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Blessing of the Pooch... On Sunday, Oct. 4, Gilead Congregational Church held its annual Blessing of the Animals out on the church's new gathering terrace. About 23 dogs, one cat and two kittens were blessed by the Rev. Denise Esslinger. Treats were received by all. Pictured are Carol Parda-Metilly and John Ziolko (who will marry Oct. 24 at the church) with their weimaraner, Liberty, who is being blessed by Rev. Esslinger.

Hebron Finance Director Fired

by Sarah McCoy

The Hebron Board of Selectmen (BOS) voted unanimously last week to fire Director of Finance Jim Day, who earlier this month had been placed on administrative leave.

The selectmen described Day's dismissal as a response to a failure to meet the objectives set forth by the town's management team.

While typically personnel discussions are done in executive session, Day opted to have the discussion about his time with the town in open forum, at the Thursday, Oct. 15, BOS meeting. He said last week, "I have nothing to hide. I've done nothing wrong."

However, the management team and members of the BOS referred to documents during their discussion that were not part of the public record.

Interim Town Manager Andy Tierney, who is also the town's public works director, made the recommendation to the BOS after outlining Day's time with Hebron.

Former Town Manager Jared Clark hired Day in January. He began work in February on a six-month probationary period, as is custom in the town for all new employees. In August that time was extended as the management team, Tierney reported, hadn't had enough

time to evaluate Day.

The three-person management team, which consists of Tierney, Town Planner Mike O'Leary and Executive Assistant Donna Lanza, took over for Clark in April.

Along with the extension of the probation, Day also received a review of his performance on Sept. 9. In that review, which Day categorized as mostly negative, the management team outlined three objectives for the finance director to focus on – hold regular meetings with his department, improve communication with the management team and be a "team player."

Tierney said that Day held his first department meeting on Sept. 10, but "it did not go well." He would not explain any further.

Any further meetings were few and far between, Tierney said.

In addition, the communication between Day and the management team, Tierney said, was strained. In one instance, Lanza said, the town auditor was looking for Day but couldn't find him because Day failed to communicate properly that he would be at a seminar that day.

On Thursday, Oct. 8, Day was reviewed again. Evaluation forms were given to four

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RHAM Board Declines Action on Two Big Issues

by Sarah McCoy

At a meeting this past Monday, the RHAM Board of Education (BOE) opted not to take action on two hot topic issues within the district.

After voting against a contract proposal for the district's non-certified personnel union in September, the BOE decided not to reconsider the offer despite dozens of union members in attendance asking them to do just that. The board also took no action on allocating any part of the \$218,000 balance in the floor settlement account. Board members did vote to schedule a special meeting on the matter and extend invitations to the boards of selectmen in each of the district's member towns – Andover, Hebron and Marlborough.

After Monday's meeting, BOE Chair Susan Griffiths said that board members simply chose to take no action on a contract for the non-certified personnel union. This union includes 75 paraprofessionals, maintenance workers and clerical staff.

However, members of the union present on Monday stated that the non-action signals that the two sides will most certainly go to arbitration. Arbitration dates have been set for December and January.

"It's not surprising," Jackie Skillings, a Hebron resident and paraprofessional at RHAM High School, said Monday after the meeting. "They have never bargained in good faith. Going to arbitration seems the only way to get this done."

The union has been without a contract since

July 1, 2008. Charles Fabian, the union representative for the Region 8 chapter, said that the two sides were miles apart for over a year and it wasn't until this past August that "the board made an offer the union could seriously consider."

That offer, Fabian reported, was made by Superintendent of Schools Robert Siminski with two other members of the BOE present at the time. It called for a 2 percent raise in 2009-10, 4 percent in 2010-11 and 4.1 percent in 2011-12. The contract also includes a 3.75 percent raise applied retroactively to the 2008-09 school year – the year in which employees worked without a contract.

The offer also called for increased employee contributions to health care from the current rate of 14 percent to 15 percent in 2009-10, 17 percent in 2010-11 and 17.5 percent in 2011-12, as well as a step freeze for the duration of the contract. Steps are reached when an employee reaches experience markers or obtains additional education.

When the BOE initially rejected the contract at its Sept. 21 meeting, some members stated that this wasn't their contract and wasn't anything that they agreed to.

Fabian stated that this is a disappointing stance for BOE members to take. "Shame on them," he said Monday after the meeting. "When a side sends in someone to negotiate a contract they are saying that this person has the authority to reach an agreement. They authorized the superintendent to reach a settlement

and they didn't like the agreement reached. Shame on them. They should have been at table."

The Board of Education has one more meeting, Nov. 16, prior to the start of arbitration on Dec. 2.

* * *

Joining the dozens of union members in the audience at Monday's meeting were dozens more in favor of spending the remainder of the flooring settlement to improve the condition of the school's athletic facilities.

Johnathan Ware, a member of the RHAM High School football team, stated that parts of curb and street are coming through the grass on the team's practice field.

Hebron resident Pat Fromme called the district's fields "embarrassing," "laughable" and "a safety hazard."

Those views were echoed by many others in the crowd on Monday. Siminski also read a letter from RHAM Athletic Director Mark Logan imploring the BOE to use the money to improve the field conditions.

However, the only motion the BOE heard on the matter was from Maryanne Leichter who asked the board to return \$200,000 of the \$218,000 to the three member towns as a way of closing out the short-term bond the district had to take out to fix the flooring and seek a settlement on the matter.

In addition to the building project bond, the school district asked voters to approve a \$500,000 note to fix faulty floors in the high

school and go after the parties responsible for improperly installing the tiles. The short-term note was approved and, in 2006, the district received a \$1.1 million settlement on the matter.

The majority of this settlement was used to complete the flooring repairs and another \$300,000 was allocated to pay down the \$500,000 note.

Last Thursday, Oct. 15, BOE Chair Sue Griffiths, Leichter, BOE member Tom Tremont and Siminski attended the Hebron Board of Selectmen meeting to discuss the matter.

Current BOS Chair Jeff Watt served on the RHAM BOE from 1998-2004. He stated the intention of the board, at the time the \$500,000 bond was taken out, was to repay that amount when the flooring was complete. "The only reason the board approved a \$300,000 repayment and not the \$500,000 amount was because we didn't know how much the flooring repairs were going to cost," he said on Thursday.

Watt asked the BOE to finish what the prior BOE had started and return the money to the towns.

On Monday, Griffiths stated that she took issue with the "give the money back" language that town officials have used. She said that the note was taken by the taxpayers of the school district and the settlement was reached by the school district, therefore the money was never the towns' so she questioned why the BOE would give them the remainder now.

The motion by Leichter to give the money

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Finance Director cont. from Front Page

employees who regularly work with Day, and the management team completed a fifth. However, Day never got to see those individual evaluations, even anonymously. He was given what he was told was an average of the scores by Tierney.

Day scored an overall 2.76 – between good and unsatisfactory.

The score, Tierney said, was a reflection of Day's unwillingness to meet his objectives. "There were definite concerns from long-term employees," Tierney said.

Lanza added at the meeting that some employees described Day as "confrontational" and "argumentative." She said there were also times where he used profanity and at least three concerns of sexual harassment. No formal sexual harassment claims were ever made against Day.

Day didn't return calls for comment for this story.

One member of the public, Donna Ferree, who also happens to serve on the BOF, questioned why Day was never disciplined for these so-called acts of sexual harassment. Lanza replied that they were never formally documented and therefore town management couldn't react.

Selectman Mark Stuart did note that not all of the evaluations were negative, as reviewers also described Day as "helpful," "professional," "up on current events" and "knowledgeable about the trade."

Day retorted at the meeting that he felt nothing but negativity from other employees. He said he might not have held meetings as often as he should, but that was because "there are tons of problems here" and that he "spends a lot of time working."

He went on to say that he felt that he was targeted as retaliations for his handling of specific finance issues in town. These issues include bringing to the attention of the boards of selectmen and finance a \$61,000 overspending on the construction of the Village Green roadway. Day said he was told by town office employees that this oversight could be remedied by the town's auditor but Day said he went to the BOS and BOF in the name of transparency.

Day's firing comes less than a week after he addressed a letter to the members of the BOS and BOF alleging improper conduct by the chair of the BOS Jeff Watt, the management team as well as how financial matters are handled in town.

Watt said earlier this week that the Board of Finance had plans to address these concerns at their meeting held yesterday, Oct. 22 (after press time), and that the Board of Selectmen would respond at their Nov. 5 meeting. However, both Watt and Tierney insist that the decision to let

Day go was a result of a particular incident that occurred after the finance director received what would be his final evaluation from the town on Oct. 8.

Neither Watt nor Tierney would elaborate but Tierney said at last Thursday's meeting that the incident was investigated and that he had witnesses who corroborated the claims.

Prior to taking their vote at last week's meeting, the Board of Selectmen asked Day whether or not the claims outlined by Tierney and accompanying documents were true. Day admitted that he can be argumentative when he's trying to make a point but thought he was being a team player by sticking up for the well-being of Hebron taxpayers. "I don't hide stuff or go along with the staff blindly," he said.

Day agreed that the claims outlined in the memo and by Tierney were true but was shut down by Watt when he tried to tie in town officials concerns with his own concerns outlined in his letter.

In making their vote, the selectmen each stated that Day was not being fired for his inability to do the job of a finance director but, rather, his presenting behavior that they felt wasn't conducive to the work environment the town is trying to maintain.

"It was the other issues," Watt said earlier this week. "Even after extending his probation things were still not getting better. In the end this was the best decision for Hebron."

BOS Vice Chair Mark Stuart did condemn the management team's decision to destroy Day's individual evaluation forms and demanded that this not be done in the future.

During the public comment portion of Thursday's agenda, Hebron resident Bill Rudis, who also serves as chair of the Democratic Town Committee, stated that the town was walking a thin line if it dismissed Day. Rudis, who works as a labor representative for works, said that the town never followed proper procedure in progressive discipline of Day.

He also expressed concern that rules and regulations may not have been applied consistently to all town employees.

Watt responded by saying that the town has a right to dismiss any employee without cause during his or her probationary period, and that he had hoped Day would have redeemed himself during the extended probation.

As of press time, Watt said the only communication he had had with Day since last Thursday's firing was a brief encounter when Day came to the town offices on Friday, Oct. 16, to collect his personal belongings and a request that he be compensated for unused sick and vacation time.

RHAM Board cont. from Front Page

to the three towns according to the levy schedule failed by a count of 3-7.

A second motion to hold a special meeting on the matter passed 6-4. Griffiths said she would work to schedule that meeting prior to the board's Nov. 16 meeting. Town officials from Andover, Hebron and Marlborough will be invited as the board will discuss whether or not to use the money for capital projects within district or another use.

Any decision will have to be voted on by taxpayers at a district meeting.

Hebron to Scrap Three-Person Manager Setup

by Sarah McCoy

The Board of Selectmen (BOS) had been considering whether to make the three-person town manager setup currently in place a permanent solution, but last week the three people serving in that role made such a consideration no longer necessary.

Public Works Director Andy Tierney, Town Planner Mike O'Leary and Executive Assistant Donna Lanza, who had acted as a three-person "management team" for the past seven months, presented a letter to the BOS at its meeting last Thursday, Oct. 15, withdrawing their desire to continue as members of the Management Team on a permanent basis.

"Over the last month the public has had an opportunity to weigh in and, while initially this set-up had full board support, it became clear to us that people had reservations," Tierney said earlier this week. "We made it easy for them."

He added that he, O'Leary and Lanza had been crafting the letter for the last several weeks once it became clear that the arrangement had become a "distraction" for the BOS, town staff

and themselves individually.

Tierney said he's enjoyed the challenge of serving in two capacities and extended his appreciation to members of the town's staff who have stepped up to make sure the work continues to get done in town. "Public Works is on schedule and within budget. We're in good shape," he said this week. "We have a good bunch of guys that all stepped up to the plate."

For Lanza, she said there was nothing specific that led her to conclude that the team approach wasn't a good fit. She felt that the selectmen were having a difficult time making a decision and that the public debate at the two workshops held earlier this fall complicated the matter further. "It's probably better just to move on," Lanza said earlier this week.

She added that she's grateful for the opportunity to serve on the Management Team. "It's been an enjoyable time. Hebron is a good place to work," Lanza said.

At last Thursday's meeting, the selectmen voiced nothing but gratitude to the three town

employees for their work over the last seven months. "You three have done an exemplary job," selectman Gayle Mulligan said. "You've gone above and beyond for Hebron."

BOS Chair Jeff Watt said earlier this week that he gives the management team a tremendous amount of credit for deciding it only wanted to pursue the configuration if all of the selectmen were on board. "They felt that, by returning to their original positions, they were making the best decision for them personally and the best decision for the town."

Selectman Brian O'Connell said at last Thursday's meeting that he has nothing but respect for the three team members and is happy that the town will move forward in the process of finding a permanent town manager solution.

Watt said last Thursday that he'd like to see the board wait just a little longer to revive the search for a Town Manager. Given the upcoming election that will put at least and maybe two new members on the BOS, he asked if the search

committee could be reformed after Nov. 19.

This suggestion was met with approval by the other board members.

Watt said earlier this week that the search committee, which was suspended in August, would review the list of finalists to see if they're still a good fit and if the individuals are still interested in the position. The town received over 70 applications for the position and the search committee had narrowed it down to 15 finalists, he said.

The town will likely re-advertise the town manager position as so months have elapsed since the last application period. The search committee, Watt said, would work out these details.

The management team will continue to serve until the Board of Selectmen approves a permanent town manager. At that time, Tierney, O'Leary and Lanza will aid that individual in transitioning to the role before returning to their original duties.

Three Vying for Two Spots on Hebron BOS

by Sarah McCoy

Three Hebron men are vying for two spots on the Board of Selectmen (BOS), with the winners to be determined at next month's municipal election.

Mark Stuart has been serving on the BOS for the past four years. The longest-tenured selectmen, the Democrat is back for more. He hopes to serve for, at least, another four years on the town's top board.

Stuart is joined on the Democratic ticket by Peter Moon.

Moon has lived in town for seven years but his interest in civic functions stretches back into high school. After being involved with the town's Tricentennial Commission and Historic Properties Commission, Moon was appointed to Hebron's 300th Celebration Committee. With that experience under his belt, Moon is now hoping to serve Hebron from a policy perspective.

The third candidate is Republican Dan Larson. Larson is a current member of the town's Board of Finance and a past fire chief. A longtime Hebron resident, Larson said he kicked around the idea of running for the BOS for awhile before throwing his name in the hat this year.

With three selectmen (Gayle Mulligan, Brian O'Connell and Jeff Watt) coming up on their second anniversary on the board and Will Moorcroft having served a year and a half, Stuart is the veteran of the young board. Prior to his time on the BOS, Stuart also served on the Board of Finance (BOF) for four years. He has also been a part of the Capital Improvements Program Commission in Hebron for the past eight years.

Stuart said he's running for reelection because he wants to continue the work being done by the BOS. He's proud of the "spirit of cooperation" he believes the current board members operate with and wants to continue to work for Hebron's future.

If elected, Stuart said he hopes to continue to focus on strategic planning and creating a long-range vision and plan for Hebron. These are areas that he will be considering if part of the town's search for a permanent town manager. "These past six or seven months [with a three-person management team serving as in-

terim town managers] have shown that we have the operational skills and abilities to handle the day-to-day operation of the town," he said. "Hebron's next Town Manager needs to be focused on the future."

Stuart said he also believes the budget is going to be a major concern for the town as it moves into 2010. He sees the Village Green as a key ingredient to the recipe of property tax reduction.

Considering the financial state of the town, Stuart said he also stands opposed to the town maintaining ownership of the Peters House for municipal use. "It shouldn't be a taxpayer burden," he said.

Stuart cited the recently-approved costly renovations to the Horton House as rationale for his stance. "It's illustrative of the downsides of using a historic structure for municipal, everyday use," he said.

Instead, Stuart said he'd like to see the town sell or lease the property to the Hebron Historical Society for them to maintain as it currently does with Old Town Hall.

Stuart has lived in Hebron for 24 years with his wife. Together they have two daughters who are both in college. Stuart works as a technology management officer.

Peter Moon is also seeking a spot on the BOS, after being endorsed by the town's Democratic Town Committee (DTC). Moon came to Hebron in 2002 after seeing a photo of a house that spoke to him and his wife.

Moon wasted no time in getting involved with the Hebron DTC and now, after serving on the Tricentennial Commission, 300th Celebration Commission and Historic Properties Commission, Moon has decided to run for the Board of Selectmen.

During his time in Hebron, Moon said he has made extraordinary friends and considered himself a part of the community from the moment he moved in. It was his time on the 300th Celebration Committee that prompted Moon to



Stuart

seriously consider running for the BOS. He chaired the multi-functional group and that involved both the town's history and future.

Like Stuart, Moon said he believes that taxes and the town's finances are of paramount concern in the next years. Moon said he'd like to see the town move faster on developing the Village Green district and he's ready to team up with the Economic Development Committee and Board of Finance to make that happen.

Until the time that Hebron can comfortably afford its municipal needs (i.e. road improvements, fire department, police, education, etc.), Moon doesn't believe the town can consider spending taxpayer dollars on the Peters House. "As much I appreciate its heritage," he said, "it has to be considered a second tier priority."

If elected, Moon said he will work hard to improve Hebron. He considers listening to and appreciating both sides of a situation to be strengths. But, Moon said, he's able to speak his mind when tough decisions need to be made.

Dan Larson is the lone Republican BOS candidate. He has served on the BOF for the past two years and, if elected to the BOS, would vacate his current spot meaning an appointment would need to be made to complete the board. Larson said he's interested in making the jump from the BOF to the BOS in order to have a say in the policies of the town.

Larson and his wife Patricia moved to Hebron in 1978. They bought their first house on Amston Lake and have remained there ever since.

Soon after coming to Hebron, Larson joined the town's volunteer fire department, serving in a number of capacities, including fire chief.

Larson said he's considered running for the BOS in the past but the timing was never quite right. Larson is pleased with the overall direction the BOS is currently moving and wants to be a part of the ongoing progress.



Moon

A firm believer in the town manager form of government, Larson is pleased that the management team won't be a permanent solution in Hebron. He hopes to be part of finding the right individual to lead Hebron into the future. "We're now in a position where we've seen what has and hasn't worked," he said. "Hopefully we can get it right this time."



Larson

Larson also hopes Hebron gets it right in terms of developing a business presence. He said he's disheartened to see empty buildings along Main Street and believes the town needs to act quickly to entice developers to the Village Green district. "For too long Hebron has strove to be a bedroom community," he said. "Trying to build a town on single-family residences is a loser."

Over the course of past months Larson has reached out to business owners and senior citizens to find out their concerns. He hopes to be their voice on the BOS and keep taxes manageable.

Larson said he sees the Peters House as the "perfect fit" for Hebron's municipal facilities. He'd like to see the town use the space for the Parks and Recreation department office with the second floor dedicated to a living museum.

"The new building at Burnt Hill Park is set back from the road and awfully remote for a small amount of town staff to be working at alone," he said. "The town already owns the building and has access to money to renovate it. It seems like a no-brainer to me."

Larson describes himself as "approachable" and, if he's elected, he will consider himself not a boss of Hebron but rather a "servant" working for his constituency.

Hebron voters will cast their ballot for two of the three candidates with the top two earning a spot on the Board of Selectmen. Voting will take place on Tuesday, Nov. 3, from 6 a.m.-8 p.m., at Hebron Elementary School.

Four Up for Three Hebron BOF Vacancies

by Sarah McCoy

Four candidates are vying for three vacancies on the Hebron Board of Finance (BOF). Incumbents Mal Leichter, a Democrat, and Phil LoBianco, a Republican, are both running for a second term, while former Board of Selectmen (BOS) Chair Karen Strid, a Democrat, and Tom Sousa, a Republican, complete the ballot.

LoBianco was appointed to the BOF to fill a vacancy shortly after the 2005 election. Prior to serving on the finance board, he spent two years on the local Board of Education, two years on the Capital Improvements Program Committee and 10 years on the Water Pollution Control Authority.

With a background in finance and management, LoBianco believes the BOF is a good fit for him. He's a strong proponent of civic service and wants to continue making an impact on the finance well-being of Hebron. "I'm interested in identifying spending reductions and watching that the right decisions are made in regards to how the town's money is spent," he said earlier this week.

LoBianco said he's developed a good idea

as to the needs in town and wants to see Hebron maintain what it currently has, not look to spend for spending sake.

Sousa joins LoBianco on the Republican ticket. Sousa is a 26-year retired military veteran who now works as an attorney. During his time in the service Sousa was

responsible for planning, executing and accounting for various department budgets. He also has an associate's, bachelor's and master's degrees in business.

Sousa now wants to put those skills to use for Hebron. While he has never served in a public office before Sousa is eager to give back. Given his educational background, commitment to the community and ability to work with everyone, Sousa feels the BOF is a good fit for him.

He described himself as fiscally conservative and wants to keep taxes at a manageable level. Sousa said it will be a challenge for the town to maintain what it currently has and shouldn't look to add additional capital items to the budget.

On the Democrat side, Leichter is running for his second term on the BOF. Leichter said



Sousa

he's running because he expects challenging times ahead and wants to help Hebron make wise financial decisions. "We've done some good things in the last four years despite the economy," he said last week. "Hebron will need to continue making sound decisions if the town is going to be affordable to live in."

Leichter pointed to the Village Green development as one area where, he feels, the town must make progress on to extend Hebron's tax base. He went on to say that he's up to the challenge of balancing the need to spend while not hammering residents with huge tax increases.

Leichter moved to Hebron 35 years ago. He said that he and his wife, Maryanne, liked the town as newlyweds and loved it as they raised their kids. "I'm looking forward to retiring and I'd like to do it in Hebron," Leichter said. "In order for that to happen we need to control spending."

Also running for the BOF is Strid. In addition to her time on the BOS, she is also a former member of the Planning and Zoning Commis-

sion, the Modular Building Committee and, most recently, chaired the Charter Revision Commission.

If elected, Strid said her main focus will be to budget for the future. "I understand that it's been a difficult budget year but I really feel we need to start budgeting for the future and not for the moment," she said earlier this week. "When you put the future off, it's eventually going to come around and you're going to pay the price."

With her past experience serving in town Strid feels that she has a strong grasp on the way town budgets are created and utilized. Given the current economic state, she wants to continue her commitment to community service in a challenging area. With persistence, patience and attention to detail Strid is confident she can help Hebron make sound financial decisions.

Hebron voters will be able to cast their ballot for three candidates with the top three being elected to the Board of Finance. Voting will take place on Tuesday, Nov. 3, from 6 a.m.-8 p.m. at Hebron Elementary School.



Strid

Morron Versus Schuster in Colchester First Selectman Race

by Katy Nally

In 11 days, all the door-to-door campaigning and meet-and-greets will pay off for either Democrat Glenn Morron or Republican Gregg Schuster – the two in the running for first selectman of Colchester.

Schuster or Morron will replace Democrat Linda Hodge, who was elected first selectman in 2007.

Both candidates said the most pressing issue facing Colchester is economic development and this year would pose a difficult town budget due to the nationwide economic downturn. Though they share similar views on this issue, Schuster and Morron have different backgrounds and ideas as to what it means to be first selectman.

"My number one priority is economic development," Schuster said. He proposed to attract "big developers" to Colchester after installing sewer and water lines out on Route 11. He mentioned three possibilities as to how Colchester would fund this construction. First, he said these large developers could pay for the new lines once invested in Colchester. Second, he said the town could use federal money that is earmarked for such endeavors and finally, he said the town could pay for it.

Schuster said he would not discriminate against developers, unless they were to construct a "big box development." He said he would be open to hear any ideas for construction, giving the examples of a Home Depot or a Wal-Mart. "Just show me the plans," he said.

Schuster also advocated employing a part-time economic development coordinator who would work at Town Hall. The coordinator would act as a liaison between the town and developers. He or she would also encourage businesses to come to town. Schuster gave the example of a coordinator asking an insurance company based in Hartford to construct a satellite office in Colchester. He said, this way, the town's tax base would increase and more spending would occur.

Morron agreed that it is imperative to "bring in commercial development." He said the town needs to "increase the grand list and tax revenue." Morron said he would focus on marketing plans to attract developers and mentioned extending the water and sewer lines. He said he has personally prepared for this by attending seminars on economic development.

Morron also said he would revisit a land use study that was conducted in 2004, which, he said, emphasizes the need for development on Route 85. He said he would review it and update it, then formulate a plan of action.

Morron said conducting this year's budget

would be especially difficult because of trying economic times. To make matters worse, he said the town is not off to a sturdy financial start since "it's \$600,000 in the hole because of the Board of Education." Morron elaborated, saying last year the town had more revenue because of a one-time offer of stimulus money and because teachers went without concessions.

(Hodge said the \$600,000 is an approximation because "as of right now" the same stimulus money is unavailable, but it is possible that it could come back. She said it is "within the realm of possibilities" that teachers could go without concessions for a second year in a row, but it's unlikely.)

Morron emphasized the need to be "fiscally responsible" this year and cited "combining resources" as a way to accomplish this. He said departments could save money by sharing equipment. Another idea was to regionalize the dog pound.

"We have a lot of challenges, but we have a very capable team at Town Hall," he said.

Schuster agreed that this year's budget would be especially tough, but he noted that every budget presents a challenge. He said the town would have to establish its priorities, which has education at the top of the list. "We have to make sure the school system is properly funded," he said.

Schuster said his experience as a project manager at Traveler's Insurance would help him run the town. "Someone who runs a town needs experience in managing people, managing a budget and managing organizations," he said.

Schuster has a Bachelor of Arts degree in business and economics from Lehigh University in Bethlehem, PA, and a Masters in Business Administration from the University of Connecticut. After working at Travelers Insurance for two years, he switched and became a small business owner. Schuster is now the president of Schuster Outsourcing, which finds other operations to carry out administrative functions for organizations, he said.

Schuster is also the current chairman of the Republican Town Committee, he spent a year on the business development task force and was also on the Zoning Board of Appeals. Schuster, 33, grew up in Colchester and went to school



Morron

in town until sixth grade, then went on to Kingswood Oxford in West Hartford. He returned to Colchester three years ago, but he said "it feels like I never left."

Unlike Schuster, Morron has spent his career in the public sector. Morron graduated from Conard High School, also in West Hartford, then served in the Marines for four years. He entered the public sector as a police officer in Middletown, where he worked for 20 years. As an officer he worked as an "accident reconstructionist." He has since retired from the police force, but still works as a security guard. Morron, 44, has lived in Colchester for 19 years and has served as Chairman of the Police Commission for the past two.

He said, as a police officer he learned "a lot of real life skills" and, if elected, he would represent "local views" of Colchester residents. He emphasized he is not a politician and will not bring a private, political agenda if elected.

However, recently a Democrat on Morron's slate expressed that she was not confident in his credentials and endorsed Schuster as a result. Nancy Riella, who is running for re-election to the Board of Assessment Appeals, said her decision to cross party lines "all came down to qualifications."

Riella said she asked Morron at the July Democratic Town Committee caucus what his qualifications were to be a first selectman and he replied that he had none, but he was willing to learn on the job. However, "learning on the job," she said, is not possible without a college education and "professional qualifications."

Riella said a first selectman should have managerial experience in the business world and must be able to apply this knowledge. "How can he be so arrogant to think he can do this," she asked rhetorically. "I'm opposed to anyone who has a high school education who thinks they are qualified enough to run a \$50 million business," she said. "You have to learn that from infancy."

Riella has owned an accounting/taxation firm in Colchester for 20 years. She said the people of Colchester have trusted her judgment in the past, citing when she earned the most votes of any contested Democrat in the 2007 election. The only other Democrat to win more votes, was Nancy Bray who ran unopposed for the position of town clerk.



Ford

Morron commented on the endorsement in a written statement. He said, "She knows nothing about my leadership skills or my experience as a 20-year public servant. Her comments are purely based on rumor and innuendo and it is very disappointing that an individual running for public office would stoop to this level."

Schuster said "in a way" he was not very surprised about Riella's endorsement, because "a lot of Democrats are unhappy with their party."

Riella made her endorsement Oct. 7, and since then, her name has been blacked out on political signs around town and her profile was removed from the Democratic Town Committee's website.

* * *

The other Democrats running for seats on the Board of Selectmen (BOS) are Rosemary Coyle and James Ford. Coyle is an incumbent who has been on the board since 2007. She retired in 2006 from her position as president of the Connecticut Education Association, which she held for six years. Before that, she was an elementary school teacher in Montville for 37 years.

Ford is a traffic engineer for Beta Group. He has served on the PZC since 1999. Ford said he wants to make the switch to the BOS because "it will be the leading group that would really put effort forward to market Colchester to businesses."

There are also two candidates on the Republican slate. Both Stan Soby and Greg Cordova are incumbents on the Board. Soby was elected in 2006 and served as first selectman for 11 months in 2007. He is currently the vice president of community programs at the Connecticut Institute for the Blind/Oak Hill.

Cordova is running for his third term on the board. He also serves on the Parks and Recreation Commission and the Water and Sewer Commission. He has lived in Colchester since 1990 and used to work for Bank of America.

The four other candidates for the BOS will all receive seats this year, because John Malsbenden is stepping down.

Elections for these candidates will be held Tuesday, Nov. 2. There are three voting locations, which will be open from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. Residents in District One can vote at Town Hall, 127 Norwich Ave., those in District Two can vote at the Assembly of God, 85 Skinner Rd., and those in District Three can vote at Bacon Academy, 611 Norwich Ave.

For more information about Schuster, visit www.schuster2009.com and for more about Morron, visit www.colchesterdemocrats.org.



Cordova

Marlborough Finance Board Seats Up for Grabs

by Katy Nally

Three candidates are in the running for full seats on the Board of Finance (BOF) but only two will win.

The seats will go to Lauren Cragg, Cliff Denniss or Dick Shea. On the current board, Republicans Pasquale Amodeo and Susan Lesser are stepping down. The two will run for seats as alternates, along with Democrat Russell West.

Cragg, the only Democrat in the running for a BOF seat, was appointed to the board as an alternate in December 2008. She has lived in Marlborough for six years and served on the PTO as a Board of Education liaison. Cragg has a Bachelor of Arts in History from Grinnell College, a Masters in Public Administration from the University of Colorado and now works as a strategic risk consultant.

Cragg said as an alternate she was "very active" in decisions the board made. She said she fought for public safety issues like retaining a lifeguard at the lake.

She said the challenge the board would face this year is "doing more with less." Cragg said her 25 years of experience in government consulting would help her manage this year's budget. She said by working on communication within the board, a



Cragg

budget could be passed more smoothly.

It is also important that voters understand the budget numbers, she said. "I would like to be committed to getting the job done," Cragg said.

West, running as an

alternate, also sup-

ported Cragg, saying

the budget system

"could operate better with Lauren Cragg" as a board member.

West, 71, has lived in Marlborough for 21 years. He is a retired hotel-owner, but works as a part-time telemarketer and a real estate agent. He has served on the Democratic Town Committee (DTC) for three years and the Lake Advisory Commission for eight. West said he is running as an alternate to support Cragg in the hope that the budget process will go smoother than last year.

West said "some people my age are less concerned with the community and more concerned with their personal budgets." He said the board "is obligated" to provide for the community, which includes a quality education for children.

If elected, West said he would use skills he learned as a hotel owner such as managing a budget.

Running against the Democrats are Denniss, Shea, Amodeo and Lesser.

Denniss, who is running for a BOF seat, has been an alternate on the board for two years. Denniss, 64, has lived in Marlborough for six years and said he almost immediately began attending BOF meetings. Since then, he has attended budget workshops held by the selectmen and the Board of Education (BOE). Denniss worked as an insurance administrator at Aetna, but has since retired.

He said he is running for a seat because he is "very concerned with Marlborough's fiscal future," which includes the town's debt and increased taxes. He said he was not happy with how the budget was handled last year and has a few ideas as to how things could improve for this coming year. Denniss said if budgets from the BOE and the Board of Selectmen (BOS) were presented earlier, along with debt projections, the process "could have gone smoother." Despite the bumpy budget year, he said he was



Denniss

happy to see more people involved with the town proceedings.

Shea largely agreed with Denniss' stance on the issues. Shea, 66, works as a process engineer at Twin Manufacturing. He has lived in Marlborough for two years and said he attended many BOF and BOS meetings. He said throughout his career, he "learned to analyze, negotiate and communicate clearly," which, he said, are necessary traits for a board member.

If elected, Shea said he wants the BOF to work on improving communication with other boards. He said in a written statement, the difficulty in formulating the most recent budget was due to "inadequate communication."

Shea said the challenge for this year is to maintain services without increasing taxes. "I believe we have the framework in place to accomplish this, but we must make every effort to maximize the return for each dollar spent," Shea said in a written statement.

Amodeo, currently a full board member but running for an alternate position, commended the commitment Shea and Denniss demonstrated by attending many BOF and BOS meetings. He said, since "two really qualified Republicans stepped up," he decided to run as only an alternate, rather than pursue a full seat on the board.

Amodeo was appointed to the BOF as an alternate seven years ago, then ran for a seat and won four years ago. Amodeo, 41, has lived in Marlborough since 1999. He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Russian from Colgate



Shea

University, a law degree from Georgetown and a LLM in taxation from New York University. He currently runs his own law firm.

Amodeo said he wants to stay involved with the board because candidates with a "historical perspective" are needed on the BOF. He said knowing the board's history provides transparency.

In a written statement, Amodeo said, "Through years of serving...on the Board of Finance, I have become familiar with the various town departments' budget items and the rationales used to sustain increased spending. I hope to use this experience to keep town government honest and avoid wasteful spending."

Susan Lesser is also a full-time member running as an alternate. Lesser has lived in Marlborough for over 20 years. She has a Bachelor of Science degree in finance from the University of Connecticut and a sixth year teaching degree from Eastern Connecticut State University and she currently works as a teacher in Tolland. She was elected to the BOF four years ago.

Lesser said she decided to run as only an alternate because of time constraints. She said her potential replacements, Denniss and Shea, would both be very capable board members.

She agreed with Denniss and Shea, saying this year would pose an "extremely difficult" budget because "the economy has not improved." She said the town could still make cuts to some areas to avoid raising taxes. Lesser gave the example of unequal cuts made in education, where RHAM's budget was reduced, while Marlborough's elementary school did not suffer many budget-related changes.

Town-wide elections will be held Tuesday, Nov. 3 from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. at Elmer Thienes-Mary Hall Elementary School, 25 School Dr.

Artisan Framing in Marlborough More Than Just Picture Holders

by Katy Nally

There's almost nothing Hebron resident Denise Thompson can't frame. She's matted priceless works from art class, put antique stick pins in shadow boxes and even framed part of a stadium seat for one die-hard Boston fan.

"There's always a way," she said, chuckling.

Thompson's ability to match, mat and frame is the product of owning her own frame shop for ten years. Her store, Artisan Framing & Gallery, is in the loft of the yellow building in the newly-renovated Shoppes at Marlborough Barn, the former Marlborough Barn complex. The store recently made to move to Marlborough from Hebron and opened on Sept. 1.

According to Thompson, what sets her store apart from other frame shops is the quality. She said her design skills play a large role in how she frames for clients. Thompson was an art major at Glassboro State College in New Jersey and began working in a frame shop when she was in school. She also creates oil and mixed media paintings as well as body prints for clients.

Thompson's paintings are on display at Artisan Framing & Gallery, because the store doubles as an art gallery. She showcases between seven and 10 artists at a time, most of whom are from Connecticut.

Practically all the wall space of Thompson's shop is taken over by artists' works and samples of frames. Kelly Radding's botanical paintings cover the wall near a window that overlooks a pond. Radding's paintings feature life-sized leaves, feathers, plants and anything found in nature. In a tiny frame with a white mat, two watercolor leaves, one green and one yellow, appear to sit above the frame's glass. The leaves glow with life as though they might flutter to the ground if breathed on.

Adjacent to Radding's collection is a huge, scenic painting done by Jim Grabowski of Marlborough. The painting, called "Coast," is 48 by 60 inches and features streaks of acrylic

paint that depict a flurry of clouds and sea.

Other artists who have works on display at Artisan Framing & Gallery include Ellen Gaube, Diane Tuttle and Thompson's father, Thomas Marzolf – an expert woodworker who creates cedar canoe paddles with inlays of mahogany, sassafras and cherry.

In addition to showcasing artists' works, Thompson's store hosts a variety of workshops and events. This Saturday and Sunday, Oct. 24 and 25, Deborah O'Connor will offer silhouette drawings and on Nov. 14, Ratting will teach the art of travel journaling. Thompson also hosts a holiday gallery show beginning in November.

Events and artists aside, Thompson said what really keeps the shop going are her frames. When clients come in with a priceless artifact, Thompson said she usually shows them a few samples of matting and frames that enhance the object. "Designing pieces up for clients is a matter of tweaking until they get something they would like to have," she said. Thompson's dedication to each piece and person is what "keeps clients coming back," she said.

Artisan Framing & Gallery boasts an enormous selection of frames, ranging from a museum-worthy stock with gold leaf to hand-carved wood to shiny metallic. The matting collection is even more impressive, with hundreds of choices including a hand-wrapped silk mat with deep gold bevels. "For any given piece, there are dozens of different combinations," Thompson said.

So what could be worthy of such an endearing frame and mat combination? How about a black and gold body print? Thompson came up with the idea while in art school, and it's somewhat like a grown-up version of creating a butterfly by folding a painted piece of paper in half.

Thompson creates body prints by painting an infant's or a woman's body with black oil



Artisan Framing & Gallery opened recently at the Shoppes at Marlborough Barn. Other than custom frames and mats, the store offers art workshops, activities and gallery shows.

paint and metallic paint on top of it, then the person presses themselves on to a sheet of drawing paper. The result is a naked bust immortalized on paper. "It's very empowering for women," she said.

Thompson said most of her clients create about eight prints and have them framed shortly after. She said they make an excellent present for any occasion. But, sorry men, Thompson only paints women and babies for this masterpiece.

Artisan Framing & Gallery is much more

than frames with its array of events, activities and displays. In Thompson's 10 years of experience, she said she has kept clients coming back for more because of her quality standard and design skills. Over the years, Thompson has had a skilled hand in preserving hundreds of sentimental objects and as a result, has formed lasting relationships, she said.

"I really do love what I do," she said.

For more information about Artisan Framing & Gallery visit www.artisanframingandgallery.com or call 860-295-0059.

East Hampton Receives \$750,000 for the Senior Center

by Michael McCoy

A year from now, the East Hampton Senior Center may look quite a bit different.

Last week, the town got word that they will receive a state Community Block Development Grant (CBDG) for \$750,000.

"We're very excited about this project," glowed Town Manager Jeff O'Keefe, who said the town found out about the availability of the grant early this year, and then held a public hearing, soliciting ideas.

However, O'Keefe said the grant is quite specific, and an eligible project must address "direct benefit" (like housing rebates), "urgent need" (like slum or blight), or provide low or moderate income housing. "It's a highly competitive federal grant program," said O'Keefe. (Though, a federal grant, the CBDG is distributed by the state.)

During the public hearing, a group of senior citizens, suggesting improving the senior center, succeeded in persuading the town to pursue the grant. The town then formed a committee of seniors to steer the application.

The 20-year-old senior center is "really starting to exceed capacity," O'Keefe said. "It is just so cramped. People are walking on each other."

O'Keefe also pointed out that while the town had 901 seniors in 1989, that number is projected to be 1,800 by 2020.

O'Keefe said the grant application came in at a hefty 400 or so pages, and included items like architectural design and a description of the benefit to the town.

Along with the committee, the final product was a collaboration involving L. Wagner & Associates, Friar Associates, O'Keefe, and Director of Community and Environmental Planning Kerry Nielson.

The main component to the project is a new two-story 1,500 square foot multi-purpose room. However, it will also include renovating 2,000 square feet of existing space. According to a document from Friar Associates, the improvements will yield, among other things, a receptionist's desk, office for the director, exercise room, kitchen, lunch room, computer area, and music area.

O'Keefe expected the full scope of the project to be completed with the \$750,000, which is the maximum amount dispersed for CBDGs.

The next step will be the final engineering, and then bidding the project. O'Keefe said he hoped to break ground in late spring or early summer of 2010. "We have a lot of work ahead of us, but that's our plan," he said.

As for the seniors, he said, "They'll benefit immensely from this expansion."

Gotta's Farm Features Corn Maze for Halloween in Portland

by Michael McCoy

There's just two weeks left to visit the only corn maze in Portland.

From 10 a.m.-5 p.m. this Saturday and Sunday, as well as next weekend, Oct. 31 and Nov. 1, Gotta's Farm and Cider Mill's Corn Maze will be open. It's visible from Route 17, and located at the intersection with Strickland Street.

The Gottas have farmed in Portland, starting in 1898 with John Gotta. His son, Leo, farmed it after him; his son Robert farmed it after him; and now his son, Dick, farms the 100 acres.

The maze is covers about 2.75 acres, and Gotta smiled wile saying that if you don't reach the far corner from the entrance before exiting the maze, "You cheated."

Gotta said the maze takes the average person about 20 minutes to complete.

At the same location, visitors can pick their own pumpkins and sip homemade apple cider and munch on cider doughnuts. Or, of course, Gotta's apples.

Gotta's mother-in-law, Mary Jane, recently died of breast cancer, and he said of the maze, "It's kind of dedicated to her." So, he's donating \$1 from every \$6 admission fee to Susan G. Komen for the Cure.

Opening the maze on Labor Day weekend, Gotta had to grimace when saying the weekend weather has not helped. The most favorable weekend was Columbus Day weekend, but the Portland Fair took the crowds then.

Still, he said, when the weather has been nice, the maze has done well.

Gotta's started planting the corn, twice, on June 6. The reason for the double planting was to keep the stalks thick enough so visitors can't peek across the winding path. Then, on July 15, Precision Maze of Missouri came, equipped with a GPS and mowed the 50-inch paths. Gotta said he plans to expand next year's maze, possibly doubling the size and adding a hayride.

Gotta's Farm and Cider Mill (located a about a mile north from the maze on Route 17) is open seven days a week, 8a.m.-6p.m., from late April to Dec. 23. The Gottas also run QP Farm Market, located at Route 66, across form the Winchester Café. Also open seven days a week, 8:30 a.m.-6:30 p.m. QP operates from late April to Halloween.

The stand at Route 17 was built just after World War II, but Gotta's has always had a stand at one place or another on the stand. The farm and corresponding stands employ 15 people. At the two farm stands, you can by fresh fruits and vegetables, pies, preserves, salsas, breads, cookies, salad dressing, cider, with virtually all of it homegrown or homemade.

Gotta's also offers more pick your own produce than just pumpkins. For the rest of the month, visitors can also pick apples. The picking season will resume in June with strawberries and then peaches in August.

For more information concerning the maze, call 342-1844 or visit www.gottasfarm.com.

Arrest Made in East Hampton Bus Incident

East Hampton Police reported Thursday the driver of the bus a kindergartener was left on all day last month has been arrested.

Herbert Smith, 29, of 1 North Maple St., was charged Oct. 21 with risk of injury to a minor, police said. Smith was released on a \$10,000 bond, police said, and is scheduled to appear at Middletown Superior Court on Tuesday, Oct. 27.

The arrest is in connection with a Sept. 4 incident wherein a 5-year-old chid was left alone on a school bus for nearly six hours, police said. Smith was the driver of the bus, police added.

Police also said they anticipate no other arrests in this case, as the investigation "has shown no cause to pursue criminal charges on anyone else to date."

Colchester Police News

10/13: Diane Moore, 52, of 179 Main St., Apt. 2F, was charged with third-degree assault, disorderly conduct, risk of injury, interfering with emergency calls and first-degree reckless endangerment, State Police said.

10/13: Thomas Vogel, 39, of 92 Pine St., Columbia, was charged with risk of injury and breach of peace, State Police said.

10/14: Mark Stewart, 46, 14 Dale St., South Hadley, MA, was charged with DUI, failure to drive in proper lane and failure to have headlights on, State Police said.

10/14: Michael Therriault, 34, of 59 Meadow St., Willimantic, was charged with failure to appear, second-degree burglary and third-degree larceny, State Police said.

10/15: Matthew Desautels, 24, of 76 Old

Hebron Rd., was charged with failure to appear, State Police said.

10/15: Katherine Johnson, 27, 21 Greatneck Rd., Waterford, was charged with DUI, speeding and failure to drive in proper lane, State Police said.

10/17: Joseph Rodriguez, 32, of 238 Burnside Ave., Apt 1W, East Hartford, was charged with DUI and reckless driving, State Police said.

10/18: Keri Golias, 31, of 6 Rondaly Rd., Amston, was charged with sixth-degree larceny and second degree forgery, State Police said.

10/17: Leland Prior, 61, of 12 Chaucer Rd., East Hampton, was charged with DUI and failure to maintain lane, State Police said.

East Hampton Police News

9/30 — Todd T. Bower Jr., 20, of 230 Old West High St., was arrested for passing in a no-passing zone and reckless operation, East Hampton Police said.

9/30 — A 15 year-old male juvenile was arrested for disobeying signal of an officer, operating without a license, operating on a public highway and unreasonable speed, police said.

10/2 — James P. Charland Sr., 40, of 17 Ter race Ave., Taftville, was arrested for operating a motor vehicle without insurance, police said.

10/10 — Scott M. Roth, 29, of 221 Swamp Pike., Gilbertsville, PA, was issued a ticket for failure to obey a stop sign, police said.

10/10 — Stephen Hils, 50, of 46 North Airline Rd., Wallingford, was arrested for operating under the influence of alcohol and failure to drive right, police said.

Portland Police News

10/16 — Dylan Cruz, 18, of 325 Old Marlborough Tpke., was charged with possession of alcohol by a minor and failure to obey stop sign, Portland Police said.

10/16 — A 17 year-old male was arrested for possession of less than four ounces of marijuana, police said.

10/16 — A 16 year-old male was arrested for possession of alcohol by a minor, police said.

East Hampton Citizens Celebrated at State of the Town Address

by Michael McCoy

St. Clements Castle was filled with about 150 smiling faces last Thursday, Oct. 15 during East Hampton's first State of the Town Address.

After a cocktail hour and dinner, the main course of the evening started with Town Manager Jeff O'Keefe offering his remarks. He reminisced about the past year, hitting moments like his first visit to town, highlighting his ride across the lake, escorted by the late Dennis Griswold. He also mentioned his first Red Sox game (through Parks and Recreation).

O'Keefe also touched on the town's recent progress, mentioning the recent securing of water at, appropriately enough, St. Clements' Oakum Dock.

The town manager also thanked virtually every staff member (both highly visible and largely unsung) that makes the town run. Among these was Executive Assistant Cathy Sirois, who he called "the epitome of how I'd like all staff to respond to citizen's concerns."

O'Keefe credited Sirois and Human Resources Coordinator Lisa Seymour with putting together the event.

O'Keefe later showed gratitude toward the current Town Council, saying, "It takes broad shoulders to be in politics." He presented each council member with a trophy, each time naming some of their particular virtues. Challenging the notion that the council was nothing but discord, O'Keefe said that 77 percent of its 70 approved motions this past year were made unanimously.

Finally, O'Keefe thanked his wife, Donna, saying that on many nights "she lay awake, wondering if I'm ever coming home."

Then State Senator Eileen Daily introduced the evening's keynote speaker, Bridgeport Mayor Bill Finch, calling him "one of the most good and decent people you'd ever want to meet."

Finch touched on issues both uniting ("This is a lovely, lovely town") and contentious (calling the state "169 fighting fiefdoms, prohibited by law to cooperate"). He spent a good deal of time talking of education, and promoted income differential for teachers, while challenging tenure. He also said of his town, "I create all the bad test scores that pull all of yours down."

The evening ended with a ceremony of volunteer awards, honoring excellence over the last year. They were law enforcement officer (East Hampton Police Sgt. Garritt Kelly), volunteer firefighter (Danny Burdick), Volunteer Ambulance Association member (Tom Donnelly), volunteer commission (Scott Bristol and Dan Wolfram of the Brownfields/Redevelopment Agency) and not-for-profit organization (Friends of Lake Pocotopaug).

Most notably, Russ Oakes took home the award for Citizen of the Year.

Last but not least, were two awards not listed in the program, which O'Keefe called Standing Ovation Awards.

He recalled, as a child, seeing a certain twinkle in his father's eye that only happened when he was at Lake Erie. "My dad died in 1982, and I never saw that look again...until I came to East Hampton," said O'Keefe, speaking about the late Dennis Griswold. Among Griswold's achievements is the founding of the Friends of Lake Pocotopaug.

The other award went to Bob Heidel, who passed away earlier this year. Heidel was an active Republican in town, who is publicly most remembered for his pursuit of water for the town.

Alluding to the recently-secured water rights, O'Keefe said, "Although Bob didn't live long enough to see it to completion, indeed, because of Bob and his dedication, it will be realized."

Fifteen Candidates Seeking Seven Town Council Slots

by Michael McCoy

Facilities improvements, a potential town water system and Lake Pocotopaug are among the issues on the minds of the Town Council candidates as they count down the days to the Nov. 3 elections.

The 15 candidates – who are vying for seven seats – come from all three political parties in town. The Chatham Party is putting up Kyle Dostaler, Derek Johnson, John Jordon, Scott Sanicki and Sue Weintraub. Democratic candidates are Christopher Goff, Barbara Moore, Nancy Ninesling, Jill Simko and John Tuttle. Thom Cordeiro, Bill Devine, Town Council Chair Melissa Engel, Ted Hintz Jr. and Judy Isele represent the Republicans.

Cordeiro, 41, is seeking his second straight term on the council (he was also on from 2001-05). He said he is hoping to capitalize on “some good momentum” the town has worked up. Some examples he gave were the recently-submitted road improvement plan by Public Works Director Keith Hayden – “roads are probably the most visible thing that residents see,” Cordeiro said – and the recent water source acquisition at St. Clements. He credited much of this momentum to Town Manager Jeff O’Keefe, who recently completed his first year in East Hampton.

Cordeiro said a water system “could be right away,” as far as channeling effort goes. But he figured that finding funding could push it off for a bit. The 2007 rejection of the multi-million dollar proposed water system, Cordeiro said, “doesn’t mean we don’t need water.” Cordeiro also endorsed beefing up the town’s economic development, saying “we need to try to lure some businesses to town.”

As for Lake Pocotopaug, Cordeiro said he’d like to see it “somehow less green in the next two years.” He added, “We talk about it, and we talk about it,” but now it’s time for action.

He also touched on facilities, but said the education component had to come first. Cordeiro lamented the day his children, two of which are now in middle school, might use “the same [high school] physics labs I used 23 years ago.”

Cordeiro also said he looks forward to “renewing my friendship with Scott Minnick.” Minnick, a current member of the Town Council, is running for the Board of Education. This means, Cordeiro noted, the two of them will no longer bicker at meetings. “Our friendship has been affected,” he said somberly.

Cordeiro, currently a marketing manager at Stanley Works, has lived in town for 34 years. He and his wife Kim have three children.

Seeking his third straight term on the council, Devine, 65, has a fairly lengthy history in town politics. He was on the Board of Finance from 1981-87, and then the Town Council from 1987-91 (although technically, the council was the Board of Selectmen until 1990). He also served as State Liquor Commissioner from 1991-95.

As far as major projects go, Devine said, “We can’t do anything until the economy gets better.” But he did name some things he figured can’t wait. This included replacing catch basins around the lake, improving the roads, addressing the high school, and replacing the Memorial School roof. He endorsed the large-scale facilities plan, which called for improvements to all the schools in town as well as Town Hall, but said, “That’s gonna take 10 to 20 years.”

Devine expressed similar thoughts on a future water system, but said, “We can start planning for it.” He said he didn’t want a “private water company to truck it in,” figuring the company would entice people with discounts and then price gouge later.

Devine expressed his pleasure over the recent securing of a water source, as well as the nearly-finished streetscape project, a project that, he said, “came out beautiful.” Devine also endorsed drawing more business to the center of town and Route 66 corridor. (Devine has run Devine Jewelers in the town center since 1978.) He and his wife, Ann, have one daughter.

Dostaler has maintained a presence at town hall for the past four years. From 2005-07, he served on the Town Council, and has nary missed a council meeting since being voted out two years ago.

When asked to explain his running this go-around, Dostaler said, “Really, I think it’s about improving the town I live in and want to live in,” and added, “I want to run to fight for quality of life for residents.”

As for the current council, Dostaler mentioned things he found “upsetting to me.” One of these was South Main Street’s Belltown Place saga. He said the Planning and Zoning Commission “defended [South Main Street residents] very well,” but said the Town Council undermined that work when they allowed the aquifer stress test that eventually legally deemed there was enough water to support the proposed development.

Dostaler said “we need to plan better … we need to ensure that we have affordable housing for people.” But, he said, “The town is dragging its feet.”

Dostaler also preached improving the town’s roads, as well as the senior center and library, calling the latter “inarguably one of the most important services that residents have.”

He also pushed for updates to the high schools science labs to comply with the recommendations by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC), saying, “We need to do something about that now; we can’t wait.”

However, he criticized the push toward major projects like a townwide water system, a new Town Hall and a revamp of Sears Park. Speaking about these, he criticized the council, accusing them of constantly shifting their priorities. “It’s almost as if the Town Council is playing whack-a-mole,” he said.

Dostaler, 43, is also chairman of the Chatham Party. He and his wife Mary Ann have lived in town since 1998. He works with his wife in her business MAD Communications, which specializes in Internet services and web development.

Engel said the current council has “made tremendous progress,” and pointed to items like Public Works Director Keith Hayden’s road improvement plan, the facilities plan, the acquiring of water rights at St. Clements and the lake protection plan. She also noted the recent merging of the lake and conservation commissions, calling the move “long overdue.” Engel went so far to call the current council “one of the most effective…we’ve ever had.” Like Cordeiro, she praised O’Keefe, as well as former Public Works Director Bob Drewry, who served as acting town manager for about a year before O’Keefe.

Over the next couple years, Engel said she hopes to begin revising the charter, something she said is “way overdue.” In the short term, she also proposed to stagger terms on the Town Council; currently, all council member terms run two years.

Engel seemed excited to begin facilities improvement, but noting the size of the undertaking, figured it’s “going to take some thinking and doing.” She noted there is a scarcity of funds for such a large-scale improvement, but said “hopefully that will change,” and also figured, “We can do pieces of it each year.”

However, Engel remarked, “I don’t like spending other people’s money,” seemingly hopeful that funding sources would be unearthed, something she similarly said about a future water system.

Engel, whose husband is Raymond, has lived in town since 1973, and runs Markham Meadows. She is the most senior member of the council, having served for 10 years.



Dostaler

Goff, 37, said that, like everyone, he seeks to maintain East Hampton’s “small town, rural character.” But he said the trick is figuring out how. “I don’t think there can be one opinion,” he said.

Like many, Goff cited Lake Pocotopaug as a priority, and reported that the town recently applied for a grant to this effect, which would include replacing nine of the lake’s catch basins.

As far as facilities go, he promoted addressing the high school science labs, as well as Memorial School’s roof. He also wants to address Town Hall, the condition of which, he said, is “disgusting.”

Goff praised the Water Task Force for recently securing a water source and seemed anxious for “the next step.” Goff said “we have lots of businesses that would love to have the water,” but added, “I really don’t see it happening over the next two years.”

Goff is seeking his second straight term on the Town Council; he previously served from 2001-05. (Before that, he was on the Board of Education from 1998-2001.) As for this most recent term, he said he was proud of his part in adopting the senior tax freeze initiative, explored by a seven-member committee that he chaired. He said he also played a part in 2001 creation of the town’s website, www.easthamptonct.org, as well as its ongoing evolution.

Goff is a lead children’s services worker at the state Department of Children and Families. He is a lifetime resident and father to three children.

For the past four years, Hintz, 39, has been on the Board of Finance (BOF), and is currently its chair. He said he now wants to take that service “a step further.”

During his four years on the BOF, Hintz said, two of the budgets have passed on the first referendum; he called this “a great accomplishment.” He also noted the AAA bond rating the town recently secured, which he credited to “responsible authorization of debt.” When asked if his budget approach would change on the council, Hintz said no, and added, “As far as I’m concerned, my duty has always been to the taxpayer.”

Hintz said “three huge priorities for the town” are pursuing grants for a water system, addressing facilities and fixing Lake Pocotopaug.

Looking at the work already completed, Hintz counted the roads as something well on its way to being addressed. He also praised the Town Council for February’s decision to combine and eliminate some of the boards and commissions in town. Hintz said the council has been effective “in a very short period of time for the town.” And, he added, “I feel honored that I’ve been at the forefront of the progress that’s been happening over the last two years.”

Hintz and his wife Shannon have twin daughters. He and his sister run the financial planning company Hintz and Co., while he also runs Hintz Financial Services, which specializes in retirement. Both businesses are located in Portland.

Isele, also a current BOF member, called getting a budget to the taxpayers “my big thing,” something she focused on with the finance board. She also praised the BOF’s building up the fund balance over the last several years.

If elected to Town Council, Isele said implementation of the road improvement plan would be a priority, saying, “It seems like our roads have been neglected for years.”

She also said she hoped to “get past the negativity” that’s plagued the town, though she said that was already improving. She praised O’Keefe for helping the negativity to tail off,

saying, “He’s motivated town employees; he’s empowered them.”

Isele included the securing of a water source and the recent State of the Town event as other examples of a positive shift. On the former, she said, “You’ve gotta take your first step to take your second step.”

She also endorsed both the pursuit of the facilities plan and a water system, but figured they both depended on securing grants.

Isele and her husband Tom have two kids. They have lived in town since 2000. Now a stay-at-home mom, Isele spent 20 years as a Certified Public Accountant. She has been on the BOF since 2003.

Johnson could not be reached for comment. However, according to a Chatham Party press release, he is a partner at the Hartford law firm Ruben, Johnson, Morgan & Horan, P.C. He is an adjunct professor of economics at UConn as well. Johnson served on the Town Council from 2005-07.

As for Jordon, much of his rhetoric is devoted to the lake, which makes sense since he has spent the last three years on first the Lake Pocotopaug Commission, and then the joint Conservation-Lake Commission. “The lake is on the precipice right now,” he warned, and reminded residents that it’s the largest natural lake in the state.

“I’ve never held [elected] political office before; I’ve never had a desire to,” said Jordon, but said the current administration provoked him to run. “People get away with murder,” he said, connecting this with his theory that three local developers are major campaign contributors to the two major parties. “I’m tired of people who don’t even live here influencing the way we live.”

Jordon, 63, called the parties the “Republicrats” and wondered, “Whoever heard of three Republicans and two Democrats block voting on every issue?” He also took aim at the packaged facilities proposal, figuring the town could not shoulder the cost, and said, “last time I looked, [Governor] Jodi Rell’s pocketbook was pretty empty.”

Clearly on his mind, however, were roads, which he said were “awful” and described more than once as “like Beirut.”

Jordon moved to town in 2001 and was a high school teacher and college professor before spending 40 years in the insurance industry, most recently at TD Bank. He also has backgrounds in marine and freshwater fish biology. He and his wife, Susan, have two daughters.

Moore, who is also the chairman of the Democratic Town Committee, said she’d “be very honored” to serve on the Town Council. She said that, before long, she’ll be retired, giving her even more time for the role. (Moore, 62, has run Chatham Caterers in town for over 25 years.)

Moore was slow to find fault with the current council, saying, “Considering all the different groups… I really do think they’re doing a great job, all of them.”

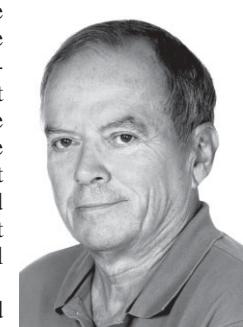
Currently a member of the BOF, Moore, said “Fiscally, I would pay a lot of attention to the budget process.” Before her current term on the finance board, Moore also served on it from 1997-2005.

Speaking on facilities, she said, “I think the first thing we need to do is address the issues at the high school,” but as for the rest of the proposed plan said, “I think at the moment, that’s probably enough.”

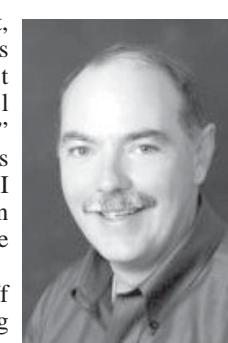
Moore seemed pleased that the water source at St. Clements was secured, and as for moving forward said, “We have much to think about in the future.” However, she predicted this would not get rolling anytime soon.



Moore



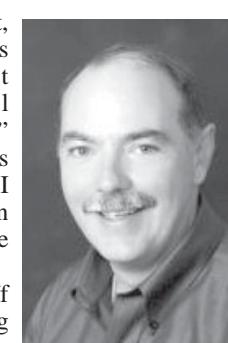
Goff



Hintz



Isele



Cordeiro



Ninesling

Moore has lived in town since 1968. She has a husband, Raymond, two children and six grandchildren.

Ninesling, 50, is new to East Hampton politics, though she's lived in town since 1982. During that time, she's coached Little League, youth basketball and soccer, and has taught CCD at St. Patrick's Church. She has been a member of the Old Home Days Committee since 2003, and was recently named its treasurer. She said she feels she has "a good balance of a background to help East Hampton."

Ninesling cited Lake Pocotopaug and the pursuit of a water system as priorities, and said of the latter, "I think the first step is getting the engineering done." Speaking about a future system, she said, "I think you need to be ready to do it," so grants can be immediately grabbed when they become available. However, she said that "might not be for five or 10 years."

Ninesling also endorsed implementing the new lake plan, and said she wished to see the Brownfields progress continue. She also said she was in favor of the large facilities plan, but said, "I wouldn't do it on the backs of the tax-payers."

Ninesling has also served on the board of directors at the Connecticut Natural Gas (CNG) Credit Union, and is a past president. She spent 18 years at CNG, serving as a financial analyst. She is currently a stay-at-home mom, and she and her husband David have two boys.

Sanicki said he feels he would be "a good asset for the town," and said his engineering background would be especially helpful when it comes to bidding and roadwork.

Speaking about the current Town Council, Sanicki said some members are "effective at what they do" but that others "don't go to meetings." He also criticized O'Keefe for not getting back to residents who voice concerns with issues like lake treatments and exploring the trash service. "That's one of my pet peeves," he said.

As for the lake, he figured the town needs to move on it, and said he was not as excited about the new lake action plan as others, given that he said it did not contain the solution.

Addressing facilities, he said, "There obviously has to be some changes to the town," specifying the police force cramped in the corner of Town Hall. However, he questioned the proposed plan, and said, "You don't need an office for every individual person."

Sanicki also worried about efficiency problems, and said the Main Street Bridge debacle (the replacement of the bridge took several months longer than originally anticipated) was in part the fault of the town. "The director of public works should be absolutely plugged in," he said, adding, "It was a total communication gap that happened there."

Sanicki called water "the loaded question in town right now." He said securing the water source was wise but disagreed with purchasing the Greer property. He said he welcomed an eventual water system, although he added, "I don't think we should rush in to something." (He said it "hurt my head" when he recalled O'Keefe addressing American Distilling owner Ed Jackowitz during the recent State of the Town address and said, "We've got water for you.")

Sanicki, 31, moved to town in 2002 and currently works for Pratt & Whitney.

"I pretty much get involved with anything that comes my way," said Simko, 38. For the last three years she has been active with the Friends of Lake Pocotopaug, and from 2003-07, she served on the BOF. She said she was particularly proud of the Chatham Roundtables initiative – a series of budget discussions with the public – she helped lead during her time on

the finance board.

Noting the difference between budget approaches, Simko said, "It puts [the council] at a strong advantage." She explained the BOF "do all the work" and the council gets to decide to approve or reject. "I'm excited to be on the other end of it," she chuckled.

Voicing her approval of the recent vote to secure a water source, she said of a future water system, "I'd like to be a part of seeking out grants, anything to lessen the burden on the taxpayer."

She also called for renovations to the high school, but said of the rest of the huge facilities proposal, "I would not jump into anything without examining everything."

Simko teaches science at Naylor Middle School in Hartford and has lived in town since she was 6.

Tuttle said he's running again because "I think there's still a lot of work to be done." At the top of this list was roads, and Tuttle said he was anxious to implement the road improvement. He also praised the Conservation-Lake Commission for their submittal of a lake protection plan last month, calling it "a valuable document." Tuttle suggested the council moving on the commission's recommendations sooner rather than later.

Tuttle also expressed pride over contributing to the hiring of Jeff O'Keefe, whom he called "a first class town manager."

Tuttle, 48, who contributed heavily to securing the water right at St. Clements, named the "pursuit of water" as another focal point. Reporting that funding has already been secured for engineering the system, he promoted the aggressive search of funding sources. "I have no intention of putting [it] on the backs of taxpayers," he pledged.

As for facilities, Tuttle said the high school "can't wait forever" and called Town Hall "inadequate." He admitted "we can't do it all," but worried that if the town only pursued updating the high school science labs, the renovation project might not be eligible for all the potential state funding.

Tuttle and his wife, Mitzi, have two children and have lived in town since 1998. Currently the vice president of sales for the hot dog company Nathan's Famous, Tuttle has been on the council since 2007. He previously served on the Board of Education from 2003-07.

Weintraub, 56, is finishing up her first term on the Town Council. "There are a lot of things that I'm proud of," she said, including backing the senior tax relief, as well as the recently adopted Wayfinding Signage Program.

She also called the last two years "an education I could not have paid for." Prior to her time on the council, she served for two years on the Planning and Zoning Commission.

"It could always be better," Weintraub said of the current council's performance. She specifically admonished the council for firing Jim Thomas two years ago, before his first day on the job as town manager. She said Thomas would "a great resource for the town."

"We have to have a community master plan," Weintraub said. While she endorsed a water system "that will protect our small town character," she said, "We need to have policies and plans in place before we do that."

Looking at infrastructure, Weintraub championed "safer roads and bridges." She also mentioned protecting the watershed and improving the high school science labs. On the facilities note, she said, "We need to address the needs of our library. It's definitely outgrown its space."

Weintraub has lived in town since 1988, and has run her graphic design business, Weintraub & Company, located in Middle Haddam, for 25 years. Her husband is Bud.



Sanicki



Tuttle



Simko



Weintraub

Four Proposals Passed at Colchester Town Meeting

by Katy Nally

Residents approved four proposals at a town meeting last Thursday, Oct. 15, including a right-to-farm ordinance and the acquisition of open space on MacDonald Road.

The meeting room at Town Hall was filled to capacity with residents who could vote for or against the four questions. But no one opposed, and the four propositions passed unanimously. Residents even applauded after the right to farm ordinance was passed.

Besides the right to farm and the land on MacDonald road, residents also approved the development of land in Westchester and a no-leash law in the dog park.

First Selectman Linda Hodge said she was "thrilled" that all four were unanimously passed by residents. "They represent a lot of work done by a lot of different people," she said.

The right-to-farm ordinance was drafted in September and was discussed at several Board of Selectmen meetings. At the Sept. 17, meeting the board decided on a final draft of the ordinance that adopted the state statute with minimal changes. The state statute was passed 20 years ago, but individual towns enact an ordinance so it pertains to local farming practices.

The ordinance protects farmers from complaints regarding odor, noise, dust, pesticides and water runoff caused by livestock and crops, but it does not protect negligent or "reckless" farmers.

"The fact that it passed unanimously is just an endorsement of what a milestone this is for the farmers," Leslie Curtis, vice president of the Colchester Land Trust, said. Curtis said that since a land study came out in 2007, the Land Trust and local farmers have been trying to adopt a right to farm ordinance for Colchester. According to the study, it was the number one priority of the farmers. She said the new law will give farmers the "right to conduct their businesses." "The farmers were thrilled," Hodge added.

Hodge said the MacDonald Road proposition is also "exciting" because it is a chance to "expand our open space." The land is a 31-acre plot adjacent to the Ruby Cohen property.

The land was purchased for \$182,250, with \$140,000 coming from the town and \$42,250 from the Colchester Land Trust. The \$140,000 will come from two accounts; the open space account and the land acquisition account.

Lisa Hageman, president of the Land Trust, said she was "thrilled" about the acquisition of the 31 acres. She said it "made sense that the town should own it" and it will continue to be used as an "outdoor education classroom."

The acquisition has taken about five months because it was originally carried out incorrectly in June. Hodge followed town charter procedure for purchasing land and did not read an ordinance written in 2003 that outlines how open space should be purchased. The process was restarted and the selectmen met with the Board of Finance on Oct. 5 to finalize the purchase.

Hodge said residents were also pleased with the leash law ordinance, which allows dogs to run leash-less when inside the dog park. However, according to Hodge, this ordinance is not applicable, as there is no dog park yet. She said the project is still in its fundraising stages.

Lastly, the proposition that reinstated the ownership of a 12-lot parcel on Bull Hill Road received less enthusiasm from residents, but it still passed unanimously. According to Hodge, a contractor received the rights to develop the Westchester land, but the agreement expired on May 20. The approval simply reinstated that agreement between the town and the developer.

Overall, Hodge said she was very excited about the four propositions. "Four very different groups of people worked very hard," she said. "It was nice to see their hard work be brought to a really positive conclusion."

Portland Voters Face Choice for First Selectman

by Michael McCoy

For the first time since 2003, First Selectman Susan Bransfield has some competition. When voters flock to the polls Tuesday, Nov. 3, they can choose between Bransfield, a Democrat, and Republican challenger Sandra Downes. Also, while he's not on the ballot, Independent Lambros Lambrinides has been campaigning around town in recent weeks, as a write-in candidate for first selectman.

Bransfield, 54, moved to Portland in 1982. From 1991-95, she served on the Board of Education (BOE), and then spent the next six years on the Board of Selectmen (BOS). In 2001, she lost a bid for first selectman and spent the next two years on the Economic Development Commission.



Bransfield

Since 2003, she has been the first selectwoman.

Speaking of her first campaign for the position, she remembered, "I was concerned with the town's financial management and economic needs." She continued, "At that time we had a lot of challenging budgets," and Bransfield said she sought to slow down the mill rate acceleration.

After winning her 2003 bid, Bransfield said she first started pushing for the revision of the town's Plan of Conservation and Development, which was completed in 2006. She then said she immediately turned her focus to updating the zoning regulations, which were adopted in 2007.

She also expressed pride over the hiring of an economic development consultant in 2005, and for bringing in businesses to town like Cavalier's Bakery on Main Street and ProMold Plastics in the old Sweet Waverly building.



Downes

Bransfield also noted pleasure over the approval of Portland TownPlace, a major mixed-use development slated for the old Elmcrest property. "That project is well on its way," she said.

Bransfield named her three priorities if re-elected as "maintaining sound fiscal policies, promoting and encouraging economic development, and improving our infrastructure." She said the latter would include items like roads, parks, schools and addressing the water system.

"There's a lot that still needs to be completed," Bransfield said, noting that projects don't necessarily end just because a political term does. "There's a fair amount of knowledge that's necessary for running a town," something she said she felt she possessed.

She also noted that four of the six current selectmen have served on the board during her whole tenure as first selectmen – and all four of these are up for re-election. "I'd be very pleased to see the current board to continue. I think we work together very well."

Prior to running the town, Bransfield was an education service specialist with the state Department of Education's Child Nutrition Programs. She and her husband, Portland native Tom, have three adult children. Bransfield called Portland "a great place to bring up a family."

Downes could not be reached for an interview, but did speak to the *Rivereast* in June, shortly after she announced her candidacy.

Downes in June called Portland TownPlace – which at that time had not yet been approved – a "great opportunity." Among her concerns was addressing the town's water supply.

In addition to collecting Republican votes, Downes said she expected to garner Democrat ones as well, and added, "There's enough Independents we can actually win, and we are going to win."



Lambrinides

Senior counsel and assistant vice president at The Hartford's Corporate Law Group, Downes has practiced law since 1990. She also has degrees in psychology and education. Downes and her husband Jim have lived in town since 2006. She has three

adult children. Upon moving to Portland, she immediately got involved with the Republican Town Committee, of which she is vice chairman. She is also active in the Bartlett Hill Association.

Lambrinides, 64, announced he was running this summer after considering the idea for a while and, he said, hearing people tell him, "I'd vote for you."

Lambrinides added that when he heard a Republican was running this year, he thought, "It would be more interesting if there were three people." When asked why he's running as an Independent, Lambrinides, an unaffiliated voter, replied, "I don't want to owe anybody anything." Though brand new to Portland politics, Lambrinides has lived in town for quite a while, since he was a year old to be exact.

"I think the town needs a new direction, for lack of a better word," Lambrinides said. He said he feels the current selectmen "bite off a lot more than they can chew sometimes," leaving priorities like road improvements unattended to.

Speaking of roads, he questioned the wisdom of the streetscape project at the south end of Main Street. "Many people, including myself, don't think it should be done."

On the other hand, he proposed, "We have a water issue that's been lingering for a long time." Lambrinides said he's been canvassing door-to-door, and has heard that as a concern many times. "I'd take a look at anything," he said about resident concerns.

Lambrinides, now retired, spent 20 years at Pratt & Whitney as an electronic systems technician. He also worked for Middlesex Signs, a business started by his father.

* * *

The Republicans and Democrats are each running four candidates for the other six seats on the Board of Selectmen. The Republicans are John H. Anderson, Carl Chudzik, Thomas Nash and Matthew Rice. The Democratic hopefuls are Mark Finkelstein, Brian Flood, Sharon Peters and Kathleen Richards.

Though he could not be reached for comment, Anderson provided the *Rivereast* with information during the 2007 election. Married with two children, Anderson is a lifelong resident. He works at Anderson Farm Supply, a Portland business started by his grandfather, John V. Anderson.

Anderson has served on the BOS since 2003. Prior to that, he served as a constable from 1979-84.

The most immediate impression Chudzik, 57, gave was his love for Portland and serving it, rarely obscured because of his upbeat disposition. "The most important thing is to come out and serve your community," he said. "I live giving to the town; I love giving to people."

Chudzik has sat on the BOS since 2007, after spending two years on the Conservation Commission. This seems at the front of his mind, as his love for nature is apparent, specifically his sea legs.

Chudzik proposed that natural recreation areas and development can coexist quite nicely, figuring, "We're not going in and clear-cutting."

He also mentioned a free swimming spot and free-range dog park as enticing options for town recreation. "We have some beautiful raw jewels," he said of the town's geography, figuring they could be exploited without being compromised.

Turning to the economy, Chudzik recognized, "We need business in town, obviously," and said, "It's getting tough on people."

Chudzik runs Chudzik Reality. He and his wife Jo Ann have one daughter. He moved to town in 1986 "to be on the pond," alluding to his home on Jobs Pond.

Finkelstein said he thinks Bransfield "has

done a superior job as first selectman," and added, "Most of the accomplishments are hers, and we're her support staff." One of these accomplishments, he said, was the mill rate increasing just .25 mills during the last two years.

He also said, "What I especially like about this board is we're able to work together for the benefit of the town," crediting both Republicans and Democrats. He said this could not be said of all past boards of selectmen. "There was a lot of infighting years ago," he said.

Finkelstein said the 2010 budget process will be "challenging," but figured, "We'll see what we can afford and create a budget."

Over the next couple years, he said he seeks to maintain the town's infrastructure, addressing issues like roads, water, and sewer. He also counted shepherding the police and volunteer fire department as crucial. "I think we're very lucky in town," he said of the last tow groups.

Finkelstein, 62, is a lifetime resident, and also sits on the boards of directors for both the Connecticut Association of Health Care Facilities and the American College of Health Care Administrators.

Professionally, he is vice president of Hughes Health and Rehabilitation, Inc in West Hartford. He and his wife Donna have three adult children. He's been on the BOS for seven years.

Flood, the deputy first selectman, is finishing up his second term on the BOS. He said "public service is important," and seemed to be inspired to get involved not only from growing up in town, but by his father Tom's volunteerism in town.

Flood moved to town when he was a young child. Prior to his time on the BOS, Flood was assistant coach for American Legion Baseball.

"I'm just proud to be part of Susan's administration," he said, adding, "We're lucky to have her." Flood said the current BOS "works very well together," and chalked even that up to Bransfield. "She gets it done," he said.

Flood said that during the next two years, "We need to keep going along as we are."

Though admitting that budgets are unpredictable, he seemed confident of the 2010 process: "As long as we continue to manage the money, we should continue to improve."

Flood, 42, is an attorney at Moore, O'Brien, Jacques & Yelenak in Cheshire.

Nash, 65, moved to town in 2002 and said running for the BOS was "something I've been contemplating for several years." He said government's local level is "where the rubber meets the road."

However, Nash said he simply did not have the time to devote to it until now, and owned up to being a "true novice." (Nash is a risk management analyst for American Eagle Credit Union, and just recently cut his commute significantly since being transferred from Naugatuck to Glastonbury.) "If you're going to get involved," he said, "you need to commit yourself."

Referring to previous comments made by Downes, Nash said, "I think Sandy said it best. We need to listen to the people in the town."

To this end, Nash said the survey conducted by the Republicans said people want more opportunities for children's recreation. This prompted him to mention the recent push for converting the old town reservoir into a swimming hole. He figured the town had no shortage of ball fields, but the addition of walking and biking trails would be great.

Commenting on the current BOS, he said, "I believe they've tried to do the best they can." However, instead of elaborating, he added, "We'll let the election decide that."

"I'm willing to do the work," he promised. "I look forward to it and welcome it."

Nash, a Danielson native, said of Portland, "In many respects it reminds me of the town I grew up in," and likened it to "a comfortable sweatshirt you put on when you get home at night."

Nash has a wife named Gloria, two stepsons and two grandchildren.

Peters has served on the BOS since 2005. She said she's running again "to continue to assist in moving our town forward."

During her tenure on the board, Peters said she was glad to help make sure funds were available to complete the Plan of Conservation and Development, as well as update the zoning regulations. In addition she praised the board for keeping taxes low while "maintaining the same level of services."

Going forward, Peters, 46, hoped to address blight, opining that the issue was lack of enforcement. Peters said she hoped to look for creative ways of doing so, noting New Britain's recent decision to place liens on properties with blight.

As for the enforcement problem, Peters figured, "The court system is overburdened." She said since blight is dealt with criminally, it falls quite low on the level of priorities.

When asked about the budget, Peters, referring to the last one, said, "Hopefully, our next budget go-round won't be as difficult or Draconian, as they say." However, she credited the 2009 version passing on one referendum to the BOS's "transparent" approach to communication, crediting the lion's share to Bransfield.

Peters, a mother of two, runs her own law practice in Portland, her hometown for 40 years. She specializes in child protection and criminal law, and is a Certified Child Welfare Law Specialist. Prior to her time on the BOS, she served on the PZC (2001-03) and EDC (2003-05).

"I just want to contribute to the community," said Rice, 33, who moved to town in 2006.

Remarking on the sitting BOS, Rice said, "I think the town is ready for a change and fresh ideas. I think the current board is kind of stale." He also criticized them for "spending our money in the wrong areas."

"We need to be focused on saving," he said. "I don't think the town can run with any kind of deficit."

Rice championed business development and increasing the tax base, as well as "more community based services," specifically "something for the kids." He proposed creating something free for town users like turning the reservoir into a swimming hole or opening a teen center.

A broker with Village Mortgage in Torrington, Rice also has a wife named Maxine.

Richards, 57, seemed nothing but positive reflecting on her six years on the BOS. (Prior to this, she spent two years on the BOE.)

In the future, she said she hoped to see the BOS working more closely with Economic Development Consultant Mary Dickerson. She figured town residents deserved a break from shouldering the tax burden, but added, "I think we're improving on that."

However, she did commend the BOS for halting the mill rate in 2008 and raising it just .25 mills this year. She also praised the current BOS, noting the lack of controversy. When there is disagreement, she said, "We can talk it out."

Richards and her husband, Bill, manage the Connecticut division of Henkels & McCoy in town. She has two children, four grandchildren, and has lived in town since 1966.



Rice



Flood



Nash



Richards



Anderson



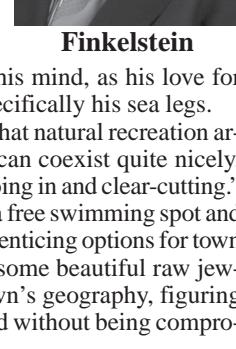
Chudzik



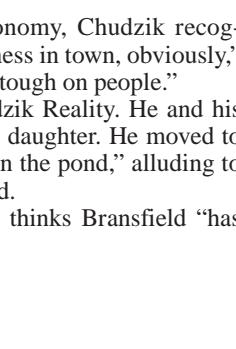
Finkelstein



Flood



Peters



Finkelstein said he thinks Bransfield "has

From the Editor's Desk

Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

It hasn't gotten a whole lot of attention in the letters to the editor pages of the *Rivereast*, as most of them have concerned political endorsements, or the veterans' tax situation in Marlborough, or the ongoing soap opera that is East Hampton, but there've been some interesting goings-on in Hebron as of late.

For starters, there's the situation with the town finance director, Jim Day. As Sarah McCoy reported last week, the town placed him on administrative leave, a move that may or may not have had to do with a letter he sent to the Board of Selectmen earlier this month alleging, among other things, that he had been asked to illegally stalk a Hebron resident to determine if they were living in a home without a certificate of occupancy, and to keep quiet about a budgeting deficit.

Well, last Thursday (after the *Rivereast* went to press), the Board of Selectmen opted to fire him outright. The selectmen didn't even do it in executive session, either. They tried, but Day, saying he felt he had nothing to hide, asked them to go ahead and render their decision at the public portion of the selectmen's meeting. So they did, and voted 5-0 to let him go.

The unanimous decision to fire Day means the town needs to search for both a finance director and a town manager. That's because, also last Thursday (it was a busy night for the Hebron Board of Selectmen), it was announced that the trio of town employees who had been serving as town manager wish for the arrangement to be just a temporary one, and want to eventually be able to return to their normal jobs.

The Board of Selectmen, as you may know, had been looking at making the three-person town manager a permanent thing in Hebron, so now they're going to start looking for a new town manager again. I think this is good news, because I thought the three-person town manager thing was a bad idea from the start.

I covered Hebron for three years as a reporter – and, if I do say so myself, I did a pretty good job. I've seen all that the town manager does, and it's a lot. Even if you spread those responsibilities across three people, it's still a lot, when you consider those three people still had their normal full-time jobs to deal with. (And those positions are nothing to sneeze at either; the three sharing the town manager role are Public Works Director Andrew Tierney, Town Planner Michael O'Leary and Executive Assistant Donna Lanza.) There's only so much one person can juggle before something gives.

Hebron's a growing town, and an important one in the area (seeing as how it's the home base for the RHAM middle and schools and the AHM youth service bureau, all of which serve Andover and Marlborough residents as well). It deserves its own, full-time manager. I'm glad the selectmen are going to start looking for one again.

* * *

As I've written here before, my mother's whole side of the family is from the south, and I've spent a good deal of time there over the years. So I know from firsthand experience the stereotype about southerners is, like all stereotypes, unfair. They're not all racist, Bible-thumping rednecks. And some of them even dare not to vote Republican. So, it pains me when stories such as this one actually do

take place in the south. It just makes it that much harder to explain to people that....well, they're not all that way.

I read over the weekend about the justice of the peace in Louisiana who refuses to marry interracial couples, because he doesn't think those types of marriages last long. The man, Keith Bardwell, told the Associated Press that this doesn't make him a racist. He used the classic defense of "I'm not a racist; I have black friends," and said he's married black couples. "They come into my home, I marry them, they use my bathroom," he told the AP. (I found the "they use my bathroom" line to be particularly revolting, as if Bardwell thinks he should be commended for daring to let a black man use his bathroom.)

First of all, refusing to marry an interracial couple does indeed make you a racist. It's practically the textbook definition of the word. You're discriminating against someone based on the color of their skin.

Secondly, if you're worried about the marriage failing, then why are you still a justice of the peace in the first place? If half of all marriages end in divorce, then whatever couple Bardwell marries, regardless of race, has a 50-50 chance of not lasting. Those aren't great odds. But Bardwell marries people anyway, as well he should. People are people, not statistics.

Bardwell further defended himself by saying that, based on people he's talked to and interracial marriages he's observed, a child of an interracial couple is not readily accepted by black society or white society, and he doesn't want to help put children through that. Also, he tells interracial couples of justices of the peace who *will* marry them.

But, actions speak louder than words. (And his words spoke loud enough to begin with, in such wonderfully evolved statements as, "I just don't believe in mixing the races that way.") It's discrimination, plain and simple. Hopefully, Bardwell will take a cue from that integrated toilet he so proudly boasted about, and will stop acting like the racist he says he isn't.

* * *

As I write this, it hasn't yet been set in stone, but it sure looks like a Yankees-Phillies World Series – a.k.a., the World Series From Hell – might happen. I've watched at least part of most World Series over the years (although I admit I didn't watch any of the 2006 matchup between the Cardinals and the Tigers. You may recall the Mets lost the NLCS that year in seven games. I was at Game 7, got to see Yadier Molina hit a two-run homer off Aaron Heilman in the top of the ninth to give the Cardinals the lead, and then Carlos Beltran take a called third strike with the tying runs on base to end the game. Watching the World Series that followed was just too painful to even consider). But I don't know if I'll be able to watch this one. Who do you root for? I know, I know, go with the lesser of two evils. For a Mets fan, though, who would that be? There's no right answer to that question.

So, I instead bring words of solace to Mets fans and Red Sox fans, and fans of the other 26 teams that won't be playing baseball next week: It's only about 115 days until pitchers and catchers report for spring training.

* * *

See you next week.

Obituaries

Colchester

Caroline A. Schauble

Caroline A. Schauble of Colchester, formerly of Windsor Locks, died Monday, Oct. 19, at Wadsworth Glen Health Care and Rehabilitation in Middletown, where she had lived for the past year.

Born and raised in Crown Point, NY, she attended nursing school at Jersey City Medical Center and became a registered nurse. She married John J. Schauble Sr., of Paterson, NJ, and they lived briefly in Indiana before moving to Windsor Locks in 1952. Caroline was a homemaker and raised five children before returning to nursing in the 1970s as a charge nurse at Windsor Hall Nursing and Rest Home in Windsor. After the death of her husband in 2005, she moved to Colchester, where she lived for two years with her daughter and son-in-law.

She is survived by her five children: Jeanne Schauble of Bowie, MD; Leona Schauble of Nashville, TN; Peggy Messerschmidt and Fritz Messerschmidt of New Britain; Sue Murphy and Edward Murphy of Colchester; and John Schauble, Jr., and Rebecca Day of Akkokeek, MD. She is also survived by one grandson, Karl Messerschmidt of New Britain, and a sister, Helen Majury of Wayne, NJ.

No memorial service will be held. Care of arrangements has been entrusted to the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home of Colchester. For online condolences, visit www.auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

Portland

Karen L. Miller

Karen L. (Kirsche) Miller, 60, of Glastonbury, beloved wife of Ronald A. Miller, died Saturday, Oct. 17, at Middlesex Hospital. Born Nov. 2, 1948, in Middletown, daughter of Richard W., Jr., and Margaret (Anderson) Kirsche of Portland, she was raised in Portland and had lived in Glastonbury for the past 23 years.

She was a business analyst trainer for ING. Karen was a graduate of Portland High School, Class of 1966, and earned an associate's degree from CCSU. She was a member of the Zion Lutheran Church, Portland, and a volunteer for Reach for Recovery and Drive for Recovery with the American Cancer Society.

Besides her husband and parents she is survived by a son and daughter-in-law, Garrett A. and Lindsey G. Miller and their son Jacoby A. Miller of Minot, ND, a daughter Megan A. Miller of Glastonbury and her partner Kyle T. Fisher of East Hampton; a sister and brother-in-law Paula A. and Craig H. Brown and their daughter Rachael "Sweet Pea" Brown of Portland, her mother-in-law Helen Miller of East Hartford.

She was predeceased by a brother, Peter R. Kirsche.

Funeral service was Thursday, Oct. 22, in the Zion Lutheran Church, 183 Williams St., Portland. Burial private. Friends called at the Mulrany Funeral Home, 725 Hebron Ave., Glastonbury, on Wednesday, Oct. 21.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to the Susan G. Komen for the Cure, 350 Church St., Lobby Level, Hartford, CT. 06103 or to the Cholangiocarcinoma Foundation, 5526 West 13400 South, No. 510, Salt Lake City, UT 84096.

East Hampton

Anne Marie Ouellette

Anne Marie Ouellette, 80, of East Hampton, widow of Roger A. Ouellette, died Sunday, Oct. 18, at Hartford Hospital. Born Sept. 17, 1929 in Fall River, MA, she was the daughter of the late Jean B. and Rose (Lafierriere) Ouellette, and resided in East Hampton since 1957.

Before her retirement, she was a seamstress for the John Meyer Clothing Company in Norwich. She was a communicant of St. Patrick Church in East Hampton where she was active in the Ladies Guild for many years.

She is survived by her three sisters, Louise Fletcher of Rhode Island, Jean Posse of Massachusetts, and Virginia Kadelski of Hebron; also many nieces and nephews.

She was predeceased by a brother, Roger J. Ouellette, and two sisters, Marguerite Ouellette and Pauline Tremblay.

The funeral procession left the Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton, on Thursday, Oct. 22, followed by the funeral liturgy at 10 a.m. in St. Patrick Church in East Hampton. Burial will be Saturday, Oct. 24, at 11 a.m. in Notre Dame Cemetery in Fall River, MA. Friends called at the Spencer Funeral Home on Wednesday, Oct. 21.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the East Hampton Volunteer Ambulance Assoc., P.O. Box 144, East Hampton, CT 06434, or to Alzheimer's Assoc., 279 New Britain Rd., Kensington, CT 06037.

To leave online condolences, visit www.spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

Marlborough

Nancy Strong

Nancy Strong, 62, beloved wife of Bruce Strong Sr., died Friday, Oct. 16, at Marlborough Health Care. Born May 29, 1947, in Biddleford, ME, she was the daughter of Genevieve (Jones) Evans and the late Charles Evans. She had lived in East Hampton and Middletown for most of her life. She had been employed at Community Action of Greater Middletown before her retirement.

Besides her mother and husband, she is survived by a son, Bruce Strong Jr. of East Hampton; two daughters, Wendy Coleman and Jennifer Strong, both of East Hampton; a brother, Charles Evans of East Hampton; two sisters, Rose Evans of Middletown and Donna Read of East Hampton; and five grandchildren.

Funeral services were held Tuesday, Oct. 20, at the Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton.

East Hampton

Barbara Marie Dumond

Barbara Marie (Belanger) Dumond, 84, of East Hampton, widow of Joseph E. Dumond, died Monday, Oct. 19, at Middlesex Hospital. Born Jan. 9, 1925 in Grand Falls, New Brunswick, Canada, she was the daughter of the late George and Mary Ann (Mockler) Belanger. She had lived in East Hampton since 1955.

Barbara was a graduate of St. Joseph High School in Grand Falls, New Brunswick, a graduate of Hotel Dieu Hospital School of Nursing in Campbellton, New Brunswick in 1946, and in 1947, received her Nursing Certificate from the Province of New Brunswick. Barbara had worked as a private duty nurse in Edmundston, Canada, and then at St. Joseph Hospital in Van Buren, ME, St. Mary's Hospital in Lewiston, ME, and St. Francis Hospital in Hartford.

Barbara was a volunteer at Middlesex Hospital, the Well Child Clinic in East Hampton, the Youth Services and the Red Cross Bloodmobile. She was a communicant of St. Patrick Church in East Hampton, past president of the Ladies Guild, past president of the Knights of Columbus Auxiliary, past president of the Bell Town Garden Club, former member of St. Patrick's Choir, and a former CCD Teacher at St. Patrick Church. Barbara loved to golf and play Bridge with her friends.

She is survived by her four daughters and their husbands, Carole and Kenneth Faraci of Middletown, Sallie Milardo of Middletown, Sandra and Peter Swider of Salem, and Dawn and Owen Flannery of East Hampton; three sons and their wives, Frank and Melinda Dumond of East Hampton, Peter Dumond of East Hampton, Mark and Connie Dumond of Colchester; three sisters, Claudette McManus, Marina McCormick and Judith Grant; 14 grandchildren, Amber Eckert, Justin Milardo, Brent Milardo, Audra Swider, Nicholas Swider, Ashlee Dumond, Matthew Dumond, Damien Dumond, Michael Flannery, Mark Flannery, Kimberley Ballard, Randall Dumond, Christopher Dumond and Shelby Dumond; two great-granddaughters, Grace Flannery and Karter Ballard.

She was predeceased by a brother, George Belanger Jr., and a granddaughter, Michele Milardo.

The funeral procession will leave the Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton, today, Friday, Oct. 23, at 10:15 a.m. followed by a funeral liturgy at 11 a.m. in St. Patrick Church, East Hampton. Burial will follow in St. Patrick Cemetery. Friends called at the funeral home on Thursday, Oct. 22, from 5-8 p.m. Memorial contributions may be made to St. Patrick Church Renovation Fund, P.O. Box 177, East Hampton, CT 06424. To leave online condolences, visit www.spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.