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Dr. James "Drew" Hyatt was recently named as Eastern Connecticut State University's 2009 Distinguished Faculty Member. The environmental earth science professor has a passion for getting students involved in research outside the classroom. He is shown here at Providence Canyon State Park in Georgia as he maps the topography of the canyon earlier this summer.

Andover Man Honored by ECSU

by Sarah McCoy

Andover resident Dr. James "Drew" Hyatt was recently recognized for his teaching efforts by Eastern Connecticut State University (ECSU).

The professor of environmental earth sciences was named ECSU's 2009 Distinguished Faculty Member. It is considered the university's most prestigious faculty award, as peers choose the winner.

For this scientist, sitting down to reflect on his achievements isn't nearly as exciting as, say, rocks.

Yes, rocks.

Insignificant to most, Hyatt has carved out a career teaching and deciphering stories from stones and sediment.

Hyatt, who is from London, Ontario, completed his studies in his home country. He came to the United States in 1993, after completing his Ph.D. Hyatt first settled in Georgia and began work as a professor at Valdosta State University.

Wanting to get out of the heat and closer to family members, Hyatt came to Eastern in 1999. But Georgia was still on his mind.

Hyatt had undertaken several research projects during his time down south and wanted to continue them despite his relocation. These projects, including a look at sedimentary records at local lakes and Georgia State Park Providence Canyon, have been expanded to become more

than just Hyatt's own personal projects but an interdisciplinary adventure for fellow professors and students.

"The most enjoyable part of my job is involving students," he said. "The research part is fulfilling but working with students has the most meaning."

ECSU, Hyatt said, offers unique opportunities for undergraduate students to dig in and become more involved in hands-on research. With a new science facility that opened last year came an influx of new equipment. From a Ground Penetrating Radar to a Terrestrial Laser Scanner, ECSU students have access to tools not typically afforded to students.

Hyatt isn't letting these tools sit on the shelf, by any means.

In his 10 years at ECSU, he has led five trips for faculty and students to conduct research down in Georgia. In fact, a group led by him returned recently after a 12-day trip to the Providence Canyon.

The canyon was formed by erosion caused by the clearing of fields back in the 1800s. By coring the sediment of the deposits and mapping the interior, Hyatt has been able to learn more about its history.

However, he wasn't content to stop there. Since his initial trips down to Georgia, Hyatt has expanded the project to "Art Rocks" – a

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Surprise Selectman Pick from Colchester Caucus

by Michael McCoy

Landing on a candidate for First Selectman is often a nominal process for town committees. But it's been anything but for the Colchester Democrats, and it's safe to say the result surprised more than a few people.

During their caucus Tuesday night at Town Hall, the party selected Glenn Morron, the chair of the town's Police Commission, as its candidate for First Selectman after nothing short of a rollercoaster ride.

In April, doubts surfaced about whether the Democratic Town Committee (DTC) would endorse incumbent Linda Hodge for re-election. In fact, not only were additional candidates interviewed, but Hodge was put through the same process, something quite uncommon for an incumbent. In fact, one report said the DTC gave her a vote of no confidence during an April 13 meeting.

Then, last month, Hodge's executive assistant Mike Caplet threw his hat in the ring for the DTC nomination, declaring, "I look forward to starting a campaign focused on the issues." However, that campaign stopped before it even really started. Caplet withdrew from the race last Sunday, just three days short of the caucus.

So, the DTC endorsement once again seemed to be Hodge's for the taking. At first, things looked promising for her. On Tuesday, at a DTC

meeting held before the caucus officially started, the nominating committee backed her 6-0, and the DTC backed her 30-0. However, at the caucus that followed shortly thereafter, the Democrats present nominated Morron. Then, the party voted for him over Hodge, by a vote of 36-32.

When contacted Wednesday, Hodge seemed shocked by the outcome and, when asked if she had any notion that something like this might happen, she responded, "None." However, she pointed out, "Well, I did get the Democratic Town Committee's unanimous support."

As for the cause of the outcome, Hodge could only offer, "When you work on behalf of the whole town, you make tough decisions that make people unhappy."

When asked to weigh in on all this, DTC Chair John Malsbenden would only say, "I endorse the candidate of the Democratic Party."

As for the irregularity of the whole situation, Malsbenden said it does happen. In fact, he said, during the 1970s there were two entire slates voted on at a Colchester DTC caucus.

Hodge, when asked about possible division within the Democratic party, said, "One of my goals is to build teams and bring people together." She then added, "We're going to have to band together to do what's best for the town."

When asked if by "we" she meant Democrats, Hodge responded, "I mean everybody."

As for Morron, Hodge said during the caucus he commented that he had no experience, "but I'm willing to learn."

Malsbenden said he only knew Morron from his time on the Police Commission. "I don't know the rest of his background," Malsbenden said, who declined to comment on Morron's character. "I will develop opinions over the course of the next couple weeks." (Both Malsbenden and the First Selectman's office said there was no resume for Morron on file. Morron did not return a call for comment.)

After being asked if he felt this episode has fragmented the Democratic party, Malsbenden responded, "No, I don't. Nor can I comment, as I don't know, as to what Linda Hodge's plans would be."

Hodge made those plans known herself. When asked if she would still run, she did not hesitate before responding, "Yes." She simply did not yet know how she would proceed: forcing a primary or running unaffiliated. Hodge said she would decide by this weekend.

Morron's seat on the Police Commission is worth pointing out, since he openly opposed a decision made by the BOS earlier this spring. At a March meeting, the BOS voted 3-2 to re-

move Jim Stavola from the Police Commission for allegedly issuing a public statement against a decision of the BOS, without passing it through Hodge's office. Hodge was the only Democrat to vote for his removal.

At that March meeting, Morron accused Hodge, among others on the BOS, for acting on their distaste for Stavola's strong will. Morron has been the commission's chairman since May.

As for Caplet, he has not been in Town Hall since the caucus and has not been able to be reached for comment. Malsbenden said he has not seen him since he withdrew from the race Sunday. He only commented, "I don't believe he was pressured into doing it."

Hodge said Wednesday that Caplet had told her he wanted to run an issues-based campaign, and he didn't feel he was able to do that. Instead, she said, people were focusing on his age and how he and Hodge were getting along.

Hodge said there has been speculation that she told Caplet to withdraw, but, she said, "We didn't even discuss it. It was a done deal by the time he told me."

While the first selectman pick is getting all the buzz, there are other candidates on the DTC slate. Incumbent Rosemary Coyle is seeking

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look at the canyon both in a geomorphical sense as well as an aesthetic sense. He has partnered with ECSU art professor Andy Jones to bring this program to life.

Art Rocks is an interdisciplinary program that gives students access to study the composition of the Canyon from both a scientist's perspective as well as an artist's. While Hyatt and his students might be using the colors of the sediment to understand what's happening at the Canyon, Jones and his students are using the same area to create dirt paintings.

Hyatt added that this project will soon be featured at the new Connecticut Science Center in Hartford.

In addition to the work in Georgia, Hyatt has also begun local projects as a way of encouraging students to get their hands dirty.

A couple years ago students collected sediment cores from the bottom of Andover Lake. Hyatt is hoping to continue work at this site and map the bottom of the lake floor.

"It's a great partnership where we can go out and study the lake and the town is provided with additional information about the site," he said.

Hyatt's interest in Andover Lake has ex-

panded, as he now serves on the Andover Lake Management Association.

This semester, Hyatt is also working with students on the study of sink holes. While these aren't the sink holes commonly thought of down south, Connecticut does have its own unique collection. Hyatt is leading a student research project that looks into these.

"Students who get involved in undergraduate research are able to figure out and solve problems. These aren't canned scenarios from a book," Hyatt said. "It's also great prep for grad school and it allows for students to take a real ownership of the work that's being done."

When Hyatt steps back to think about his desire to expand student research and his recent naming as ECSU's top professor, he can only come up with one conclusion. "[The award] really reflects my opportunity to work with very good people," he said. "It's very nice to get and I'm honored to receive it but it's as much an award for the people I work with."

Hyatt and his wife, Trudy, have two children: Jake, who is going into his senior year at RHAM High School in Hebron, and Hannah, who will be a freshman at the school.

Surprise cont. from Front Page

reelection on the Board of Selectmen, and James Ford is running for his first term.

Gregg LePage is seeking his first term as Town Treasurer. Mary Tomasi is also seeking her first two-year term, but on the Board of Education (BOE). Incumbents Don Kennedy and Monica Swyden-Bolles are looking to reprise their roles on the BOE with four-year terms.

Two other incumbents, Nancy Riella and Tearice Peters seek reelection on the Board of Assessment Appeals, and, finally, Joseph Wagner will run for the Board of Finance as a first-timer.

Notably absent from the ballot is Malsbenden himself, who has been in town government since his tenure on the Planning and Zoning Commission began in the 1970s. He has served

on the Board of Selectmen since 2001, and has chaired the DTC since 2004.

When asked why he declined to seek reelection to the BOS, Malsbenden chuckled, "I keep getting asked that question." He then explained, "I just don't want to be that active in my 70s." (Malsbenden will be 70 by the time the election rolls around.)

"It's time to go," Malsbenden figured.

The Democrats already have one event planned to raise campaign funds. On Nov. 1, two days before the election, they will hold their annual spaghetti dinner at St. Joseph's Polish Club, 395 South Main St., Colchester. Details have not been completely firmed up, but Malsbenden said the event typically runs about \$10.

From the Editor's Desk

Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

I've written in the past about my fondness for the "News of the Weird" types of stories. Usually, I read these tales of strange, but true, events on a national wire service, and the stories rarely come from Connecticut.

But I was in luck this week; by the time Tuesday afternoon rolled around I had come across not one but two bizarre stories involving animals, from right here in the Nutmeg State.

The first one made national news, and for good reason. For many of us, when we hear the term "bird-fighting," we think of cock-fighting, that horribly inhumane (and thankfully illegal, at least in the U.S.) event at which people gather around, place bets, and watch roosters attack each other, often to the death.

Down in Shelton, though, a group of people apparently decided bird-fighting needn't be limited to just one species. According to the Associated Press, police Sunday arrested 19 people from Connecticut, Rhode Island and Massachusetts and seized 150 birds (as well as \$8,000) in a house raid. Most of the birds were saffron finches, and a few were canaries.

Yes, that's right: saffron finches and canaries.

A saffron finch is a small, usually yellow bird, originating from South America. They're about five and a half to six inches in size. And as for a canary....well, think of Tweetie Pie from the old Looney Tunes cartoons. These are small, small birds. People paid money to watch them fight?

The wife of the man who owned the home where the bird-fighting took place told the AP her husband and others trained the birds to fight and gave them some type of food, either protein or sugar, to make them hyper. The birds would fight for about 15 minutes, she said, pecking each other in the legs, head and eyes. (According to the state DEP, some of the birds seized had sustained injuries, including blindness, and may have to be euthanized.) Apparently, the fights had been taking place for years, and are popular in the region.

It was an unbelievable story, and also a sick and twisted one. I think bird-fighting is a sick practice in general, and that's when it involves roosters. These are tiny, defenseless little birds. I can't fathom obtaining pleasure by warping them — feeding them sugar to make them hyper — and then watching them fight

one another to the point of severe injury. Sick, sick stuff.

The news of the bird-fighting broke on Monday and, like I said, it made national news. And Connecticut made national headlines again on Tuesday, for another strange story involving animals. According to the AP, New Britain resident Angel Rolon told Hartford police he lost control of his SUV Monday after two baby pet snakes escaped from his pocket as he was driving.

Rolon told officers the snakes slithered near the gas and brake pedals, and he and a passenger tried to catch them, the AP reported. The SUV veered into some parked cars and then overturned.

That's just beyond bizarre — if it's even true; police haven't been able to find the snakes, according to the AP story. If it's not true, then that's a pretty creative way to explain a car accident to the police. If it *is* true....putting snakes in your pocket? Really? And then driving??? What part of that seemed like a good idea?

* * *

As editor of the *Rivereast*, I see all those little event notices and church/library/senior center listings before they get published. I've come across some pretty interesting events during my time here, and also seen some real deals. One of the best deals returns this weekend, to Portland.

After taking the month off, Trinity Episcopal Church, located at 345 Main St., is bringing back its Sunday breakfasts. Each week, from 8-9 a.m., people can choose one of four different breakfasts: an omelet with four cheeses, two eggs (prepared any way you like them), two pieces of French toast or two plain, blueberry or strawberry pancakes. Each of the meals also includes juice, coffee, toast and bacon. The egg meals cost \$4 each; the French toast and pancakes cost \$3 each. You can't beat those prices. And all proceeds go to the church's Youth Group Fund.

I frequently come across such bargain-priced meals in the senior center listings (and some tasty-sounding meals, too; I notice that next week, for example, seniors in the area are getting kielbasa one day). But Trinity is offering a bargain meal you don't have to be a senior to partake of.

All you have to do is get up early on Sunday.

Hebron GOP Candidate Slate Features Mix of Veterans, Rookies

by Sarah McCoy

The Republican slate of candidates for this fall's election features some familiar faces as well as newcomers to the political scene.

"It's a very balanced slate," Republican Town Committee (RTC) Chair Donna McCalla said earlier this week. "And, more than that, each person is bringing with them a very specific set of skills to the board they are running for. People actually have solid qualifications for the position they're seeking."

Dan Larson, a current member of the Board of Finance, is the party's lone candidate for Board of Selectmen (BOS).

"I just felt that this was the best way I could help my community at the time in my life," Larson said of his decision to run.

Larson has been involved with the town since moving to Hebron in the 1970s. In addition to his experience on the finance board, Larson has also served as Fire Chief, Deputy Fire Marshall and on the Board of Tax Appeals (the prior name of the Board of Assessment Appeals).

According to town charter, no one party can have more than three candidates seated on the BOS. Since Gayle Mulligan and Jeff Watt, both Republicans, have another two years in their terms on the board, the RTC is running only one selectman candidate this year.

Voters will vote for two candidates, with the top two being elected to the board.

Will Moorcroft, who has served on the BOS since being appointed a year and a half ago to

fill David Schoolcraft's position, will not seek an additional term. Instead, the father of three is running for the local Board of Education.

"With Hebron's budget situation the Board of Ed[ucation] plays such a key role," Moorcroft said this week. "I think that I have transferable skills from my time in other roles that could be beneficial to the board."

Moorcroft and his wife moved to town in 1998. He began serving the town almost immediately, first on the Planning and Zoning Committee (PZC) for eight years, and then the BOS. In addition, he's been a frequent volunteer at the Montessori School that his children either attended or currently attend.

"My wife and I have always been active with our kids at school," he said. "I want to continue to be an active parent and felt that now was the right time to see if I could do that on the Board of Education."

Moorcroft is joined on the ticket by Kathy Shea and Tina Blinn. Shea has been on the BOE for the past four years and is seeking reelection this fall. Blinn, who said she moved to town last August largely for the town's strong educational reputation, is looking to foster her own children's education as well as those in the community. "I feel that I'm a reasonable person and I'm willing to do my homework to make the best decisions for the whole community," she said.

Three candidates will be elected to the BOE.

Two placeholders are currently on the Republican slate for Board of Finance (BOF), but, according to McCalla, it won't stay this way for long. Tom Sousa is serving as a placeholder for Philip LoBianco. LoBianco is presently serving on the BOF, but he was on vacation "in the woods of Maine," McCalla said, and was unable to file the necessary paperwork in time for the caucus.

"Phil currently serves as the Board of Finance's vice chair," McCalla said. "He's very interested in continuing to serve there was just little time to get the paperwork in place to get him on the ballot without a placeholder."

According to state statute parties can endorse candidates at their caucus held for one week, typically in July. After that time parties can only swap candidates or remove them not add. Placeholders are commonly used to hold the spot for candidates not able to file the paperwork in time for the caucus.

The other listed candidate for the BOF is former board chair Brendan Shea. Shea is a placeholder for a candidate yet to be determined.

McCalla reported that several individuals came forth for the BOF at the last minute. Rather than making a hasty decision, McCalla said, the RTC Vacancy Committee will evaluate each of the interested candidates and make a recommendation in the coming weeks.

Debra Dee is seeking a second term on the

RHAM Board of Education. Also running for the regional school board is Laura Steiner. Helen Reardon is listed on the ticket, though she is also a placeholder for a candidate yet to be determined.

Voters can cast their ballot for three RHAM BOE candidates with the top three being elected to serve.

Natalie Wood is seeking another term on the PZC. She has served on the commission in an alternate or full-member capacity since moving to town in 1997. Also running for the commission is Terry Piggott.

Three candidates will be elected to this post.

Brenda Casoni is running for PZC alternate. Jardo Opocensky is seeking reelection to the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA), while Henry Sawicki is seeking full-member status after serving as an alternate for the past term.

Three candidates will be elected to the ZBA. Nicole Thorspecken, a recent college graduate and soon-to-be law student, is seeking election as ZBA alternate.

Valerie Watt, wife of current selectman Jeff Watt, is running for Board of Assessment Appeals. Voters will vote for two candidates at this post and two will be elected.

This year's municipal elections will be held Tuesday, Nov. 3. Voting will take place at Hebron Elementary School, 92 Church St., from 6 a.m. until 8 p.m.

Marlborough Republicans Endorse Candidate Slate

by Sarah McCoy

The Republican Town Committee (RTC) caucused on Monday to endorse candidates for this fall's election, and filled up the ticket with a mix of veterans and political newcomers.

RTC Chair Ken Hjulstrom said after the caucus that he was pleased with the turnout for individuals interested in serving. "With all the activity around the budget process this past year, I think it caused more people to either reaffirm their commitment to serving Marlborough or spur interest in new people who saw the needs in town," he said.

The Republicans endorsed Clifford Dennis and Richard Shea for the Board of Finance (BOF). Dennis currently serves as an alternate to the board.

Voters will cast their ballot for two BOF candidates and two will be elected.

Susan Leser and Pasquale Amodeo are both running to serve as BOF alternates. They both currently serve as full members to the board.

Carole Shea, Sue McFarland and Jack Murray are all running for election to the local Board of Education. All are new candidates to the board.

Voters will vote for three candidates with the top four earning a spot on the board.

Sandy Sudduth and Riva Clark are seeking spots on the RHAM Board of Education. Both are new candidates. Voters will vote for two candidates and two will be elected.

Hjulstrom and David Morganson are running for Board of Assessment Appeals. Two individuals will be elected and voters will cast their ballot for two candidates.

Jim Fox is seeking reelection to his post on the Planning Commission. He is joined

on the ticket by Dieter Zimmer. Zimmer is running for the Planning Commission after nearly 20 years on the RHAM Board of Education.

Carl Carlson is running for Planning Commission Alternate.

Three individuals will be elected as full members to the Planning Commission and two alternates will be elected.

Jeffrey Tracey, Scott Miller and Emily Gaudinski were endorsed by the Republican Party as candidates for the Zoning Commission. Miller currently serves as chair of the commission.

Voters will elect three candidates to this commission.

Michael De'Corleto is seeking a position as Zoning Commission Alternate.

Al Donze and Dick Proch are running for the Zoning Board of Appeals. Both are new candidates. Voters will vote for three candidates and three will be elected.

Gordon Isleib is running for Zoning Board of Appeals Alternate.

According to state statutes local parties must have held their meeting to nominate candidates between July 21 and 28. Once this roster is set parties can no longer add names but can swap or delete candidates.

Hjulstrom did note that some individuals listed on the roster are placeholders for future candidates but did not intend to run themselves. Hjulstrom would not confirm which candidates are placeholders but stated that most names are "true candidates." Municipal elections will be held Nov. 3. The Community Room at Marlborough Elementary School, 25 School Rd., will be open from 6 a.m.-8 p.m. for eligible voters to cast their ballot.

Candidate for First Selectman Tops GOP Slate in Portland

by Michael McCoy

At its caucus Monday night, the Portland Republican Town Committee (RTC) voted forth a slate that included something that has not been there in six years: a candidate for First Selectman.

Sandra Downes announced her candidacy for First Selectman just over a month ago. Though she tops the ticket, Downes is just one of many candidates the RTC is quite jazzed about. The GOP unanimously voted forth the ticket Monday night at American Legion Post 69.

Last month, the Republicans' nominating committee voted 5-0 to back Downes. A resident since 2006, Downes has practiced law for 19 years and is currently senior counsel and assistant vice president at The Hartford's Corporate Law Group. In addition to her Juris Doctor, she also holds bachelor's degrees in psychology and education.

"We certainly are excited to have a First Selectman candidate, especially with the caliber of Sandy Downes," said RTC Chair Cindy Varricchio. She praised Downes for her "strong educational background" and her vision. Varricchio also lauded her "new perspective."

Varricchio also figured Downes "doesn't owe any favors to anyone." (However, she also explicitly said she wasn't suggesting current First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield did.)

Completing the GOP's slate of Board of Selectmen (BOS) candidates are two veterans and two new faces. Carl Chudzik, who is finishing up his first term, will run again, as will John Anderson, who has sat on the board since 2003.

The fresh faces include Thomas Nash, who is a Senior Risk Management Analyst for American Eagle Federal, along with mortgage broker Matthew Rice. Both are relatively new

to town.

The lone Board of Education incumbent is Brenna Kosicki, who has filled Mark Bucheri's vacancy since he passed away last fall. Kosicki, no stranger to education, is the Director of Special Education for the Hebron School District. Newcomer Joseph Dinegar also knows his way around a classroom. The candidate has spent the last six years teaching chemistry in Hartford. Other candidates include Jennifer Godwin and Christopher Orcutt.

Other candidates include incumbent Peter Castelli and Marabeth Gildersleeve, who are vying for spots on the Board of Assessment Appeals. There are two candidates running for the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA). Richard Varricchio (Cindy Varricchio's husband), is seeking election. He is a newly-certified surgical technologist and has been active on the Senior Citizen Advisory Board and the Boy Scouts of America.

Also running for the ZBA is Jack Sterry. Though new to the office, he is certainly not a new name to residents. Sterry served on the Board of Assessment Appeals for 40 years, and was just honored as Portland's Republican of the Year last Friday.

"We have a blend of people who have been here all their life," Varricchio said, as well as newer residents "who have some fresh ideas to bring to the table." She referred to the resumes of the candidates as "diverse and impressive."

Varricchio said the party will release a schedule of events and fundraisers before long, though she did not have any conclusive dates at press time. However, she said the party would hold a cocktail party in town, and would have tables at the Portland Brownstone Festival and the Portland Agricultural Fair.

Portland Democrat Ticket Full of Incumbents

by Michael McCoy

One thing is certain: no one can chide the Portland Democrats this fall for lack of experience.

Monday night at the Senior Center, the Portland Democratic Town Committee (DTC) unanimously voted forward its party ticket. It is composed of 12 incumbents.

Leading the ticket is 27-year-resident Susan Bransfield, who will once again seek the office of First Selectman, a position she has held since 2003.

Deputy First Selectman Brian Flood will also seek reelection, along with colleagues Mark Finkelstein, Sharon Peters and Kathleen Richards (who is also the DTC chair). Their tenures on the Board of Selectmen range from four to seven years.

On the school board front, Andrea Alfano, Rosemary Murphy-Woitowitz, and Ben Srb will all try to reclaim their seats. If elected, this will be the first full term for Alfano and Srb, as they are both currently filling vacancies.

Two more incumbents will run for Board of Assessments Appeals, including current chairman Richard P. Murphy. Also seeking reelection is David O'Brien. Finally, two more familiar faces will run for Zoning Board of Appeals. Richard Basso is seeking the 2009 term, while Gloria Gdovin is looking to keep her 2010 seat, which will expire in 2010.

"It's great," Richards said of the experience-stacked ticket. "I'm happy."

Speaking to the knowledge that could potentially return, she said, "It's important for the town."

Sometimes party leaders have a hard time finding citizens willing to volunteer for town boards, but Richards said in this case it took little convincing. "I guess that shows they enjoy what they're doing," she ventured.

When asked to assess the work of her and her fellow BOS members, who have now worked together for four years, Richards said, "We do work together to make the town a better place to live."

Of course, this year, the reelection of a Democrat First Selectman is not a given, as the Republicans are running a candidate for the first time since 2003. "I think it's good to have an opponent for Susan," Richards opined. "That's healthy."

However, Richards put her faith in Bransfield, who she credited as being a uniting figure in the party, and codifying the Democrats' morale.

Richards also said the Democrats looked forward to nurturing the Portland Town Place development.

Though Richards said Democratic fundraisers will be planned between now and the election, no details had been firmed up by press time.

Colchester GOP Chair Tops Slate of Candidates

by Michael McCoy

Tuesday night, the Colchester Republicans unanimously backed their slate of candidates, which is led by their own chairman.

The Republican ticket was endorsed unanimously by the party Tuesday night at Colchester Town Hall. Gregg Schuster will make a bid for first selectman this fall. Schuster, a 20-year resident was previously on the Colchester Business Development Task Force and is currently a Zoning Board of Appeals alternate. He is also the chairman of the Colchester Republican Town Committee (RTC).

Behind Schuster are Stan Soby and Greg Cordova, who are hoping to keep their seats on the Board of Selectmen.

Also looking to retain her seat is Board of Education member Betsy Ciccone. She will run alongside Mitch Koziol and Ron Goldstein, who is currently vice chairman of the Board of Finance.

In the Board of Assessment Appeals race, Dave Anderson, the current chairman, is running once again, as is newcomer Gary Harris.

"I'm excited about the whole ticket," Schuster said. However, he said that, if pressed to specify, he holds a certain affinity for the candidacy of Rob Tarlov, who is making a bid for Board of Finance (BOF). Schuster said Tarlov has been serving on town boards for the last 20 years, most recently on the Water and Sewer Commission. "I would not call them glamorous commissions," said Schuster, who seemed excited to see Tarlov take a role with more visibility.

Appropriately enough, Tarlov works as a financial advisor.

Schuster said it was a hard process to put together the "slate of experienced candidates." Furthermore, he promised none of these were simply placeholders, but qualified individuals. "We're not just throwing warm bodies out there," he laughed, adding more earnestly, "These are people with great ideas." Elaborating, he said the party had a vision for education, keeping taxes reasonable and expanding businesses in town.

He said that, if elected as first selectman, one priority of his was to hire an economic development coordinator, someone whose "sole job is to get businesses in Colchester." Schuster said this would lead to not only increased services but also an increased tax base to the town.

When asked if the seemingly disparate state of the Colchester Democrats could work as an advantage to the Republicans, Schuster responded, "I think the Republicans have a great opportunity." However, he said this had nothing to do with what is going on with the Democrats, but rather a wealth of virtues on the part of the candidates.

In a press release issued Tuesday, Schuster said, "I am thrilled to receive the unanimous endorsement of my party for First Selectman. We have put up a great slate of candidates and I look forward to taking our message to the voters."

Schuster said events and fundraisers would heat up after Labor Day. But, their biggest fundraiser is actually their next one: the annual gold tournament at Chanticlair Golf Course. That event, open to all who wish to register, will begin at 7 a.m. on Aug. 22.

Norwich Man Charged in Colchester Stabbing

by Sarah McCoy

A Norwich man was arrested earlier this month after an altercation at a party put one man in the hospital, police said.

Brian Duhamel, 20, of Laurel Hill Rd., Norwich, was charged with first- and third-degree assault, first- and second-degree reckless endangerment, unlawful restraint, threatening and two counts of disorderly conduct on July 16, after allegedly becoming involved in a physical altercation with two other individuals.

Just after 3 a.m. State Police responded to a call reporting a stabbing at 127 Brainard Rd. in Colchester, according to police reports.

Upon arriving at the residence State Police from Troop K and the Major Crimes Unit discovered that Daniel Fitzgerald, 18, of Buckley Hill Road, had been stabbed with a

knife, police said. He received medical treatment from Backus Hospital and was later released, a hospital spokesman said.

The second victim, Brian St. John, 19, of Pine Brook Road, did not require medical attention, police said.

State Police said they arrested Duhamel at the scene without incident.

Since his arrest, prosecutors have adjusted the charges against Duhamel to, "more accurately reflect the incidents that night," Lt. Paul Vance, from the State Police Public Information Office, said. One charge of disorderly conduct has been dropped, as has the second-degree reckless endangerment charge.

Duhamel was arraigned at Norwich Superior Court July 17 and held on a \$200,000 bond. He was due back in court Thursday, July 30, police said.

Marlborough Police News

7/24: Faith Watrous, 36, of 30B Freestone Ave., Portland, was charged with third-degree assault, second-degree criminal mischief, and disorderly conduct, State Police said.

Portland Police News

7/18 — Michael Lane Jr., 40, of 21 Commerce St., was charged with disorderly conduct and third-degree criminal mischief, Portland Police said.

7/20 — Richard Hladky, 56, of 22 Middlesex Ave. Ext., was charged with second-degree breach of peace and second-degree threatening, police said.

7/21 — John Cichon, 30, of 38 Presidential Dr., Quincy, MA, was charged with failure to appear, police said.

7/21 — Ashley Giannotti, 19, of 1 Bryant Rd, East Hampton, was charged with DUI and traveling too fast for conditions, police said.

7/22 — Jenna Poitras, 25, of 4 Coe Ave., was charged with failure to appear, police said.

7/25 — Jordan Clark, 18, of 85 Chestnut St., Middletown, was charged with violation of probation, police said.

Woman Charged After Alleged Sexual Encounter with Local Teen in East Hampton

by Michael McCoy

A Marlborough woman is free on bail after an alleged sexual encounter with a 13-year-old female East Hampton resident.

Mariel Hautman, 19, of 15 Emily Rd., in Marlborough, was arrested and charged with second-degree sexual assault and risk of injury to a minor on July 10. According to documents on file at Middletown Superior Court, multiple sources reported that the alleged victim performed oral sex on Hautman.

According to court documents, East Hampton Police Officer Jared Boynton investigated the case, which began on Feb. 24 with a report by Rose Ann Wanczyk, a clinician at Middletown's Community Health Center.

Boynton's report said Wanczyk contacted him after having a session with the alleged victim earlier that day and said a sexual encounter had taken place. According to the report, the girl had told her best friend about the incident during a sleepover the night after the encounter. The friend became uncomfortable and told her mother, who, in turn, told the mother of the alleged victim. The 13-year-old and her mother then told Wanczyk, who called police, court documents said.

Boynton interviewed the alleged victim on Feb. 24, according to court documents. According to the girl, she invited Hautman and Hautman's friend, Adam Miller, 20, to her East Hampton home during a Feb. 18 phone conversation. The couple came over around 10:30 the following morning. After watching television for a couple hours, the girl invited the couple to her bedroom.

A conversation between Hautman and the girl led to the topic of ex-boyfriends, and, in Hautman's case, an ex-girlfriend, court documents said. The alleged victim said the conversation "got them both excited" and then declared she would perform oral sex on Hautman.

Hautman replied, "Go for it!" After performing the act, the girl told police Hautman "got dressed and looked like she enjoyed everything," according to court documents. The girl told police she was unsure as to what Miller did during the act, but that when she looked at him, he was staring back from across

the room, court documents said.

The three then played *Guitar Hero* on the Wii, the girl made lunch, and then Miller and Hautman left, according to court documents.

During an interview with Boynton, Hautman said she met the victim last fall in gymnastics class and "became close friends and talked almost every day," according to court documents. She also said she visited the victim at her home two times the previous week.

Hautman's testimony primarily differs from the alleged victim's in that once the girl brought up the oral sex, Hautman said she responded, "What?" and the victim "walked over and climbed onto her." Hautman told Boynton she thought to herself, "this can't be happening," got nervous and "may have passed out." She also told Boynton she "did not remember feeling anything," court documents said.

Hautman told Boynton that after the girl asked her "how was it?," she "became scared" because she realized she had just had sex with a 13-year-old, according to court documents.

During his testimony, Miller told Boynton he was "apprehensive" about the visit, since he knew the victim's age. He corroborated Hautman's testimony, saying she "was lying in a 'catatonic state'" during the encounter, according to court documents.

Miller told Boynton that at one point during the sex, he said, "Come on guys, are you done yet?" He also said he "felt very uncomfortable about what he observed."

Miller, a Hebron resident, was not charged with anything. However, police applied for an arrest warrant for Miller, for the charge of risk of injury to a minor, but the court denied it, according to court documents.

After appearing in court, Hautman made \$50,000 bail. She is scheduled to next appear in court on Aug. 11.

East Hampton Police Chief Matthew Reimondo said that while females are certainly charged with sexual assault less frequently than males, he added, "It's not unheard of," and suggested it may be an underreported crime.

Colchester Police News

7/23: Patrick Small, 54, of 435 Old Hebron Rd., was charged with DUI and traveling unreasonably fast, State Police said.

7/23: Daniel Garlia, 30, of 324 Jeffrey Rd., Willimantic, turned himself in on a warrant for second-degree failure to appear, State Police said.

7/23: Robert Barber, 67, of 116 Clark Hill Rd., East Hampton, was charged with DUI and traveling unreasonable fast, State Police said.

7/25: Christopher Day, 22, of 75 West Rd., was charged with DUI and improper display of license plate, State Police said.

7/26: Tabatha Black, 19, of 26 Moose Meadow Rd., Willington, was charged with possession of drug paraphernalia, interfering with a police officer and possession of a controlled substance, State Police said.

7/26: Owen Burgess, 28, of 111 Loomis Rd., was charged with third-degree assault and breach of peace, State Police said.

7/28: William McDonald, 67, of 29 Long Hill Rd., Andover, was charged with DWI and failure to drive right, State Police said.

East Hampton Police News

7/14 — William DiPietro IV, 19, of 26 Colchester Ave., was issued a ticket for littering, East Hampton Police said.

7/17 — Chris Stewart, 43, of 34 Iverness Ln., Middletown, was issued a ticket for having a dog with no rabies vaccination, police said.

7/19 — Peter A. Sorensen Jr., 27 of 2142 Durham Rd., Madison, was arrested for operating under the influence of alcohol, failure to drive right and passing in a no-passing zone, police said.

7/20 — Todd N. Hatfield, 43, of 37 Fern Ln., was arrested for misuse of marker plate and failure to display front plate, police said.

7/20 — Ashley E. Schonagel, 19, of 29 West High St., was arrested pursuant to a warrant for fourth-degree larceny, conspiracy to commit fourth-degree larceny, fraudulent use of an automated teller machine and third-degree identity theft, police said.

7/21 — Kristin A. Chapone, 19, of 4 Depot Hill Rd., was arrested pursuant to a warrant for disorderly conduct and third-degree criminal mischief, police said.

7/23 — Robert P. Schools, 42, of 184 West High St., was issued a ticket for having an unsecure load, police said.

Weekend Stabbing in Colchester Sends Man to the Hospital

by Sarah McCoy

A Colchester man was arrested on Sunday for allegedly stabbing another man in the neck and left tricep.

Calvin Nyack, 41, of 115 Prospect Hill Rd., was arrested just before 11 p.m. Sunday, July 26, when State Police responded to a report of an assault at a home on Mill Hill Road. According to state police, troopers found Chad Comeolattaro, 46, of 107 Mill Hill Rd., with multiple stab wounds.

The incident reportedly occurred at Comeolattaro's home.

Comeolattaro was transported by ambu-

lance to Backus Hospital for emergency surgery and was still being treated as of Wednesday. He was listed in stable condition, a hospital spokesman said.

Nyack fled the scene and was soon located and arrested, police said. He was charged with second-degree assault, second-degree reckless endangerment and disorderly conduct, police said.

Nyack was arraigned at Norwich Superior Court on Monday, July 27, police said. He is free on bond and due back in court Wednesday, Aug. 19.

Obituaries

East Hampton

John Wall Swanson

John "Jack" Wall Swanson, 82, of West Hartford, beloved husband of Natalie (Prizzi) Swanson, died Wednesday, July 22, at St. Francis Hospital. Born Sept. 7, 1926, the son of the late John Arthur and Eva (Wall) Swanson, he spent his childhood in Portland.

Jack served in the U.S. Navy as a 3rd class Petty Officer during World War II. He raised his family in East Hampton and was a communicant of St. Patrick Church where he and Natalie were married an impressive 57 years ago. Jack was self-employed for many years and then retired to West Hartford. He loved "the city" and was a communicant of St. Peter Claver Church in West Hartford. He enjoyed many years as a Democratic moderator at Braeburn School. He attended many Conard High School functions and was a true Chieftain fan.

Jack's engaging personality and sense of humor will be missed by all of his family and friends. A special thank you to Drs. Philip Karanian, Daniel Girardi and Steven Lane. They not only took great care of Jack but engaged him in banter that he loved so much.

Besides his wife, Natalie, he leaves his children, George Swanson of Ludlow, VT, Jane S. Olney of Louisville, KY, and Anne S. Condon and her husband Bill of West Hartford. Jack leaves five grandchildren who were the apple of his blue eyes, Eric, Jacob and Wesley Swanson, and Billy and Kyleigh Condon. He also leaves his sister, Mary Lynch and her husband, Robert of Cromwell; his sister-in-law, Annette Bengston of West Palm Beach, FL; and several nieces and nephews.

He was predeceased by his brother, Richard Swanson.

Friends called at the Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton, on Saturday, July 25. The funeral procession left the funeral home on Saturday morning, followed by the funeral liturgy in St. Patrick Church in East Hampton. Burial followed in St. Patrick Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the American Heart Association, 1 Union St. No. 301, Robbinsville, NJ 08691-4183, or the American Lung Association, 45 Ash St., East Hartford, CT 06108.

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

Colchester

Katherine Fuchs

Katherine "Kay" (Sargento) Fuchs, 96, of Colchester, formerly of Wethersfield, wife of the late Richard Fuchs, Sr. died Friday, July 24, at a local convalescent home. Born in Hartford, she lived in Wethersfield since 1940 before moving to Colchester a few years ago.

She is survived by two sons, Robert Fuchs of New Britain and George Fuchs of Rocky Hill and several grandchildren and great grandchildren.

She was predeceased by her son, Richard J. Fuchs, Jr.

We'll always remember her as one who loved all things chocolate. Eating a piece of chocolate cake will never be the same.

Her granddaughter, Alesia Alicata, would like to thank the staff at Apple Healthcare in Colchester for their loving care and support.

The funeral was Tuesday, July 28, with a Mass of Christian Burial in Corpus Christi Church, 601 Silas Deane Highway, Wethersfield. Burial in Rose Hill Memorial Park, Rocky Hill. There were no calling hours.

D'Esopo Funeral Chapel, Wethersfield, is entrusted with the arrangements. For online expressions of sympathy, visit www.desopo.com.

Colchester

Roy Theodore Dudzic

Roy Theodore Dudzic, 73, of Colchester, passed away Sunday morning, July 26. Born Nov. 9, 1935, in Glastonbury, he was the son of the late Mitchell and Helen (Stec) Dudzic.

Mr. Dudzic served proudly with the US Army and went on to work for Pratt & Whitney Aircraft for many years before his retirement as foreman in 1985. In his spare time, he loved to fish and bowl and he enjoyed watching westerns, especially those featuring John Wayne. Mr. Dudzic was a longtime member of St. Joseph's Polish Society in Colchester.

He is survived by his loving companion of 38 years, Vera "Vickie" Burchards of Colchester; two children, Deborah Murach and her husband, Boleslaus of New London and Roy T. Dudzic Jr. of Taylors, SC; a granddaughter, Jacklyn Salsbury; his sister, Nancy Ponchak of Naples, FL; and numerous extended family members and friends.

In lieu of flowers, donations in his memory may be made to Middlesex Hospital Hospice and Palliative Care, 28 Crescent St., Middletown, CT 06457.

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

For online condolences, visit www.auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

Colchester

James Joseph Huron

James Joseph Huron, 60, of San Francisco and formerly of Colchester, passed away peacefully on Thursday, July 2, at Maitri Compassionate Care in San Francisco. He was born in New London and raised in Colchester.

He attended Colchester public schools through eighth grade and graduated from St. Bernard's High School in New London in 1967. He received his Bachelor's degree in Pre-Law from The College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, MA, in 1971. He attended the University of California's Hastings College of Law in San Francisco where he received his Juris Doctorate in 1973. He was licensed to practice law in Connecticut in 1974.

In 1982, James returned to live in San Francisco. He was an active member of The Church of the Holy Redeemer where he served as eucharistic minister for many years. He was an avid stamp collector and a member of the American Philatelic Society.

He was predeceased by his life partner of 24 years, Elmar Lins.

He is survived by his devoted parents, Dorothy and Joseph Huron of Worcester, MA, and Jupiter, FL, formerly of Colchester; a daughter, Laura Huron, of New York City; a son, Matthew Huron and his fiancé, Angela Dombrowski, of San Francisco; and a sister, Donna Huron Marosy, her husband, John Paul Marosy, and their son, Martin Huron Marosy, of Worcester, MA. He also leaves his loving friend and the mother of his children, Geri Bosco of San Francisco, and numerous, dearly beloved cousins and friends.

Family and friends are invited to attend James' memorial Mass to be held at St. Andrews Catholic Church in Colchester on Saturday, Aug. 15, at 11 a.m. Internment of James' ashes will follow at the new St. Andrew's Cemetery. A repast will then be held at the St. Joseph's Polish Society.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to Maitri Compassion Care, 401 Dubose Ave., San Francisco, CA 94117, www.maitri.com.

Hebron

Virginia Davis

Virginia "Ginny" (Chodorowski) Davis, 70, of Hebron, beloved wife for 42 years of Robert F. Davis, died Sunday, July 26, at Harrington Court, Colchester. She was born in Brooklyn, NY, daughter of the late Zigmund and Caroline (Sokolowski) Chodorowski and had lived in Hartford for over 35 years before moving to Hebron eight years ago.

Ginny was a para-professional at Kennelly School, Hartford, for over 15 years as well as a former president of their P.T.A. She was a charter member of The Women of the Moose, Hartford Chapter 2115, a longtime communicant of St. Lawrence O'Toole Church, and a daycare provider at her home for 15 years.

Besides her husband she is survived by a son and daughter-in-law, Robert F. Davis Jr. and Bonnie of Andover; a daughter and son-in-law, Mary Beth Colletti and James of Hebron; four grandchildren, Joey and Dylan Colletti and Austin and Meghan Davis; a brother, Thomas Chodorowski and his wife Shirley of Florida and several nieces and nephews.

The funeral will be Saturday, Aug. 1, at 9 a.m. from The Dillon-Baxter Funeral Home, 1276 Berlin Tpke., Wethersfield, followed by a Mass of Christian Burial at 10 a.m. in St. Lawrence O'Toole Church, 494 New Britain Ave., Hartford. Burial will follow in Cedar Hill Cemetery, Hartford. Friends may call today, Friday, July 31, from 4-8 p.m., at the funeral home.

Contributions in her memory may be made to Moose Charities, Mooseheart, IL 60539.

To share a memory with the family, visit www.dillonbaxter.com.

Marlborough

Walter G. Hale Sr.

Walter "Walt" G. Hale Sr., 74, passed away unexpectedly at home on Tuesday, July 28. Walt was born Aug. 2, 1934, in Wolcott, VT. He moved to Marlborough in 1967.

Throughout his working years he was employed by Pratt & Whitney, Flanagan Brothers, and co-owned H&W Hale Brothers Trucking with his brother Howard. In his retirement years he worked part-time at East Hampton Ace Hardware. Walt enjoyed bowling, snowmobiling, NASCAR racing, Red Sox, cards and spending time with his family and grandchildren.

Walt was the son of the late Walter and Louva Hale of St. Johnsbury, VT. He was predeceased by his wife, Barbara Geneva (Manzo) Hale in 1994. He was also predeceased by his brothers Glendon, Donald, Kenneth and Stanley, and sisters Patricia and Bonita "Bonnie."

Walt is survived by his daughter and son-in-law, Terrie and Greg Hagggett, and his two sons and their wives, Walter and Christine Hale Jr. and Alan and Teresa Hale; his grandchildren, Marisa, Cole, Anthony, Nicholas and Lizzie, all of Marlborough. He is also survived by his brother and sister-in-law, Howard and Phylles Hale of Boynton Beach, FL; sister and brother-in-law, Marilyn and Louis St. Hilaire of West Burke, VT; sister and brother-in-law, Cheryl and Howard Jacobs of Manchester; brother and sister-in-law, James and Darlene Hale of Danville, VT; sister-in-law Ernestine Hale of St. Johnsbury, VT; sister-in-law Jane Hale, also of St. Johnsbury, VT; and many nieces, nephews, extended family and friends.

Funeral services will be held Saturday, Aug. 1 at 11 a.m. in the Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton. Burial will follow with Military Honors in the family plot in Marlboro Cemetery. Friends may call at the Spencer Funeral Home today, Friday, July 31, from 5-8 p.m. and Saturday morning from 10 a.m. until the time of the service.

In lieu of flowers memorial contributions may be made to the Weiss Hospice Unit, c/o the Development Office, 55 Crescent St., Middletown, CT 06457.

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

Colchester

Gilbert Hoffmeister

Gilbert Hoffmeister, 93, of Colchester, beloved husband of Mary (Lightcap) Hoffmeister, passed away Tuesday evening, July 28, at home, surrounded by his loving family. Born Aug. 31, 1915, in Philadelphia, PA, he was the son of the late Roy and Miriam (Gilbert) Hoffmeister.

He enlisted in the Army in November of 1942, proudly served during World War II with the 20th Armored Division until his honorable discharge in February of 1946. Mr. Hoffmeister earned his HVAC Certificate and went on to work as a civil engineer for many years before his retirement.

Before moving to Connecticut in 2000, Gilbert and Mary had lived in Dunnellon, FL, for 20 years and King of Prussia, PA, for the 25 years prior to that. Having a great love of music, he enjoyed being a tenor soloist as well as playing the cello. In recent years, he joined Baron-Smith-Golec American Legion Post 156 in Moodus.

In addition to his loving wife of 67 years, he is survived by three children and their spouses, Susan and Gary Rodimon of East Haddam and Lloyd and Laura Hoffmeister and Barry and Kathy Hoffmeister, all of California; seven grandchildren; five step-grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren; and numerous extended family members and friends.

Graveside services with full military honors will be observed at 10:30 a.m. Saturday, Aug. 1, at the State Veterans Cemetery, Bow Lane, Middletown. There are no calling hours.

In lieu of flowers, donations in his memory may be made to American Legion Post 156, P.O. Box 100, Moodus, CT 06469.

Care of arrangements has been entrusted to the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home of Colchester. For online condolences, visit www.auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

Portland

Herbert Edward Weldon Jr.

Herbert Edward "Ky" Weldon Jr., 61, of Portland, passed away on Tuesday, July 28, at Middlesex Hospital. Born in Southington, he was the son of the late Herbert E. and Alice (Saunders) Weldon.

Ky was a longtime resident of Portland and from 1972 to 1996 was a fireman and EMT for the Portland Volunteer Fire Department Company No. 3. He worked for the Southern New England Telephone Company for 20 years and after his retirement started a company called System Solutions Plus in Portland.

He is survived by two sons, Keith Weldon and his wife Ashley of Towson, MD, and Todd Weldon and his wife Beth of Cheshire; two brothers, Russell Weldon of Utah and Douglas Weldon of Connecticut; two sisters, Janice Ryan of Utah and Meredith Nyberg of Bristol; and a granddaughter, Sidney Weldon of Cheshire.

A funeral service will be held today, Friday, July 31, at 7 p.m. at the Doolittle Funeral Home, 14 Old Church St., Middletown, and interment will be at the convenience of the family. Friends may call Friday evening at the funeral home, from 5-7 p.m.

In lieu of flowers, friends may make donations in Ky's memory to the American Cancer Society, P.O. Box 1004, Meriden, CT 06450.

Messages of condolence may be sent to the family at www.doolittlefuneralservice.com.

Colchester

Shirley M. Hill

Shirley M. Hill, 86, formerly of Colchester, died April 10, at her home in Deland, FL. Shirley was retired from Aetna in Hartford.

She leaves her four sons, Michael J. Hill of Deland, FL; Peter G. Hill of Newport, RI; James Hill of Randolph, VT; and Raymond A. Hill of Deland, FL. She leaves 13 grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren.

Services will be held at St. Andrew's Church on Norwich Avenue in Colchester at 11 a.m. on Aug. 1.

In lieu of flowers, make all donations to Raymond Hill Trust, 102 Beech Tree Ridge, Killingworth, CT 06419.