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These signs in front of Colchester Town Hall Tuesday apparently did the trick, as taxpayers passed the town's \$47.63 million 2008-09 budget. Last year, it took four referendums before voters finally passed a town budget.

Colchester Budget Passes on Just One Try This Year

by Kristina Histen

Colchester's \$47.63 million 2008-09 budget passed at referendum Tuesday, with only 17 percent of the town voting.

But at least this year, it only took one referendum to pass the spending plan.

'Yes' signs lined the entranceway of the Town Hall Tuesday, where taxpayers voted on both the Board of Selectmen's proposed \$13.33 million budget and the Board of Education's proposed \$34.29 million budget.

By comparison, last year, Colchester voters rejected a proposed 2007-08 budget at referendum three times, before finally passing a \$44 million spending plan by a 1,989-1,404 vote in September.

A total of 1,588 voters cast ballots Tuesday, out of the town's 9,215 registered voters. Of the 1,584 that voted for the

selectmen's budget, 1,225 voted in favor of it and 359 voted against it, and of the 1,573 that voted for the school board budget, 1,144 said 'yes' and 429 said 'no.'

"The turnout was very low," Town Clerk Nancy Bray said. "I don't even remember the last time it was this low. If I were to guess why, it was probably because people were happy with the budget."

Superintendent of Schools Karen Loisel said she felt the turnout was low because the budget represented a zero mill increase. In her experience, she said, when citizens have concerns about the budget or concerns about other issues they don't hesitate to make their feelings known to elected officials. The low turnout was probably due to the fact that people did not have concerns about these

budgets, she said.

Community members of all ages (providing they were over 18, of course) took about five minutes to walk in and out of the Town Hall to vote. Although many were hesitant to tell their opinions about the budgets, saying it was a private issue, a few took the time to share their thoughts.

"I voted yes for both because first of all, I believe in the education that children should have," resident Joe Cronin said, "and the town still needs services."

The majority of residents that voted 'yes' for the Board of Education budget said they felt it was already too low and didn't want to see anything else cut out. Some also thought that more needed to be done for it and expressed the importance of extra pro-

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grams and extracurricular activities that need to be made available for children.

"I think they do a good job planning," resident Rick Young said. "My kids went to school here and did really well in college because of that."

Resident Keith Masse said he voted in favor of both budgets "because it seemed like a fair budget this year and we've had a lot of contention over the years."

One resident that voted no really thought "people who have kids in town should pay more taxes than those of us that are ready to retire." Another resident, Ray Stevenson, said he always votes no because too much money is being spent both in the town and throughout the country. "Gas is just too high," he said. "We

have to cut back, so I think the town and the federal government should have to too."

Loiselle said, "I know I speak for all of the Colchester Public Education staff and the Board of Education when I say that we are thrilled that the budget passed at the first referendum. I believe that by voting yes the community validated the efforts of town and school officials to bring forth a responsible and conservative budget in recognition of these financially-challenging times."

So, after about half a year of planning, organizing, research, making presentations and dealing with cuts, town officials can finally now relax. Well, at least for a few months, until next year's budget season starts up...

Low Voter Turnout in Portland Passes \$28.84 Million Budget

by Michael McCoy

When the numbers were tallied Monday evening after the Portland budget referendum, the only mystery was just where all the voters were.

The residents of Portland passed the 2008-09 budget by a vote of 407-122. The approved spending plan comes in at \$28.84 million, with \$17.6 million of that making up the education budget. This is a 3.03 percent increase over the 2007-08 budget, and includes a projected mill rate of 26.99 mills, resulting in a zero percent increase in taxes. First Selectman Susan Bransfield said the selectmen would formally set a mill rate at their meeting Wednesday, May 21.

Out of 5,826 eligible voters, 529 came out to the polls. This translates to a 9.1 percent turnout, less than half of the 18.8 percent who voted on last year's second referendum, which passed the budget. The turnout figure appears even starker when compared to the 25.7 percent who turned out in 2005 when the budget passed. (The 2006 voter turnout was 16 percent, but even that was nearly seven percentage points higher than the turnout on Tuesday.)

During voting hours Monday, the sentiments of voters mirrored the landslide 'yes' vote that followed. Fred Cohan said he voted in favor of the spending plan "because it's the best budget we're going to get for the schools. If it fails, it's going to get cut down even more."

Paul Scrivano seemed to agree. He voted for the budget and explained, "My kids are in the school system, and I think if you vote 'no' they'll cut more from the schools. They've cut enough as it is."

Sue McDougal, a teacher at Brownstone Intermediate School, voted 'yes' and echoed these comments, but added, "I wish it wasn't a zero percent [tax] increase." She laughed at her observation that she may be the only person asking to increase the budget.

"We've already lost \$150,000," McDougal said of the education side of the budget. "We're already limiting supplies." McDougal said that while \$150,000 may not seem like much in the scope of the budget, there are many useful things it could provide. Mentioning one possibility, she said, "That's a couple of teachers."

McDougal also expressed concern over the lack of other services that result from a lean budget, including the ceasing of spring brush

removal. She said her household "can manage, but our two elderly neighbors can't."

George Kisiel agreed that there was a lack of services in town, but he still voted against the budget. He said he felt the education spending in particular was "way too high."

Another voter, who didn't want to be named, agreed the figure was too high and said, "I can't afford to live in this town anymore." The voter said the spending proposal was "not sound financial practice."

Maria Pramuka came out and said what many thought was the reason for the overwhelming budget support, as well as the low turnout. Unable to hold back her laughter, she explained her reason for voting 'yes' as "because my taxes aren't going up." She admitted the zero percent tax increase "kind of surprised me."

Selectman John Anderson said he was not surprised by the landslide support for the budget, and declared, "We did our job."

Board of Education Chairman Chris Hetrick said he wasn't surprised either, and added, "If I would be surprised about anything it would be the 122 'no' votes."

First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield did not seem caught off-guard by the results either. "I was told by many people that this would overwhelmingly pass." She added, "I think that people realized it was not a controversial budget. It was well formulated. As a result, I guess there was not a lot of publicity on the budget."

"I'm very grateful we do not have to increase taxes next year," said the First Selectwoman. "That's the result of some very careful budgeting."

Selectman Carl Chudzick said he took the low voter turnout to be a sign that people approved of the spending plan. But not everybody took the low turnout in stride.

About 16 volunteers helped man the polls Tuesday, including moderator Grace Godwin. As the time drew closer to 8 p.m., the various workers used words like "pathetic" and "ridiculous" to describe the turnout. One volunteer, Roselani Ferguson lamented, "It's terrible that our servicemen are fighting for freedom, and people cannot motivate themselves to vote."

Bransfield thanked the voters, the selectmen, the poll workers, and the registrars of voters for their part in the budget process.

Body of Springfield Man Surfaces in Portland

by Michael McCoy

The body of a man who apparently committed suicide was found in Portland Sunday.

According to Portland Police Officer Dave Bond, police received a call from a boater around 2:15 p.m. Sunday, May 11, saying he had found a body in the Connecticut River, about a quarter of a mile from Petzold's Boat Yard.

Bond said the town's volunteer fire department was notified, and the state chief medical examiner's office dispatched a member to the site.

Bond said police identified the body as that of Isreal Rodriguez, 73, of Springfield, MA. "We ran his name, and found he had been reported missing back in May of 2007," Bond said.

Bond said "there didn't appear to be any

foul play," but added that the body was sent to the medical examiner's office in Farmington, who will issue the official cause of death.

Bond said Massachusetts State Police told Portland Police that in early May 2007, they had received a call from someone who reported seeing an individual jump off of the Memorial Bridge in Springfield. "When [the Massachusetts state police] got there," said Bond, "they determined it was this gentleman."

Bond called the body "badly decomposed."

When asked if bodies surfacing in the Portland portion of the Connecticut River is somewhat commonplace, Bond responded, "It happens every so often." But, he added, "I don't know that we've had any from as far as Springfield."

Hebron Seniors Discover Joy of Gaming

by Sarah McCoy

Hebron senior citizens could soon be giving their grandkids a run for their money when it comes to video games.

On Tuesday, the Russell Mercier Senior Center introduced people to the Nintendo Wii, a video game system where users' movements are mimicked on the game.

"It's a great way to promote exercise, fitness, and socialization for our seniors," HealthNet Community Events Director Bob Beckwith explained.

In hopes of motivating seniors to get moving in a new way, HealthNet is donating Wiis to any senior center in Connecticut willing to participate in a statewide Wii bowling challenge. Currently HealthNet has delivered over 80 systems.

On Tuesday Beckwith was in Hebron to introduce the Wii to a room of three dozen senior citizens. With the controller in his hand, Beckwith demonstrated how to bowl Wii-style. "Just swing your arm back and let go of the button, like you would a regular bowling ball," he instructed.

The game was initially met with a great deal of hesitancy with many seniors preferring to sit back and watch. Sharon McKenna of Hebron was first to try. She knocked down four pins on her first try and received a round of applause by onlookers surprised to see bowling taking place on a video game screen.

McKenna, who is a member of a senior bowling team in Vernon, said she plans to partici-

pate in future Wii events as a way to practice her form. "I tend to bring my arm across my body," she said. "This will be a wonderful way for me to correct that."

As the demonstration went on, more and more seniors took their turns bowling. As they got comfortable, the competitive spirit came out. While there wasn't exactly trash-talking going on, there were a few tongues stuck out, and victory dances for strikes and spares.

"You'd be surprised," Beckwith said. "Folks really get into it and want to win."

Now that they've become acquainted with the system, Hebron seniors will have a chance to compete against others, as HealthNet begins its quest to find the best Wii bowling team in the state. Over the summer, neighboring senior centers will compete for the right to play in the State Cup to be held in October, most likely, at the Wallingford Senior Center.

Elsie Mazzarella, of Hebron, said she and her husband would be back for other Wii activities and competitions at the senior center.

"I loved it," Mazzarella said. "I said to my husband, we should get one in our basement. It would certainly get our kids to come over more."

Senior Center Director Sharon Garrard said she became interested in the gaming system as a way of promoting exercise, "It's fitness in a fun way." But the Wii is offering much more than that, giving seniors a time to come together as a team.



Sharon McKenna of Hebron takes a shot at bowling during the Nintendo Wii demonstration at the Russell Mercier Senior Center Tuesday. Hebron seniors will now have an opportunity to compete on a virtual bowling team against other Connecticut senior centers.

Portland Apparently Off \$4.6 Million Hook

by Michael McCoy

Town officials breathed a collective sigh of relief last week when they got word that the town looks to be off the hook for \$4.6 million that the state demanded in March.

In November 2001, a \$38.6 million middle and high school building project passed at referendum. The state paid 55 percent of that tab. At the time, the Board of Education had projected that, by October 2008, 1,070 students would be using the facility.

However, current enrollment is 580 students.

Last summer, the state began conducting an audit of the project, as per standard practice. In the fall, Superintendent of Schools Sally Doyen received a letter from the state, questioning the 1,070 projection.

In December, Doyen met with the state Office of Internal Audit with the Bureau of School Facilities, which told her the state had overpaid by \$5.2 million based on enrollment figures. She met with the office the next month and discussed the matter again, this time bringing along First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield, Finance Director Rob Buden, and members of the school board.

Doyen received a final audit report from Raymond Inzero, Chief of the Office of Internal Audit, on March 5. In the report, Inzero said the town owed the state \$4.6 million. While it was slightly less than the \$5.2 million figure reported to Doyen in December, it still upset several town officials. At a March Board of Selectmen's meeting,

State Representative Jim O'Rourke said he felt the town "operated in good faith" and added that he was "well aware that the town of Portland doesn't have \$4.6 million lying around, burning a hole in their pocket."

O'Rourke seemed quite confident that he and State Senator Eileen Daily could see to it that special legislation passed, exempting Portland from paying the large bill.

And now, it appears he has done just that.

On Wednesday, May 7, both houses passed Senate Bill number 402, which would exempt

Portland from this burden. A press release from Daily's office said she and O'Rourke, "acting swiftly on the last day of the legislative session, included language in a comprehensive school construction bill to codify a specific projected enrollment figure for Portland's middle school/high school complex."

The press release said the legislation "allows the town to retain nearly \$5 million in state reimbursement." The release concluded with a quote from Daily: "This new language built into state statute secures for Portland its fair share of state school construction funding, to the benefit of Portland homeowners and other property tax payers."

Section 515 of Amendment A of Senate Bill number 402 is the passage that corresponds to the town, and reads "...the town of Portland may use one thousand seventy as its projected enrollment figures for the expansion and alteration project at Portland Middle/High School."

Daily said Tuesday that "the taxpayers of Portland have every right to rely on the approvals given by the Department of Education." She added, "If the figures were so out line [in 2001], the people at the state, who are paid to do just this, should have acted then."

Bransfield said the state will issue another audit but "that [enrollment] part of the audit would not be a factor any longer." She added, "I would like to express my gratitude to Senator Daily and Representative O'Rourke. We await the governor's signature."

The bill will not become official until Governor M. Jodi Rell signs it. Neither Daily nor her press agent Laurence Grotheer could suggest a timetable for when the governor may sign it. Grotheer said, though, that should Rell fail to sign the bill within 60 days from the senate and house's passing, it will automatically become law.

Daily also commented, "I have every confidence that she will sign it...relatively soon," and added, "I just don't anticipate any problem with this."

Marlborough Residents Pass \$20.68 Million Budget

by Kristina Histen

Budget season is apparently over for the town of Marlborough.

The \$20.68 million 2008-09 budget passed at the annual town meeting on Monday, despite opposition by some community members.

Only about 30 people were at the meeting Monday to represent the estimated 6,000 residents in Marlborough. Board of Education (BOE) Chair Maria Grove said at a school board meeting the next night that she is "concerned only as a citizen" and "disappointed" at the lack of public involvement. Board of Finance member Cliff Denniss echoed her concerns at the meeting, saying that the BOE probably brings in the biggest crowd, with usually only two or three residents in attendance. "It's pitiful," he said.

Of the attendees at Monday's town meeting, about 26 approved the budget with about eight in opposition. (Voting was done by a show of hands.) The approved budget is a 3.67 percent increase over current year's spending. It is a tax increase of 2.59 percent, which means, for example, if taxes paid this year were \$5,000, next year they will be \$5,130.

First Selectman Bill Black said he "was glad that at the town meeting the voters supported and approved it," but said the dollars recommended do not support a sustaining budget amount, because of increases for energy, contractual obligations, materials, etc. He also said that meeting expectations and timeliness of services and deliverables will be difficult.

"We worked on what our needs are and not our wants," Board of Finance (BOF) Chair Catherine Gaudinski said at Monday's meeting. The BOF had their typical number of meetings and reviewed both budgets from the Board of Selectmen (BOS) and the BOE, she said. Usually, the BOF goes through every line item in the town operations budget and makes an individual decision of where cuts came from, but this year they left it up to the BOS to make reductions based on a numerical amount, she said.

At the meeting, resident Joanne Goode brought up an issue regarding the rise in probate costs and fees. Black explained that back in October, Marlborough was cited because the court was not in compliance as defined by the State Probate Administrator Judge James Lawlor.

Resident Rosanna Carlson expressed concerns about senior aid decreases and the budget making it difficult for senior citizens to afford living in town. Black said the selectmen have taken a serious look at what the senior van is used for, and a \$14,500 grant for transportation has been applied for. The senior van is for medical appointments, and is not an ambulance service, he said. He said the selectmen, to save money, have eliminated some elements of senior transportation, including going out of town to pick up people, and changing the minimum age of people served from 55 to 60.

"We've secured grant with the state and we've made progress," Black said. "Change is hard, but we're making it based on costs to ensure service."

Resident Sharon Reiner made a motion seconded by Goode to vote on each line item in the total expenditures separately. Since the RHAM BOE budget had already been approved, the items would consist of the local BOE, Town Operations, Contingency, Reserve for Capital and Non-Recurring (CNR) Expenditures and Town Debt. Reiner said she felt that decreases in the Richmond Memorial Library account were "unacceptable" because "it serves every member from toddlers to senior citizens." Gaudinski also voiced disappointment in the adjustment of the library funds, when other lines that had been recommended for change were not. However, Reiner's motion failed, and all the line items were approved as a whole.

"I'm very upset to see cuts to the local library," Goode said. "Money is like gold to the library. It is unfair to finance a private office for a probate judge for only 20 hours a week. It's not the way I like to see it."

The town was in agreement, however, on other items on the agenda, including adopting \$410,000 for a fire truck vehicle bond resolution, a \$1.53 million road improvement bond resolution and to have \$27,757.25 of CNR funds to be returned to either future capital or debt.

In explaining the \$1.53 million road improvement bond resolution, Black said a lot of work needs to get done on roads and the town has been playing "catch up" trying to get them in shape. "It is a lot of money to borrow," he said, "but we have a plan and we're going to get through it."

Hebron Man Who Killed Wife Deemed Unfit to Stand Trial

by Sarah McCoy

The Hebron man charged with murdering his wife was deemed incompetent to stand trial at a hearing Wednesday afternoon.

Clermont Genesse, 85, of 10 Senate Brook Dr., was ordered by Judge Carl Schuman to be committed to the Whiting Forensic Division of Connecticut Valley Hospital (CVH). CVH is a psychiatric hospital run under the purview of the state Department of Mental Health and Addiction services.

The ruling comes almost three weeks after Genesse allegedly attacked his 80-year old wife, Francoise, with a knife and hammer just hours after the couple signed paperwork to enter a home for the elderly.

Francoise Genesse was treated at Hartford Hospital for a fractured skull, broken palate, a blood clot on her brain, and blunt trauma to her head and shoulder area, State Police reports said. She died on May 7 as a result of the injuries sustained in the April 25 attack.

After his wife died, charges against Genesse were changed from attempt to commit murder to murder. He was also charged with second-degree assault and assault of an elderly person.

However, it appears unlikely Genesse will ever stand trial on any of the charges considering the testimony of Lynn Biella, a licensed clinical social worker on the evaluation team that conducted Genesse's competency exam. "He doesn't even know he's in jail," Biella said

of the defendant, who was diagnosed with Alzheimer's last March.

Biella testified that, in the expert opinions of the evaluation team, Genesse was unable to understand the charges brought against him or assist in his own defense. She also noted that the severity of Genesse's cognitive deficits are consistent with dementia, and are likely never to improve. Biella said Genesse believed the year to be 1985, and couldn't locate his wrist when asked by the evaluation team.

Schuman ordered periodic exams be conducted on Genesse every six months. In the event Genesse is ever deemed competent, he could stand trial for the attack. In the meantime he will be placed at CVH immediately with civil commitment proceedings to begin. In order to be eligible for civil commitment a defendant must demonstrate that he or she is suicidal, homicidal or gravely disabled. On Wednesday, Schuman said he believed Genesse to be all three.

Considering the judge's ruling that Genesse is incompetent to stand trial, the prosecution is effectively suspended. However, the court is scheduled to receive the first competency review by Nov. 12.

Family members of Clermont Genesse were present at Wednesday's proceedings but declined to comment on the ruling.

Owner of Colchester Business Charged with Embezzlement

by Kristina Histen

A Norwich man has been charged with six counts of first-degree larceny and three counts of second-degree larceny, after he allegedly made illegal withdrawals of a little over \$133,000 from a state tourism account, State Police said.

Richard Cardone, 63, of 296 Salem Tpke., Norwich, was arrested April 23, State Police said. Cardone is the owner of Support System LLC at 7 Park Ave., Colchester. His company was subcontracted to work for the State of Connecticut Department of Tourism by getting information from visits to the tourism department's web site and providing people who were visiting Connecticut with literature about the state.

However, detectives from the State Police Troop K barracks in Colchester initi-

ated a criminal investigation after receiving a formal complaint from the Department of Tourism of possible misappropriation of funds, State Police said.

Through interviews and a review of records, state police said, detectives learned that from June 2006 until May 2007, Cardone made nine illegal withdrawals from a tourism account funded by the State of Connecticut to himself, State Police said.

State Police Detectives from the Eastern District Major Crime Squad located Cardone and took him into custody without incident on April 23. He was processed at Troop K and held on a \$100,000 court-set bond. He was due in Superior Court in Norwich May 8, State Police said.

Town Council Kills Proposed Fertilizer Ordinance in East Hampton

by Michael McCoy

Two years after the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Agency (IWWA) started the initiative to draw up an ordinance prohibiting phosphorous-containing fertilizers, the Town Council shot it down by a 4-2 vote at its Tuesday meeting.

IWWA members Scott Hill and Josh Wilson spearheaded the effort to create the ordinance, and various drafts of it have been volleyed between the IWWA and the Town Council. In March, council members seemed just moments away from striking a section that would regulate the sale of fertilizer and pass the ordinance townwide, but resident Paul Peszynski, owner of Paul's and Sandy's Too, labeled the ordinance "an exercise in foolishness."

So, instead of proceeding with a vote, the Town Council held a special meeting last month to discuss the finer points of a potential ordinance. The meeting was held late last month and was attended by representatives from TruGreen, Jessica's Garden, Paul's and Sandy's Too, the IWWA, the Lake Commission, as well as the town council.

The council then revisited the issue during their meeting Tuesday night. Chairman Melissa Engel kicked off the discussion by saying, "I think we've heard from as many people from the community as we possibly can."

The councilors each took a turn to give their final remarks on the issue. Bill Devine said, "I would like an ordinance, but I wouldn't want an ordinance if you can't enforce. So, it's kind of a Catch -22."

Council member John Tuttle said he's "come completely full circle on this." He said that while he once supported the ordinance, Tuttle continued, "Because of the forum we've had, I changed my mind. I don't think an ordinance is the answer. ... I think it's not wise to proceed."

He later added, "I'm not convinced that lawn fertilizer is the real culprit. I don't think putting a feel-good ordinance together is the answer."

Council member Tom Cordeiro, perhaps the most assertive proponent of the ordinance at the March meeting, also seemed to have changed his mind. "I do think it would be a really good idea to draw a line in the sand," he said. But, he added, "What's right isn't always making an ordinance and saying 'aren't we great?'" Like Tuttle, Cordeiro suggested this may only amount to a "feel-good ordinance."

Cordeiro also said he felt the April 2009 effective date was too soon to provide sufficient education, and that he would consider an ordinance that would not go into effect for 18 months to two years out.

"Not voting for an ordinance doesn't mean we're going to do nothing," Cordeiro said. "We haven't done enough education-wise to make another ordinance."

After the meeting, Cordeiro added, "If we just [pass a law,] that's not the answer," continuing, "I don't want to make a law for law's sake. This is a law for law's sake."

Council member Scott Minnick, however, began his comments on the matter by saying, "I don't know where to start."

He said the ordinance "was always a go until last scheduled meeting, when we had a resident get up and say he was against it. Since that point, we've come full circle."

He added, "The fact that something's not enforceable doesn't mean you shouldn't do it. That's a defeatist attitude." He cited littering, speeding, and underage drinking as analogous offenses.

"What this ordinance would do," Minnick said, "is create a policy... and more importantly, be a catalyst for other solutions."

Minnick maintained, "I feel this should be put into law in town. The reasons against it, I think, are very weak." He said Peszynski has tried to educate his customers for a number of years concerning fertilizer and the welfare of Lake Pocotopaug. "The problem is," Minnick said, "it doesn't work. It hasn't worked, not by itself."

Minnick also suggested that only a few people have spoken out against the ordinance. And, he told his fellow council members, "That couple [of people] seems to take more weight with you than the many."

Council member Sue Weintraub said she spoke to Sue Jones, Watershed Management Coordinator for Dane County, WI (the county that Hill and Wilson used as a model when coming up with the ordinance). According to Weintraub, the section of that county's fertil-

izer ordinance that dealt with retail was even more strongly worded than the proposed section for East Hampton. She also said that Jones felt having the ordinance in place was enough to get people to act, and that enforcement was not necessary. Furthermore, she said that non-phosphorous fertilizers are now selling "upwards of 90 percent" in Dane County.

Reading a letter from Jones, Weintraub said, "We have been able to use this ordinance as a policy to set in motion an education system."

Weintraub said the East Hampton town attorney felt such an ordinance would not hold up in court. However, she said that Dane County manufacturers brought a lawsuit against the town, which was thrown out by a judge.

Engel supposed, "It seems to me the only difference we have in this group is whether it should be an ordinance," and suggested possibly it would merely be more appropriate as a resolution.

However, Weintraub responded, "I think you should still have the teeth there if you need it."

Still, Engel persisted, "I have a hard time agreeing to a law that we can't enforce."

"People are law-abiding citizens," Minnick said. "If you make a law, people will abide by it."

Once discussion was finished, Minnick made a motion to send the ordinance, without the language regulating its sale, to a public hearing. However, the motion failed 4-2, with only Minnick and Weintraub casting 'yes' votes.

Following the meeting, Lake Commissioner John Ciriello said, "I think the Lake Commission is going to be terribly upset by this." He continued, "I think the town council relied on one business owner in town to change their decision."

Ciriello said, once again, that "Lake Pocotopaug is very, very sensitive to phosphorous," explaining that an amount of the element that would not have much effect on another lake might create a large number of algae blooms. "It's a very serious thing that it didn't pass, in my opinion," Ciriello said.

After the meeting, an apparently discouraged Minnick asserted, "The Democrats and Republicans have proven, proven, that they care more about the 'important' people in town, the big names in town than they do about the average resident in town. That's a strong statement, and I'm sticking by it."

"It's the good old boys," Minnick continued.

Wilson later said he was "slightly surprised and disappointed." He went on to express his opinion that the ordinance was well thought out and "not onerous on any one group."

He said he was surprised by Tuttle and Cordeiro voting against the ordinance. "I'm surprised there was a change of heart, and I'm not quite sure of the reason," he said.

Speaking in general of the ordinance's failure, he said, "It's just unfortunate," and pledged that the IWWA would continue to look out for the welfare of the towns watershed.

* * *

Also Tuesday, Engel gave an update on the town manager search.

The previous Town Council fired former town manager Alan Bergren last June, and hired Jim Thomas of Old Orchard Beach, Maine to fill the position in October. Then, in December, just two weeks before Thomas was to start, the current council rescinded his contract and agreed to a release settlement of \$60,000 in January.

Public Works Director Bob Drewry has pulled double duty as acting town manager since Bergren's last day in October.

In February, the council hired Randi Frank Consulting for \$8,500 to aid with the new town manager search. Frank is an East Hampton resident and runs her business out of Wallingford.

Engel said Frank is "very excited." Engel said 27 people have applied for the job, and Frank expects three more to apply before the Monday, June 19, deadline.

According to Engel, Frank will narrow the pool of candidates down to between eight and 10. Then, the seven-person Town Manager Search Committee will spend the late afternoons and evenings of June 12 and 13 meeting with the candidates and deliberating. They will then pick their top three to five applicants, who will meet with the town council. Though the dates have not been finalized, Engel said council members would spend two consecutive days interviewing the candidates, first one-on-one and then as a whole council.

Welfare of Salmon River Spawns 10-town Compact

by Michael McCoy

Officials from 10 towns signed the Salmon River Watershed Conservation Compact Wednesday morning that pledges to collectively protect the interests of the Salmon River.

Between 80 and 90 people attended the event at the Salmon River State Forest picnic area in East Hampton, near the Colchester line. In addition to representatives from Bolton, Colchester, Columbia, East Haddam, East Hampton, Haddam, Hebron, Glastonbury, Lebanon and Marlborough, the event was attended by officials from The Nature Conservancy and the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection, as well as several state representatives and senators.

A press release from The Nature Conservancy explained, "One of the healthiest rivers in Connecticut, the Salmon is a top trout stream, and the focus of a federal Atlantic salmon restoration project. Its exemplary water quality is held as the standard for the entire Connecticut River basin. By signing the Compact, the towns are publicly affirming the importance of this natural resource and pledging to work together to protect it."

The compact states the "ecological health of the watershed is vital to the economic livelihood and social well-being of those who live, work, and play in our communities; it reflects the quality of our drinking water, enhances property values, recreation, and educational opportunities, and is integral to sustaining our quality of life."

The Nature Conservancy identified four potential "critical threats" to the watershed's welfare as being "housing and urbanizing areas," "road construction and maintenance," "water management and use" and "dams."

In signing the compact Wednesday, the town officials vowed to protect and restore the water sources of the watershed, support "efforts to link and maintain ecologically viable habitats and rural landscapes throughout the watershed," and proactively strive for the long-term "health and vitality of the watershed and thereby enhancing the social and economic vitality of the watershed communities."

The Nature Conservancy, a worldwide non-profit organization that seeks to protect ecological interests, spearheaded the project. Lower Connecticut River Program Director Shelley Green, the head of the Salmon River Project, was the morning's first speaker. Conjuring up the warm feelings that many associate with the river, Green described many scenarios that could apply to any number of area residents. "It's the swimming hole you still take your children to," Green said.

Next, Lise Hanners, Connecticut director for The Nature Conservancy, declared, "Congratulations to all of you for having the vision and the foresight to join this effort. It is a beautiful resource to our state."

Noting the virtues of working together, Hanners said, "Rivers don't respect political boundaries or the different interests this river passes through."

Rivers was followed by one of the key participants in this project, Colchester First Selectwoman Linda Hodge. Hodge admitted she "never gave a thought about the river" prior to Shelley Green approaching her to take part in the project. In fact, she said she remembered thinking, "Are you out of your mind? I know nothing about it." But, she said, she eventually "saw the light."

Hodge addressed the reasons for surrounding towns to care about the river. "It's our water source," she said. "What's in our yard, what we do every day affects that river." Also, she added, "It's a huge economic advantage," explaining that its aesthetics attract outsiders to the area.

"We really have to engage our communities," said Hodge, who voiced that residents must be proactive with such a resource as the Salmon River. Pointing out one approach, Hodge said, "The fertilizer we put on our lawns makes a difference," and later added, "It's easier and less expensive to prevent destruction than to fix it."

Hodge also thanked volunteers throughout the towns who have contributed to this effort. "They've given their time, their passion, and in many cases, their dollars," she said. "It's the volunteers who have held this up for so long."

As an official from each town was invited to come forward and sign the compact, town representatives were welcomed to make comments. Just before Marlborough First Selectman Bill Black signed, selectman Joe LaBella recalled, "I caught my first fish about 500 yards from here."

Haddam First Selectman Tony Bondi had a similar memory, saying, "I fished here with my father for years." And, he added, "It was a great parking area when I was going with my wife."

"I've lived on this river all my life," said East Hampton Town Council Chair Melissa Engel. "It's been a great resource for us."

East Haddam First Selectman Mark Walter said, "My passion with the outdoors really started with a kayak my grandfather gave me." He told the crowd, "I'm sure you all have stories of when you connected to rivers and lakes. ... Humans were made to be near water."

Green said The Nature Conservancy has been working on the Salmon River Project for about three years, and said that in January 2007, they recruited various town officials to serve on the Salmon River Steering Committee.

In addition to collectively protecting the river, Green said the compact would also enhance funding efforts. "In many cases, the state and federal governments prefer applications to cross towns," she said.

Green said that East Hampton, Colchester, Marlborough and Hebron – the four towns that have the most contact with the river – each contributed \$5,000 this year, while four of the five others contributed \$2,000 a piece. (Lebanon, which touches only a small part of the Salmon River watershed, did not contribute any money.) Green said this \$30,000 would be used in leveraging for grants at the state and federal levels.

Selectmen Chair in Hebron Resigns from Board

by Sarah McCoy

Board of Selectmen Chairman David Schoolcraft resigned from the board on Wednesday, due to a recent appointment by the state.

Schoolcraft was one of the senior members of the board, having been elected in 2005.

Last week, the Connecticut General Assembly's Judiciary Committee approved Schoolcraft's appointment as the state's newest Workers' Compensation Commissioner. The new role, which Schoolcraft was to begin today, requires him to decide on Workers' Compensation claims brought forth by employees injured at work. The job also stipulates that Schoolcraft cannot serve as an elected official at the federal, state or local level.

Prior to his appointment, Schoolcraft had worked as an attorney for the Law Offices of

Donna-Maria Lonergan in Rocky Hill.

"I'm disappointed," Schoolcraft said of stepping down from his post on the BOS. "Having been involved with town government for 12 or 13 years, it's become second nature."

Prior to his time on the Board of Selectmen, Schoolcraft served on the Planning and Zoning Commission for eight years. He said he plans to stay involved in Hebron but hasn't decided in what capacity.

The Board of Selectmen was scheduled to hold a regular meeting Thursday, after press time, where they were expected to accept Schoolcraft's resignation. Vice Chair Gayle Mulligan will serve as interim chairman until the board fills the vacancy and the members revote on positions.

Andover Sends \$10.3 Million Budget to Referendum

by Sarah McCoy

At a town meeting Tuesday, residents sent a proposed \$10.3 million 2008-09 budget to referendum later this month.

The referendum will be held Tuesday, May 27, from 6 a.m.-8 p.m. at Town Hall.

"I support the budget because it's the will of the people," First Selectman Bob Burbank said after the Town Meeting. "However, I don't agree with all parts of the budget."

On Tuesday, residents voted to reduce two line items on the budget, trimming the total by \$30,000. This brings the 2008-09 fiscal year budget to \$10,280,745, which represents a 4.49 percent increase in spending over last year and a 1.34 mill rate increase.

Of the \$30,000 reduced from the budget, \$15,000 came from the elimination of the proposed part-time administrative assistant position for the First Selectmen's office. "I'm concerned about the position," Andover resident Debbie Scanlon said. "Last year, in his justification for the substantial raise, Bob [Burbank] said that he runs the show without an administrative assistant and doesn't need one. Now, a year later, I see this item in the budget. It makes me irritated."

Burbank responded by saying the position would be used to bring continuity to the office in the case of an administrative change. He also commented that Andover "is probably the only town in the state without an administration assistant."

In the end, however, voters didn't side with their First Selectman. The vote to remove the \$15,000 allotted for the position carried by a vote of 40-18.

The second \$15,000 cut from the budget came from the Assessor's line item. The intent of the 36 voters who approved the reduction was for the reduction to come from the Assessor's and/or Assistant Assessor's salaries. But, as union members, town officials questioned the legality of the vote.

"I don't know how much clearer I can say this," Board of Finance member Marie Burbank said. "Their salaries are a legal obligation of the town. If you don't want to

honor their legal contracts, then you'd better increase the town attorney line item."

At a public hearing on April 30, some residents questioned why Assessor John Chaponis earns a salary of \$25,000 a year from Andover when he has posted office hours only six hours a week. And on Tuesday, Andover residents Donald Denley and Joan Foran added that when they go to see him during those hours, they find that Chaponis hasn't been there. "We have a seriously underperforming town employee," Denley said.

While no one said otherwise, BOF Vice Chair Cathleen Desrosiers cautioned voters not to cut the line item. "It's not the position itself that's overpaid," she said. "It might be the person in the position that may be the problem. If we cut the salary down to \$10,000 we will have nobody to work in that position."

Despite the warnings, Andover residents passed the reduction by a vote of 37-26.

The third motion heard on Tuesday to reduce the budget came from selectman David Ziff. Ziff proposed the town eliminate the Resident State Trooper position, resulting in a net savings of \$101,000. "There may be an appearance of security with a Resident State Trooper, but I'm not convinced it's being delivered," he said. "I think we'll find that life is fine without a Resident State Trooper."

Resident Ed Turn, a former First Selectman, vehemently disagreed. "I didn't intend to speak tonight," he said. "However, I'm shocked that we have a selectman who would make this motion. It is, by far and away, the best bang for our buck."

The vote to cut the \$101,000 for the Resident State Trooper program failed with only three residents in favor of the reduction.

At the closing of the town meeting residents were asked whether or not they supported the \$10.28 million budget going forth to referendum. That vote passed by a count of 37-31.

The budget referendum will be held on May 27.

Last of Colchester Business Park Applications Approved

by Kristina Histen

The Planning and Zoning Commission (PZC), in a 4-3 ratio, approved the last of the Business Park applications for rezoning at its meeting last Wednesday, May 7.

The application will change zoning from general commercial and suburban residential to Business Park for properties located throughout Chestnut Hill Road and Parum Road.

At the public hearing last month, Tom Robbins of 24 White Oak Dr. expressed concerns about the town attempting to rezone land for commercial use that it does not own, in some cases over the objections of the landowners, the potential impact of noise and light pollution, the potential for increased crime and the potential effect on the property values.

Robbins suggested that if the PZC members decided to go forward, they should omit the 60 acres next to his neighborhood, and if not that, then have at least a 300-foot buffer zone. Other neighbors felt that if there was to be a buffer zone, it should be a minimum of 600 feet.

Town Planner Adam Turner was asked to take a look at the possibility of a buffer zone from the commission. At the May 7 meeting, Turner proposed the elimination of approximately 60 acres from the southern-most parcel. Based on his findings, he felt that the parcel could survive with or without 60 acres. The elimination of this property would increase the buffer area, especially in the White Oak Drive area.

"The commission is very committed to protecting those neighborhoods," Turner said.

The importance of rezoning for Colchester is because there has been no significant new

commercial development for the past few years and residential remains consistent, Turner said. The Business Park would be in proximity to transportation with focal points near Rt. 2 and Rt. 11, it would be close to water and sewer and the consolidated areas would meet community needs, he said.

"It's been in the works with the commission to rezone these lands for about ten years," Turner said. "We had many public hearings and it was always going to pass. There was just that one question if that one piece of land should be taken out of it or not."

The final Business Park was originally proposed before many residents even moved near the rezoning parcels of Chestnut Hill Road and Parum Road. However, because people live there now, PZC members have been concerned about the residents' rights and the need to protect the neighborhoods by buffering certain areas. The zone change will also be consistent with the Plan of Conservation and Development.

PZC Chairman James Ford, Vice Chairman Joseph Mathieu, secretary Mark Noniewicz and alternate member Christine Edwards all voted in favor of the application. PZC members David Gesiak and Lisa Starkey-Rumph and alternate member John Rosenthal were opposed because rezoning could possibly change the character of the area. (PZC member Stacey Brown recused himself from the vote and Thomas Kane was absent from the meeting.)

Now that the area is rezoned, the next step will be for development to come in and build on those properties, Turner said. He can't say when that will be, but people have already been looking at properties for development.

Woman Dies in East Hampton Car Crash

A two-car accident on Route 66 Sunday afternoon claimed the life of a local woman, East Hampton Police report.

Mary Ellen Massicotte, 51, of 162 East High St., died after her 1994 Nissan Sentra collided with a 1993 Acura Legend at about 3:40 p.m. Sunday, May 11, on Route 66, about one quarter mile west of Lake Vista Drive, police report.

According to police, the Acura, driven by Matthew Rogers, 19, of 81 Viola Dr., was traveling east on Route 66 when it struck Massicotte's car, which was traveling west.

Rogers suffered only minor injuries in the collision, police say. Massicotte was flown by LifeStar to St. Francis Hospital in Hartford, where she was pronounced dead on arrival. Also in the Nissan was Massicotte's husband, Dale Massicotte, 58, also of 162 East High St. He was listed in critical but stable condition at Hartford Hospital, police say.

No charges have been filed, police report, and the cause of the crash is still under investigation.

Colchester Police News

5/6-Sean O'Connor, 27, of 92 Arrowhead Dr., Griswold, was charged with home improvement, State Police said.

5/9-Jonathan Green, 28, of 335 Oliver Rd., Lebanon, was charged with reckless driving, first-degree reckless endangerment, driving the wrong way and operating under the influence of drugs/alcohol, State Police said.

5/12-Paul Bernard, 47, of 192 South Main St., Marlborough, was charged with public indecency, State Police said.

5/13-Andrew Wilson, 24, of 44 West Eggleston St., Bloomfield, was charged with DUI and reckless driving, State Police said.

Andover Police News

5/11-Jensen Castro-Ortiz, 26, of 5 Milkowski Circle, New Britain, was charged with operating under suspension, operating without minimum insurance and traveling unreasonably fast, State Police said.

Andover Principal Suspended, But Will Keep Job

by Sarah McCoy

The Andover principal who was charged earlier this month with DUI will be able to keep his job.

Superintendent of Schools Andy Maneggia suspended Principal David Griffin last Friday, May 9, as a result of his arrest for driving under the influence of alcohol on the night of May 3. The suspension continues through today and will cost Griffin six days of pay.

After the incident, Maneggia sought legal counsel from the board's attorney Scott Chadwick. "We talked about a whole range of disciplinary actions," Maneggia said.

The Board of Education (BOE) met Wednesday; board members reviewed the disciplinary plan and supported Maneggia's disciplinary action. BOE Chair Jay Lindy referred any questions on the matter to Maneggia.

In conjunction with the suspension, Griffin will also have a letter placed in his file that states any future similar conduct could lead to his termination from the Andover school district.

Griffin was not available for comment at press time.

The BOE discussed Griffin's arrest in executive session at its Wednesday meeting. By that time, all of the nearly two dozen parents attended the meeting had departed. But before they did, many of them spoke in support of Griffin and asked that he be able to retain his position in the school.

"He's done an awesome job for my two children," Andover resident Nadine Ray said. "I don't think there is one person here who hasn't made a mistake. The only difference is you weren't caught."

Pat Morency, a Hebron resident, came out to the meeting in support of Griffin, who she said has meant a lot to her family in the past. Griffin, who is related to the godparents of Morency's 10-year old daughter, served as Santa Claus last Christmas, when there was a

miscommunication in the order for items on Morency's daughter's Christmas list.

"At that time I had never met David Griffin, but he made a 10-year old's Christmas the best it could have been," she said. "We were blessed to have him in our lives."

The Morencys, who had suffered family losses in 2005 and 2006 right around Christmastime, said that Griffin drove to their house on Christmas Eve last year to drop off the American Girl items that their daughter desired. "He helped us get through a difficult time," Morency said. "And, I wanted to repay the favor."

Griffin was arrested May 3 just before 11 p.m. He was pulled over on Interstate 384, near exit 2. He was traveling home from his niece's wedding, a wedding that the Morencys also attended. "He certainly was not in an inebriated state," Morency said at Wednesday's meeting. "Although we left earlier than he did, I do feel that we are all human and make mistakes. That's all I think this was and I have good feelings for his character."

Andover resident Bernadette McBride disagreed. "Having four children at Andover Elementary School, I place a lot of trust in school and the board to do the right thing," she said. "I don't feel that the board has done the right thing."

McBride also said she believes the arrest is "affecting the entire milieu of the school," and represents "a greater alcohol problem." She asked the school place Griffin on administrative leave pending the court proceedings.

After the BOE meeting, Maneggia said he is in conversation with the school's psychologist as to whether or not the arrest will be addressed with the students at Andover Elementary School. He added that Griffin has expressed his remorse to the faculty at the school.

Griffin is due back in court on May 19.

Obituaries

Hebron

Francoise Yvette Genesse

Francoise Yvette Genesse, 80, of Amston, passed away Wednesday, May 7, at the Hartford Hospital. Friends called Sunday, May 11, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. The Funeral Liturgy was celebrated Monday, May 12, directly at the Church of the Holy Family, 185 Church St., (Rte. 85), Hebron, with Fr. Michael Smith, officiating. There were no calling hours Monday morning. Interment followed in the New Hebron Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, donations in her memory may be made to the Alzheimer's Association, 279 New Britain Ave., Ste. 5, Kensington 06037. For on line condolences, visit www.auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

Colchester

Lynn Gibbs

Lynn Gibbs, 69, beloved husband of Laverne (Hunter) Gibbs, of Hartsthorpe, OK, and formerly of Colchester, passed away after a long battle with cancer on Feb. 26. Born in Stowe, VT in March 13, 1938, he was a son of the late John and Lottie Pearl Barrett (Green) Gibbs. The family moved to Connecticut where he was raised and eventually graduated from East Hampton High School. He married Laverne Hunter in 1960. They made their home and raised their family in Colchester.

Mr. Gibbs worked for many years as a machinist and retired several years ago. He enjoyed music, reading and collecting stamps. Most importantly, he was a pillar of the Colchester Assembly of God, currently known as the Abundant Life of the Assemblies of God. He served on the worship team, where he played the guitar. Mr. Gibbs served on the church board and was the church treasurer for many years. He and a former pastor built the church's previous building on Wall Street in Colchester.

In addition to his wife of 47 years, he is survived by six children, Nancy Peterson, Angela Wright, Samantha Amiano, Michael Gibbs, William Gibbs and Daniel Gibbs; 16 grandchildren and two siblings, David Gibbs of Vermont and Lois Mitchell. In addition to his parents, he was predeceased by 13 siblings.

A memorial service will be held tonight, Friday, May 16, at 7 p.m., at the Abundant Life of the Assemblies of God, 85 Skinner Rd., Colchester. Visit www.auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com for online condolences.

Portland

Patricia A. Bartolotta

Patricia A. Bartolotta, "Patti" to all who knew and loved her, passed away on Friday, May 9, in Tarpon Springs, FL, at the age of 71. She was the wife of Salvatore J. Bartolotta for 50 years until his passing on June 29, 2007. They lived in Portland for 45 years before retiring to "The Villages" in Florida in 2003. Patti worked for Xerox Corporation in Middletown for 35 years as executive assistant to the president.

She was an exceptional cook and her pies were legendary. Patti was an avid reader. She so enjoyed spending time with family and friends just relaxing with good conversation. She also enjoyed gardening, could play a mean game of cards and thoroughly loved being "Nana."

She leaves three daughters and one son: Cindy Goodwin and her husband Gerry from Tarpon Springs, FL who have cared for Patti as she struggled with cancer over this past year; Debbie Staples and her husband Brian from Moodus; Joseph Bartolotta and his wife Anna from East Haddam; and Susie Bransfield and her husband Michael from East Haddam. Her sister Barbara Rund and her husband Bill live in Chester. Her brother Billy Carlucci died several years ago. Patti also leaves five grandchildren and three step-grandchildren; Michael and Jennifer Staples; Patrick, Gillian and Ethan Bransfield; Jason Daigle; Brian Goodwin and Erin Cooley.

A memorial service will be held at St. Mary's Church in Portland today, Friday May 16, at 10 a.m. In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made to Hospice of the Florida Sun Coast.

Salem

Meta Bourgeois

Meta (Forster) Bourgeois, 70, of Salem, formerly of Berlin, wife of the late Philip Bourgeois, died Sunday, May 11, at William Backus Hospital in Norwich. Born in Germany, she was a former Cromwell resident, lived in Berlin for 36 years, moving to Salem in 2006. She was a member of Lady Washington Chapter No. 45, Order of Eastern Star in Middletown.

Meta leaves two sons, Scott Bourgeois and his wife Cory of Salem, and Jason Bourgeois and his wife Nadine of Proctorville, VT; four grandchildren, Nicole, Zachary, Jeffrey and Jeremy Bourgeois; several nieces and nephews.

Funeral services were Thursday, May 15, at Carlson Funeral Home, 45 Franklin Sq., New Britain. Burial will be in Maple Cemetery, Berlin. Calling hours were Wednesday, May 14, at Carlson Funeral Home. Memorial donations may be made to the William Backus Hospital, 326 Washington Street, Norwich, CT 06360. Share a memory or note of sympathy at www.carlsonfuneralhome.com.

Colchester

Troy E. Tasker

Troy E. Tasker, 39, of Colchester and formerly of Columbia, beloved husband and best friend of Theresa, passed away unexpectedly Wednesday, May 7. Born Sept. 23, 1968, in Hartford, he was a son of Ronald Douglas and Sandra-Lee (Dollak) Tasker of Columbia. He attended Windham Tech, graduated from Windham High School and went on to earn his Associate's Degree in General and Civil Engineering from Thames Valley Community College.

On Oct. 17, 1992, he married Theresa Y. Schoell at Redeemer Lutheran Church in Lebanon, where they would both remain active in the faith community. From 1991 through 1997, Troy proudly served with the Connecticut Army National Guard. He was currently a Project Manager with Woods Restoration in Newington. Prior to that, he was owner and operator of Tasker Contracting for a number of years.

In his spare time, he cherished his family and had volunteered as Cub Scout leader with Pack 13 in Colchester as well as with his sons' baseball team. Along with his father, he had hiked the Appalachian Trail and also enjoyed skiing with his children. He was an avid Red Sox fan, and he shared that passion with his family. He was a talented and accomplished carpenter and took great pride in having renovated his family's home.

In addition to his parents, and his loving wife of 15 years, he is survived by four children, all of whom were his passion, Sarah Caiafa and her husband, Paul of Colchester, Shannon Nicola of Moosup and Joel and James Tasker, both of Colchester; two grandchildren, Blake and Nathan Caiafa; his brother, Ronald J. Tasker of Columbia and his children, Ronald L. and Brina Tasker (and their mother, Zoe Tasker); his grandfather, Hyland Tasker of Virginia; his wife's family, parents Louis and Margaret Schoell of Colchester, and siblings, Kathleen Gay Poole of Niantic, Nora Poole of Waterford and Michael Schoell of Colchester; his other nieces and nephews, Ashley and Alyshia Gay, Megan Farrington, Tyler Poole and Joshua Schoell; his best and dearest friend, Eric Byrne, with whom he would conquer the world; and numerous extended family members and friends.

He was predeceased by his two sisters, Paige Ellen and Tracy Lynn Tasker. Friends called Monday, May 12, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. Funeral services were held Tuesday, May 13, directly at Redeemer Lutheran Church, Village Hill Road, Rte. 289, Lebanon, with Pastor Scott Schuett, officiating. Committal with full military honors will follow in the West Street Cemetery, Columbia.

In lieu of flowers, donations in his memory may be made to the Troy Tasker Memorial Fund, c/o Savings Institute Bank, 63 Norwich Ave., Colchester 06415. Visit www.auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com for online condolences.



Salem

Morna Paige Marolda

The untimely and quick passing of a sweet and beautiful soul, Morna Paige Marolda, occurred on Tuesday evening, May 6. Paige, as she was known by everyone she knew and loved, was born April 30, 1982, in New London, and lived all her childhood years in the wonderful little town of Salem. She graduated from East Lyme High School in 2000, where she excelled in the sports of field hockey and softball, and was a gifted artist and writer. She loved art and thought that would be her field of choice, but after a year and a half of college courses, she suddenly and emphatically decided to pursue a career in something she loved even more – sailing. She went down to Mystic, and got herself hired as a deckhand on the Schooner ARGIA. It was all water, winds and sails after that.

Paige learned how to be an incredible sailor on the waters of Fishers Island Sound, Long Island Sound and the Mystic River. After some time on local waters, she spent nine months as assistant engineer and deckhand on the Tall Ship MYS-TIC sailing out of Long Beach, California. Upon returning to Mystic, Paige earned her 100-ton Masters license, and was hired as Captain of the Schooner ARGIA. She also had the opportunity to sail the Chesapeake Bay area when she did a stint as captain of the North Wind out of Philadelphia, PA. In 2007, Paige had a hand in finishing and rigging out the brand new Tall Ship MYSTIC down in Freeport and Panama City, Florida. She served as first mate on the MYSTIC during the 2007 summer season while she cruised the New England coastline.

Salt water, winds and tides were in her blood, and she gave a precious portion of her life to the boats and people of the sailing community. She cherished every moment. She somehow found the time to continue her art work and her writing, and to travel to some incredible places with her family and friends.

Paige leaves the broken hearts of her mother and father, Victor and Jane Marolda of Salem; her older brother, VJ Marolda of San Diego, CA; her younger brother, Dan Marolda of Pawcatuck; her wonderful and very special boyfriend, Daniel Phillips of Noank; her maternal grandparents, Philip and Judy Simmons of Essex; her paternal grandfather, Victor J. Marolda of Waterbury; her many aunts, uncles and cousins, and friends too numerous to count.

Everyone who had the opportunity to meet Paige was a better person for it. To be a part of her life was to be blessed. Her beautiful smile lit up every room she entered, and touched the hearts of everyone she shared it with. She loved life and lived it to the fullest, and along the way she showed others how to do the same. Happy-go-lucky, caring, thoughtful and grateful for all she had, a beautiful young lady, inside and out, she will be remembered fondly by everyone ever lucky enough to meet her. As she never failed to remind us all, and as we all know in our hearts and will never, ever forget: "Paige Rules."

Calling hours were Saturday, May 10, at the Belmont Funeral Home, 144 South Main St., Colchester. There was a memorial service Sunday, May 11, at the First Congregational Church of Old Lyme, with a reception following in the church's Fellowship Hall.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made in Paige's name to the Jimmy Fund, a charity near and dear to her heart.

Colchester

Franklin Edward Walker Jr.

Franklin Edward Walker, Jr., "Frank," 46, of Colchester and formerly of New Jersey, passed away Wednesday morning, May 14, at his sister's home. Born July 9, 1961 in Westchester, PA, he was a son of the late Franklin and Frances (Fleming) Walker, Sr.

Mr. Walker was a mechanic for Progresso in New Jersey for many years. He was an avid Harley Davidson enthusiast, but found his greatest joy as being a devoted and doting father to his sons.

He is survived by his wife, Karen Walker and their two sons, Joshua and Jesse; his sister and brother-in-law, Donna and Gary Kornbrath of Colchester; two nieces, Christina and Elyssa; a nephew, Dylan; four great nieces and nephews; and numerous extended family members and friends.

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

Hebron

Melissa Mary Bombardier

Melissa Mary "Missy" Bombardier, 37, of Glastonbury, died Tuesday, May 13, at St. Francis Hospital and Medical Center after a courageous two and a half year battle with cancer. Born Sept. 9, 1970 in Manchester, daughter of Bernard C. and Kathleen (Miller) Bombardier of Hebron, she had lived in East Hartford, West Hartford and Mesa, AZ, and had lived in Glastonbury for the past year.

Melissa attended Burnside School and St. Rose School and graduated from East Hartford High School and Albertus Magnus College. Right out of high school Melissa started at Qualex in the customer service department. When Kodak took over Qualex she became a sales representative and made the move with Kodak to Arizona. She then returned to Connecticut working as a sales rep. with the Hershey Candy Co. until her illness. She played softball her whole life in the towns of East Hartford, Cromwell, Wethersfield and Mesa, AZ. She loved Harry Potter books, the New York Yankees, hiking the Grand Canyon, swimming, spending time with friends and family and walking and loving her two dogs Sedona and Shadow.

Besides her parents she is survived by her life partner, Elizabeth Sherwin of Glastonbury; a brother, Charles B. Bombardier of Berlin; a sister, Justeen M. Bligh of Hebron; her maternal grandmother, Mary Baker Miller of Shelton; her nieces, Brittney L. Holland, Sydney M. Holland; her nephews, Jake E. Holland, Logan S. Bligh; her godparents, Laurey Jenerous and Thomas Miller; and several aunts, uncles, cousins and friends. She was predeceased by a niece, Courtney Anne Holland. A special thank you to the whole oncology staff at St. Francis Hospital especially the nurses on 8-1 and the cancer center for all their loving care.

Funeral service will be Saturday, May 17, at 9 a.m. from the Mulryan Funeral Home, 725 Hebron Ave., Glastonbury, followed by a Mass of Christian Burial at 10 a.m. in the Church of the Holy Family, Hebron. Burial will be at the convenience of the family. Friends may call at the funeral home today, Friday, May 16, from 5-8 p.m. In lieu of flowers memorial donations may be made to a charity of the donor's choice.