equation, but said it would provide additional revenue.

Dickerson said businesses that have shown interest in the properties to date have been deterred by the environmental contamination.

Both Bransfield and Dickerson touted the property purchase and subsequent grant-funded remediation as an economic development move.

"We've done a thorough review of this property and I think it meets an awful lot of objectives we have for promoting economic development," Bransfield said.

Andover Selectmen Eye Options for Senior Center

by Sloan Brewster

Silver Petrucelli & Associates has completed the feasibility study on the proposal to convert the third and fourth grade wing at Andover Elementary School into a senior center.

The study puts the cost of the renovations at \$130,400.

At Wednesday's Board of Selectmen meeting, Superintendent of Schools Sally Doyen informed the board that the study was completed last month. In March, the firm presented its initial findings to the Board of Education.

Now that the report has been completed, it has been handed in to the state Department of Administrative Services, Doyen said. The state will review the document for code compliance and give guidance on what must be done if any renovations take place.

The final report does indicate some changes in the proposal, including that firewalls architects initially thought were required between the wing and the rest of the school will not be necessary, Doyen said.

"At this point it doesn't appear that we're going to have to do that," she said. "So that is a major, major change."

There are still security issues to consider, however, the superintendent said.

Meanwhile, selectmen approved a motion to

send the memo of understanding on the use of the space to the Planning & Zoning Commission and to send the final report to that commission when it comes back from the state.

Selectman Eric Anderson, who is also a member of the Planning & Zoning Commission and its former chairman, made the motion.

"The Planning & Zoning Commission has to look at the big picture," Anderson said in a phone call yesterday. "Is this consistent with the planning documents of the town?"

Some residents at the meeting had questions about how the proposal for the renovation fits in with an ongoing plan to consolidate classrooms at the school.

Selectman Adrian Mandeville said it was not the first time he had been asked the question.

"I've been asked about this I don't know how many times in the last couple weeks or months, if the consolidation of classes is because of this," he said.

Doyen assured folks that the renovation was a product of the consolidation and not the other way around.

"The consolidation of classrooms has nothing to do with this at all," she said. "It really did come from the Board of Education starting a year ago in terms of looking at what our build-

ing was going to look like."

"The consolidation, that's still happening, whether this happens or not?" Mandeville said. "Whether this goes forward or not the kids are going out of that wing."

"Yes," Doyen said.

The consolidation came about because of low enrollment numbers and a security check by the Connecticut State Police, Doyen said. During the check, police said it would be safer for students if they were in the same area of the school and not going back and forth between two areas, she said. Because of that, the third and fourth grade wing, which is separated from the rest of the school by a door, will be closed and all the classrooms will be concentrated in the other wing.

"That was one of the areas that the state police recommended that we try to address," Doyen said.

The school board offered the wing for a possible senior or community center after the closure of the Old Firehouse on Center Street, which has been used as a senior center since the early 1990s and was also a meeting spot for boards and commissions. In October, selectmen officially closed the building after air quality tests confirmed what folks around town have

said they have known for decades – it is infested with mold.

Some residents, including Debbie Scanlon, voiced discontent with the plan to convert the wing and suggested the seniors would be better served with their own building.

Nothing will be done to change the wing without Board of Selectmen approval and a vote by residents, selectmen said. They also said they were looking at different possibilities for a community center. Mandeville, in particular, said he was planning to go and look at a center in a steel building in another town.

A steel building would be a less expensive option than a new building, he said.

"We have to have a conversation that includes all of that," he said, referring to different ideas for how to accommodate the seniors and other local groups. "My personal opinion is the seniors have been denied for a long time."

"We have to, as a community, come together to see, as a community, what is best for the community," First Selectman Jeff Maguire said. "It is about money, it is about the children's safety, it is about what the seniors get out of this."

Look for a more detailed story about the completed feasibility study in a future *Rivereast*.

Vehicle Mirror Strikes Pedestrian in Marlborough

A vehicle that hit the right arm of a woman left her with suspected minor injuries.

At approximately 2:56 p.m. on June 30, a Nissan Murano driven by Konnor M. Elbe, 22, of 107 Hebron Rd., was traveling south on Jones Hollow Road north of the intersection with Park Road. Police said 76-year-old Ruth P. Twomey, of 37 Buttonwood Rd., Hebron, was walking north on the southbound shoulder of Jones Hollow Road when she was struck in the right, upper arm by the Nissan's right-

side view mirror when the vehicle attempted to pass her.

Elbe stopped and transported Twomey to Middlesex Health Marlborough Medical Center with a visibly swollen arm, police said.

Elbe was found at fault and issued a misdemeanor summons for operating a vehicle without minimum insurance, operating a suspended vehicle and unsafely overtaking a pedestrian, police said.

Vehicle Collides with Utility Pole in Marlborough

A collision with a utility pole left one woman with suspected minor injuries.

At approximately 3:12 p.m., on June 27, State Police said a Kia Sportage, driven by Judith I. Billingham, 75, of 16 Skylark Rd., was traveling south on South Road at the intersection with Millstone Drive when the vehicle traveled off the right side of the road.

The Kia subsequently struck a utility pole, police said.

Billingham was transported by the Marlborough Fire Department to Middlesex Health Marlborough Medical Center with complaints of neck and back pain and was issued an infraction for failure to maintain lane.

Investigator Finds No Unauthorized Access in Colchester

by Allison Lazur

A ransomware attack on the town's computer systems in March left the public with few details about what information, if any had been compromised.

Ransomware is a software virus that encrypts files, making them inaccessible to the user.

But late last month, the town released a statement revealing a third-party forensic investigator "found no evidence that any information housed within our network was subject to unauthorized access."

First Selectman Art Shilosky said a fraudulent email was believed to have been opened on a computer in the town's finance department, resulting in the ransomware attack.

"We shut that computer down right away," he said.

Ransomware attacks occur when a user either accesses an infected website or opens a fraudulent email containing an embedded virus that encrypts certain files, making them inaccessible. In a less common scenario, the virus can attack the entire computer system, said cybersecurity expert Sean Mehner of Connecticut Information Security LLC at the time

of the attack.

Shilosky said town employees do receive training on how to recognize a fraudulent email or website.

As a result of the incident, additional measures were taken to enhance safeguards, including a replacement of internet firewalls throughout the town's computers, a new server to replace the attacked server, and also the replacement of all affected hard drives.

When asked by the *Rivereast* if he was confident the enhancements would prevent another possible attack, Shilosky said "I'm as confident as I can be."

But, he added, "I don't care what you do; if [hackers] want to get in they're going to get in."

Shilosky said while most of the costs associated with the damage control were covered by insurance, about \$30,000 was utilized from the capital fund already set aside for future system improvements.

"The money was already in our capital fund," Shilosky said. "It just forced us to use it quicker than we have to, but the result is we have a better product and are safer."

Portland Police News

6/29: Kyle Grechika, 37, of 1503 Portland Cobalt Road, was charged with improper use of marker plates, Portland Police said.

6/30: James Platt, 32, of 142 Marlborough St., was charged with disorderly conduct, third-degree assault, first-degree threatening and second-degree reckless endangerment, police said.

7/1: Sean Walker, 38, of 285 Marlborough St., was charged with disorderly conduct, criminal violation of protective order and risk of injury to a minor, police said.

East Hampton Police News

6/25: Mitchell Anderson, 29, of 24 S. Main St., Glastonbury, was charged with violation of probation, East Hampton Police said.

6/26: Taina Echevarria, 36, of 32 Nelson St., Hartford, was issued a summons for operating a motor vehicle under suspension, police said.

6/27: Jason Maly, 23, of 195 West High St., was issued a summons for operating an unregistered and uninsured motor vehicle, police said.

6/28: Gregg Moore, 62, of 21 Robin Rd., Colchester, was arrested and charged with DUI, police said.

Marlborough Police News

6/29: Jennifer F. Haxton, 39, of 34 Olney Rd., Wethersfield, was arrested and charged with DUI, according to State Police.

6/30: Ketan Patel, 34, of 111A Prospect Ave., West Hartford, was arrested and charged with third-degree criminal mischief, disorderly conduct, third-degree assault

Colchester Police News

6/25: Jonathan A. Oshima, 23, of 9224 Nathan Dr., White Settlement, Texas, was arrested and charged with violation of probation, State Police said.

6/28: Michael J. Oddis, 27, of 477 Westchester Rd., was arrested and charged with reckless driving, engaging police in pursuit, second-degree criminal mischief, interfering with officer/resisting arrest and disorderly conduct, according to Colchester Police.

6/29: Leo Rodrique, 36, of 31 Kramer Rd., Colchester, was arrested and charged with DUI and failure to drive right, police said.

6/29: Jasmine Ahern, 27, of 36 Main St., Baltic, was issued a summons for failure to obey a stop light and operating a motor vehicle under suspension, police said.

Also, from June 24-30, officers responded to 16 medical calls, one motor vehicle crash and six alarms, police said, and made 27 traffic stops.

Obituaries

East Hampton

Cynthia Lindstrom Braheney

Cynthia "Cindy" Lindstrom Braheney, 63, of Palm Beach Gardens, Fla., passed away Thursday, June 20. She was the daughter of Col./Dr. Richard Lindstrom and the late Lois Lindstrom.

Cindy was born in New Britain Feb. 20, 1956. Cindy was a 1973 graduate from E.O. Smith High School in Storrs. Her early career was as a dental assistant, but over the years she became more involved in the firefighting/paramedic profession. In 1993, she became the first female firefighter/paramedic for the town of Wallingford, retiring in 2000. Prior to moving to Florida in 2017, Cindy was a resident of Meriden, Cromwell, and briefly East Hampton.

She is survived by her two sons, Christopher Busse and wife Jennifer of Ashford, and Nicholas Busse and wife Barbara of West Hartford, as well as a daughter Heather Arvanitis and husband Mike of Hollywood, Fla. She was blessed with five grandchildren: Zachary, Kierra, Mikie, Mikaela and Harriet, all of whom she greatly loved and enjoyed. She is also survived by her father and two sisters, Linda Lindstrom of Palm Beach Gardens, Fla., and Donna Lindstrom of East Hampton.

Cindy was passionate about pet adoption and provided a loving home for many cats and dogs over the years. Donations in Cindy's memory can be made to anything 'animal rescue,' be it a local shelter, Protectors of Animals, East Hartford, or Connecticut Humane Society, Newington.

A celebration of her life will be held at a later date.

Potter Funeral Home, Willimantic, is handling arrangements.

Middle Haddam

Everett R. Breece

Everett "Dick" R. Breece, 84, of Middle Haddam, beloved husband of 63 years to May (Geysen) Breece, died Tuesday, July 3, at Middlesex Hospital. Born Sept. 25, 1934, in Hartford, he was the son of the late Everett and Helen (Morris) Breece.

Dick was retired from the Johnson Marine Hardware Company, where he was a production manager, after 31 years. Dick enjoyed sailing, antiques and history. He was a former selectman in East Hampton, former chairman of the Board of Finance and was one of the three founding members of the Middle Haddam Historic District. He was a graduate of East Hampton High School and attended UConn.

Besides his wife May, he is survived by his daughters Deborah Breece of Mystic, Susan Denny (Austin Olson) of Portland; granddaughters Megan Pearson (John), Katie Denny, Emily Denny (Chris Kohn), all of Nantucket, Mass.; great-granddaughters Maeve and Faye Pearson, also of Nantucket; brother-in-law, John Geysen (Bonnie); sister-in-law, Nancy Geysen; nephew, Warren Breece (Jackie) and children Matthew, Olivia and Taylor Breece.

He was predeceased by his brother, Warren Breece (Mitzie), and sister, Linda Smith.

A private service will be held at the convenience of the family.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to the Alzheimer's Association, 200 Executive Blvd., Southington, CT 06489. To leave online condolences, visit spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

East Hampton

Helen L. Allen

Helen L. Allen, 77, of East Hampton and Willimantic, widow of Cecil Allen, died Tuesday, July 9, at her home. Born May 17, 1942, in Middletown, she was a resident of East Hampton for many years before moving to Willimantic.

Helen had worked for the East Hampton school system for many years and had also worked for the Salvation Army for over 20 years.

She is survived by her son, Hugh Allen of Lebanon; her daughter, Bertha Indelicati and husband Vincent of Lebanon; a sister, Nellie Zajakowski of Willimantic; six grandchildren; and several great-grandchildren.

She was predeceased by her daughter, Helen McKinney.

Friends may call at Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton, Tuesday, July 16, from 10:30 a.m.-noon. A memorial service will be held at noon, with burial to follow in Lake View Cemetery.

To leave online condolences, visit spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

Colchester

John Henry Andrysiak

John Henry Andrysiak, 72, of Colchester, passed away unexpectedly at his home Saturday, July 6. He shared 42 years with his beloved wife Debra (Janco), and raised his family in Colchester. He was born Nov. 1, 1946, on Long Island, N.Y., to the late Walter and Mary (Bilick) Andrysiak.

John was a veteran of the U.S. Army during the Vietnam era, serving overseas in Korea, and was semi-retired from his position as a retail salesman. He loved to fish, birdwatch, and garden when he was not watching or listening to his beloved New York Giants and Mets. He was a man of many talents who was at his best cooking Thanksgiving dinner, working with his hands, or zipping through his daily crossword puzzles. In recent years, he took great joy in being "Jaja" to his grandchildren, including fishing trips with Jimmer and teaching Charlotte to say his name.

He will be remembered as soft-spoken, sharp-witted, a master at *Jeopardy!*, a friend to all who knew him, and one who never hesitated to lend a helping hand.

John will be sadly missed, but remembered with love, by his wife, Debra; children, Michelle and her husband James Stotler of Middletown, and Matthew Metz of Fall River, Massachusetts; a sister, Carol and her husband Joseph Ruszczyk of Long Island, N.Y.; a brother, Walter Andrysiak of Long Island, N.Y.; two grandchildren, Jimmer and Charlotte Stotler; his mother-in-law, Rita Janco of Colchester; and numerous extended family and friends.

Calling hours were held Tuesday, July 9, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. The funeral Mass was celebrated Wednesday, July 10, directly at St. Andrew Church, 128 Norwich Ave., Colchester. Burial was private.

Donations in his memory may be made to Disabled American Veterans, dav.org.

For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

Colchester

Ernest Van Cedarfield

Ernest Van Cedarfield, 87, husband of Rebecca (Eaton), of Interlachen, Fla., formerly of Colchester, passed away Friday, July 5, at the Putnam Community Medical Center in Palatka, Fla. Born Oct. 26, 1931 in Springfield, Mass., he was a son of the late Anton and Emily (Bliss) Van Cedarfield.

Ernest retired several years ago after a career as a facility maintenance man at Eastern Connecticut State University. He also served many Assembly of God congregations as an on-call clergyman. In his free time, he enjoyed motorcycle riding with his wife, and camping and spending time with his family.

Ernest will be remembered as a happy man who was devoted to God and his family. He was a great husband and a great man.

He will be sadly missed but remembered with love by his wife of 47 years, Rebecca; six children and their spouses, Richard (Carol) Van Cedarfield of Newington, Ronald Van Cedarfield of Wethersfield, Ernest Jr. (Jean) Van Cedarfield of Virginia, Debra James of California, Steven Van Cedarfield of Hebron, Mark (Carol) Van Cedarfield of Colchester; stepchildren, Samantha (John) Horocks of Wilton, Maine, Ronald Chamberlain of Coventry, Richard Chamberlain of Interlachen, Fla., Frank (Amy) Chamberlain of East Hampton; two brothers, David Van Cedarfield of Colchester, Jack Van Cedarfield of Florida; a sister, Margaret Corsaro; numerous grandchildren, great-great grandchildren, and extended family and friends.

In addition to his parents, he was predeceased by two stepchildren, Menta and Anna, and seven siblings, Myrtle Bennette, Barbara Standish, Lawrence, Harold, Daniel, Francis and James Van Cedarfield.

Funeral services will be held today, July 12, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester, beginning at 1 p.m. with visitation, followed by a 2 p.m. service at the funeral home and burial in Linwood Cemetery in Colchester.

Donations in his memory may be made to the Transformation Assembly of God Church, 1104 Old Colchester Rd., Oakdale, CT 06370.

For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

Marlborough

James Patrick Murphy

James Patrick Murphy, 63, of Marlborough, formerly of Torrington, unexpectedly passed away in June.

He leaves his beloved wife of 36 years, Kathy Maye Murphy, whom he wed June 4, 1983; a sister-in-law and her husband, Barbara and John Singleton, and two nephews, John, his godson, and Thomas, in Fayetteville, N.C.; and several cousins in Torrington, Avon and Belfort, France.

Jim was born Oct. 20, 1955, in Torrington, the only son of the late James and Catherine (Colombie) Murphy. He was predeceased by a very dear Bichon Frise, Maximilian, his parents, aunts, uncles, and several cousins. He grew up in Torrington, attended St. Thomas Seminary High School in Bloomfield, graduating in 1973, UConn School of Nursing in Storrs, graduating in 1977, earned a master's degree in community mental health nursing from Russell Sage College in Troy, N.Y., in 1983, and achieved APRN Certification.

Jim worked as a mental health nurse for the Institute of Living in Hartford, Samaritan Hospital in Waterford, Mount Sinai Hospital in Hartford; as a behavioral health nurse practitioner for many years at Manchester Memorial Hospital and the US Veterans Administration Medical Center in both the Newington and West Haven campuses; and as a Sales Associate for the Home Depot in West Hartford.

Jim was a communicant of St. John Fisher Roman Catholic Church in Marlborough, where he served as a Eucharistic minister, lector, and sang with the 5 p.m. and 8:30 a.m. folk groups; St. Andrew Roman Catholic Church in Colchester, where he was a member of the ACTS Community, participated in the Passion Play for several years, and accompanied Kathy and the choir on pilgrimages to Italy, Germany and Austria; and St. Francis of Assisi Roman Catholic Church in Torrington, where he served as an altar boy.

Jim's favorite pastime was officiating CIAC high school basketball with IAABO Board 6 for over 25 years, previously with Board 7, Women's Division III NESAC college basketball, Special Olympics Connecticut, and Women's NBA with the Connecticut Sun.

Jim had a passion for cooking. He cheerfully manned the grill for many St. John Fisher parish picnics and employee picnics, and helped with the cooking for many St. Andrew Church Choir dinner concerts and employee Christmas parties. He worked as a cook at Mama Luke's in Farmington and for Adams Supermarkets for a short time.

Jim will be sadly missed but remembered with love. Calling hours will be held today, July 12, from 6-8 p.m., at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. The funeral Mass will be celebrated Saturday, July 13, at 11 a.m., directly at St. Andrew Church, 128 Norwich Ave., Colchester. Burial in Torrington will be private.

Donations in his memory may be made to Small Paws Bichon Rescue.

For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

Marlborough

Doris Santangelo

Doris (Hopkins) Santangelo, 94, of Cromwell and Marlborough (known to many as "Dodie") died Friday, June 28. She was born Jan. 27, 1925, in Stockbridge, Mass., to Stephen Hopkins and Ethel (Squires) Hopkins.

She was the widow of Salvatore Santangelo and leaves three children behind: Joseph Stephen Santangelo (Jane) of Marlborough, Stephen Santangelo of Cromwell and Joanne Santangelo of Killingworth. She also leaves two brothers: Russell Hopkins and John Hopkins both of MA. She leaves two grandsons: Joseph Stephen Santangelo II of Marlborough and Stephen Joseph Santangelo II of Cromwell.

During their early years of marriage, Doris and Salvatore owned The Hartford Club Package Store and The Hartford Beverage Co. Doris enjoyed many interests and hobbies throughout her life; collecting Victorian dolls, Skeet shooting and cooking for her family. She also loved NHRA Drag Racing and traveling around the country with her son and grandson. She was Joe and Joseph II's biggest fan. She and her husband also owned several race horses. They were big New York Yankee fans.

There will be a Mass scheduled at St. John Fisher Church in Marlborough in the future.

Marlborough

Elizabeth Czapla

Elizabeth "Betty" Czapla, 82, passed away peacefully at Middlesex Hospital from complications of dementia. Born in Hartford to Leonard and Jane (Caisse) Riccio, she attended Buckley High School until the age of 16 when she dropped out and went to work for the city of Hartford, in the welfare department.

She married Walter M. Czapla Sr. June 1, 1957, at St. Peter's Church in Hartford. They were married for 56 years. They bought a home in Marlborough on the lake in 1960. They lived there for 26 years. She was a stay-at-home mom when her children were young and had various jobs as an "Avon Lady," sold Mary Kay cosmetics, Fuller Brush and Pequot Soda, and was a 4-H leader.

During this time, she also obtained her GED, a very proud accomplishment. She then worked for Liberty Bank in Marlborough as a head teller for over 10 years, after which she got a job with the State of Connecticut D.O.T. and worked on the Berlin Turnpike as a secretary for over 10 years. During this time, Betty and Walt bought their dream home in East Hartford CT. on Syracuse Drive and lived there for over 25 years. They attended church at St. Francis of Assisi in South Windsor, where they renewed their vows on their 50th wedding anniversary. They were also members of the Luna Club.

After retirement, she did temp jobs; her favorite was working for the Manchester Police Department. After Walt passed in 2013, she sold her home and moved to Brookdale Assisted Living in Glastonbury and eventually moved to Atria Memory Care in Rocky Hill. Her last six months were spent as a resident of Marlborough Health Care.

She loved traveling with Walter, especially annual trips to Las Vegas and the local casinos.

She is loved and will be missed by her three children, Lori Rudker (John), Lisa Michaud (Joe), and Walter Jr. (Lori); five grandchildren, Kyle and Sarah Rudker, Jennifer, Adam, and Randy Michaud; a brother, John Riccio, and a sister Marie Tardie (Frank); sisters-in-law, Ellen Riccio and Stephanie Dulka; and many nieces and nephews.

She was predeceased by her parents, husband, brother Leonard Riccio Jr, sisters-in-law Marie Riccio and Mildred Pilarski, and brother-in-law Joe Dulka.

Services were held this past week at Samsel and Carmon Funeral Home. Burial took place in Mount Saint Benedict Cemetery.

The family wishes to thank the staff on South 7 at Middlesex Hospital for their compassion and care. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations in Betty's memory may be made to Middlesex Hospital, Attn: Philanthropy, 28 Crescent St., Middletown, CT 06457; please reference South 7.

Visit carmonfuneralhome.com for online expressions of sympathy.



Cobalt

Rosalie Wallace Pyne

Rosalie Wallace Pyne, 90, wife of the late Andrew J. Pyne Jr., passed away Friday, July 5, at Chestelm Health and Rehabilitation Center in Moodus. She was born Dec. 21, 1928, in Waterbury, to the late John Sr. and Mary Wallace, and later moved to Portland.



There she met and married her high school sweetheart “Pynie” in October 1951 and moved to Cobalt where she remained until earlier this year. She was a parishioner of St. Mary’s Church in Portland. Rosalie devoted her life in support of her children, and she often proclaimed to anyone she saw how proud she was of all of them and their families.

She is survived by her children, Dr. James (Teresa) Pyne of West Point, Va., Ellen (Joseph) Anderson of Ellicott City, Md., and Kathy Kearney with whom she shared her home and remained until earlier this year with additional support and loving care from her granddaughter, Phoenix Lombardi, dearest friends Bud and Becky McLean, and several others. She is also survived by three other grandchildren and two step-grandchildren, five great-grandchildren and one step-grandchild, along with several nieces and nephews.

Besides her husband, she was predeceased by her youngest child, Anne Pyne-Labagh; her sisters, Frances Johnston and Marcela Wallace; and brothers George Wallace Sr. and John Wallace Jr.

Some of Rosalie’s favorite things were road trips to Virginia and North Carolina to visit family and friends and strolling on the beach. When home she would be seen daily walking up the street wearing her safety vest with her trusted furry companion Jenny. When walking was not possible, she could be seen sitting on the front porch waving and chatting with the neighbors as they went by. She faithfully attended the annual Old Home Day Parade, wearing her Boston Red Sox hat. She will always be remembered for her final words when ending a visit or phone conversation: “Be Careful.”

On behalf of the family, we would like to thank the entire staff of Chestelm for the loving care and support they provided our mom during her stay there. Also, our thanks to Middlesex Health Hospice Program for the additional support provided during the final days.

Friends may call at the Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton, Sunday, July 14, from 4-6 p.m. A funeral liturgy will be celebrated Monday, July 15, at 11 a.m., in St. Mary Church, 51 Freestone Ave., Portland, with burial in the Swedish Cemetery in Portland.

To leave online condolences, visit spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to St. Mary Church, 51 Freestone Ave., Portland, CT 06480 or East Hampton Volunteer Fire Department, Company 2, 366 West High St., Cobalt, CT 06414.

Colchester

John Francis Stackowski

John Francis Stackowski, 88, of Colchester, passed away Saturday, June 29, at Harrington Court in Colchester. Born Dec. 27, 1930, in Shenandoah, Pa., he was a son of the late Joseph and Katherine Stackowski.



In 1952, John proudly served his country by joining the United States Air Force. On May 1, 1954, John married Theresa Fantini; the couple moved to Colchester in 1963 and shared 65 years of marital bliss together.

He was a hardworking man of many talents, considered by many to be a jack of all trades. For 35 years he worked as a mechanic at Pratt & Whitney, and part time as a bus driver during the ‘60s. He was a communicant of St. Andrew Church and an active member of the American Legion and VFW in Colchester.

In addition to his loving wife Theresa, he is survived by his son, John Stackowski and wife Patsy of Manchester; his daughter, Tina Stackowski of East Hampton; his grandchildren, Justin, Jared and Andrew Messervy; two great-granddaughters, Avah and Abby Messervy; and numerous extended family and friends.

A memorial Mass was held Thursday, July 11, at St. Andrew Church, located at 128 Norwich Ave., Colchester, followed by a reception at the Polish Club, 395 S. Main St., Colchester. Burial will be private at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that donations be made in John’s name to the Amebisys Foundation Beacon Hospice, 111 Founders Plaza, Suite 1803, East Hartford, CT 06108, or to the Colchester VFW Post 6990 Adler-Boluck Post 95 Norwich Avenue Colchester, CT 06415.

For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

East Hampton

Alice R. Grimshaw

Oct. 27, 1932-March 1, 2019

Alice was born in Occum Oct. 27, 1932, to Albert Z. and Marseline (Godaire) Babbitt. She attended Norwich Free Academy. Following her marriage to John T. Grimshaw in 1950, she relocated to Middlefield. There she began her career with the State of Connecticut; she retired as an administrative services officer from the Department of Aging in October 1987.

Alice and John moved to East Hampton in 1957, building their first home on Champion Hill, where daughter Melaney was born. Years later they relocated to Tartia Road, where son John was born. Mom loved the beach and the “smell of the water.” To enjoy this passion in her retirement, she lived briefly in Charleston, R.I. and Pawcatuck, and also enjoyed vacations to Southern California beaches while visiting her daughter and son-in-law. She returned to East Hampton and continued to reside there until her death.

A quiet retirement reading, building puzzles and enjoying her flowers suited her just fine. She enjoyed stories of her family history and was happy to join her daughter in the Havasu Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution.

She was preceded in death by her siblings, Gladys Rioux, Albert Babbitt, James Babbitt, William Babbitt and Ernest Babbitt. She is survived by her daughter and son-in-law, Melaney and Norman McHale of Port Saint Lucie, Fla.; her son and daughter-in-law, John and Jamie Grimshaw of East Hampton; her granddaughter, Katelyn Grimshaw of Marlborough; and numerous nieces and nephews residing around the country.

From the Editor’s Desk

Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

Well, they went ahead and did it.

As some of you may have seen in last week’s *Rivereast*, the Andover Board of Selectmen voted unanimously last week to remove Bob Burbank as the interim town administrator, and instead do what I wrote the board was considering a few weeks ago.

They’re going to run the town for free.

Yes, replacing Burbank will be a team of volunteers – sort of a town manager-by-committee. Five different elected officials will take turns as the town administrator; one for each day of the week. And they’ll do this all at no cost to the taxpayers.

It’s a noble concept, I suppose – but I think it’s a terrible one.

First of all, being manager of a town is tough work. And make no mistake, despite his title as first selectman, Burbank was essentially the town manager for about 11 years, until Joseph Higgins took over the work (also despite his weak-sounding “town administrator” title). It’s demanding work, whether you’re doing it for three days or three weeks or three months. You should be compensated for it.

Then there’s the fact that none of these five people were elected to serve as town administrator. Sure, voters may have wanted them on, say, the Board of Selectmen, but did they necessarily want them in the town administrator seat? Three years ago, Andover residents voted to establish a town administrator-run form of government. And I think that should include having an actual town administrator fill that role in the interim until a permanent one is found. Don’t have a rotating band of selectmen who could have little in the way of managerial experience; that’s not what Andover voted for in 2016.

And that brings me to my third and perhaps biggest reason why I think this is an awful idea. With a different person sitting in the town administrator seat for each day of the week, there will be next-to-nothing in terms of continuity. You need to have the same person in the role, day in and day out. There are meetings with various state and area officials. There are meetings sometimes with federal officials. There are negotiations with unions and other folks that might not wrap up in a single day.

Simply put, there’s a lot of stuff that requires the same pair of eyes to be looking at it. As it stands now, the only real continuity in the town hall will be the poor assistants and other employees. I’m guessing they’ll have a lot more responsibility dumped on their shoulders now. Will they be compensated adequately for this – or will they be encouraged to “take one for the team” as well?

First Selectman Jeff Maguire has said this is a good time to have the rotating, volunteer town administrators, in that there’s not a whole lot of pressing matters going on right now. And this may be true, but what if the

search for a new town administrator doesn’t go according to plan? What if it takes longer than expected? Once fall starts to roll around things start to heat up in municipal government-land. Do residents still want this set-up then? I wouldn’t.

Look, I may be completely wrong about this. (I’m sure some “Andos” probably feel that I am.) At the end of the day you’re not paying for a town administrator, even on an interim basis, so maybe that’s all taxpayers will care about. But the lack of experience, the lack of continuity.....this all sounds like a recipe for disaster.

Look, I’m not a stick in the mud. I’m all for out-of-the-box thinking. But there’s a reason why, when a town manager leaves, board members hire an interim to replace him or her rather than trying to take on the work themselves.

This is just an idea that I’m afraid is not going to work.

If you read Elizabeth Regan’s cover story on the latest get-a-banquet-hall-quick scheme by St. Clements, you probably saw a quote at the end from Peter Callan of Roncalli Institute. He said that he found the prior stories on St. Clements to be “uncharitable,” but in the exact same breath he admitted he hadn’t actually read the stories.

Two things here: First, since when are newspapers in the charity business? It’s not our business to be charitable, to make people look good. It’s our business to report on the facts, and let the chips fall where they may.

But what really made me roll my eyes was this: “I didn’t read the articles that went out there.” Look, if you’re going to complain about a story, read the darn story. I mean it. Callan isn’t the first one to complain about a *Rivereast* story he hasn’t read, and he probably won’t be the last. I’ve even had town officials call me up, claim a particular story was full of factual errors, then, when I asked them for details, admit they hadn’t actually read the story; they’d only *heard* about it.

I don’t think people realize how foolish they look when they do this. If you follow up a “that story’s no good!” with a “well, I didn’t actually read it,” it immediately discounts your argument. And it’s incredibly irritating. I can handle criticism – and more importantly, if there’s a mistake in a story, I want to know about it and correct it.

But if you’re bothered enough by something that you’re going to speak out about it at a public meeting, or call up the editor of the newspaper to complain about it, at least take the time to read what you’re talking about.

You might find the story you heard was “full of mistakes” was actually pretty on the money after all.

See you next week.