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Clad in blue caps and gowns, members of the Bacon Academy Class of 2010 marched onto the field inside the high school's track last Thursday evening, June 17, for their graduation ceremony.

## Bacon Class of '10 Looks Back

by Katy Nally

As blue graduation caps were thrust into the air last Thursday, June 14, freshly graduated high school students congratulated each other with big smiles and a few tears, and together they said goodbye to Bacon Academy.

Claire Paisey, a member of Bacon's Class of 2010, said she was excited and not sad to be graduating. Next year, Claire will attend Manchester Community College.

John Dwyer agreed with Claire, adding, "I can be sad later." John said he plans to study chemistry at the University of Connecticut.

"I'm very glad to be done, not that I didn't like it," Sean Slocum added. Sean said he plans to study secondary education at Central Connecticut State University because "I had a lot of inspiration from the teachers at Bacon."

Thursday's commencement ceremony included speeches from Superintendent of Schools Karen Loiselle, Board of Education Chair Ron Goldstein, valedictorian Nick Joaquin, salutatorian Andrew DeVoe and Gilbert Lamb essayist Jacqueline Lagasse.

The keynote speech actually came from an assortment of school staff members and was played over the speaker system. Teachers and administrators had their chance to say goodbye to the Class of 2010 and impart bits of advice for the students.

Andrew, who kicked off the commencement speeches, began by reminding students that graduation was "both a beginning and an end

for us." He thanked both teachers and parents for their continued support "through these crazy years."

The salutatorian concluded with a bit of wisdom for his fellow students. "The journey of 1,000 miles begins with a single step," he said.

Jacqueline, the winner of the Gilbert Lamb Memorial Scholarship, spoke next and recounted her experience of performing a flute solo in the wind ensemble and the inspiration from music teacher Thomas Kessler that helped her through it.

When Kessler placed a sheet of music before her during practice, Jacqueline said her "thoughts raced" after reading the composer was John Philip Sousa. She said she became even more panicked when she realized "in bolded letters was the word 'solo,'" Jacqueline told Thursday's audience. After looking at the key signature, Jacqueline exclaimed "four sharps!"

But, she said Kessler remained calm and asked Jacqueline to sight-read the piece. As it was her first time playing the solo, Jacqueline said she made a multitude of mistakes and was reduced to a "quivering mass of a flute player."

However, Jacqueline said she accepted the challenge to master the solo and, with the help of Kessler, was eventually ready to perform. On the night of the concert, Jacqueline said it

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## EHHS Graduates Dance into Future

by Mike Thompson

Before they received their diplomas and tossed their caps into the air, members of the East Hampton High School Class of 2010 did one of the things they enjoyed most.

They got up and danced.

The brief dancing – set to the Miley Cyrus hit "Party in the USA" – came at the behest of East Hampton High School (EHHS) Principal Linda Berry, who in her speech at the Class of 2010's graduation ceremony Tuesday night, made mention of several moments in the past four years when students spontaneously began boogying down.

These moments included dancing on a dinner cruise in Washington, DC, the time an impromptu dance occurred when students were stuck in Middletown after the bus broke down on the way back from Washington and opted to shake their groove thing, and a moment at the senior dinner when students got down to the aforementioned Cyrus song.

Many of these moments, Berry cracked, are up on YouTube, in case parents want to check them out.

In her speech to the seniors and their family and friends, Berry also made note of EHHS' size, calling it a "small school" that's "truly unusual in its closeness.

"It may not be the *Cheers* bar," Berry added, "but it is a place where everyone knows your

name."

Board of Education Chairman Michael Vasquez also offered words to the students. He quoted late basketball coach and sports commentator Jim Valvano, who in a 1993 speech encouraged people to laugh, think and be moved to tears – even tears of joy – every day. "If you laugh, you think and you cry, that's a full day," Vasquez quoted Valvano as saying. "That's a heck of a day. You do that seven days a week, you're going to have something special."

Vasquez also told the seniors they will find that their EHHS community will come to be "a resource in your time of need and, more importantly, will always be your home."

Given those words, it was perhaps fitting the musical selection for the evening was the song "Bridge Over Troubled Water," performed by the 13-member EHHS senior choir.

Tuesday's graduation ceremony also included words by three students, starting with senior class president John Gordon, whose speech included pleasant memories of days gone by, including "participating in the Indiana Jones obstacle course, getting into trouble for trading Pokémon cards at recess, climbing on the jungle gym at Center School, and of course, how could I forget racing shopping carts at the ancient IGA mall?"

John noted that, over the years, some things

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The East Hampton High School senior choir performs "Bridge Over Troubled Water" at the Class of 2010 graduation ceremony Tuesday evening.

## Bacon Class cont. from Front Page

felt like “a butterfly net was loose in my stomach,” as she paced before the performance.

After taking the stage and getting through the piece, Jacqueline said she was “rewarded with a polite applause” from the audience. But the real reward was that Kessler “drove me to excel.”

“Had it not been for his faith in me, I would not have had the solo in the first place,” Jacqueline said. “Mr. Kessler inspired me to be a better player. ... He said to me, and I’ll never forget it, ‘Nice job kid.’ ... Those nice words coming from Mr. K, I’ll take it.”

Nick, the Class of 2010’s valedictorian, also drew on inspiration, but from a different source – Dr. Seuss. “And as you partake of the world’s bill of fare,” Nick recited, “that’s darned good advice to follow. Do a lot of spitting out the hot air and be careful what you swallow.” Seuss was a graduate of Nick’s soon-to-be college, Dartmouth.

Besides words to live by, Nick looked back at this own Bacon memories, such as the “school-wide games of hide and seek – I mean lockdowns,” the former “shanty town” that’s now the high school parking lot and last Halloween when several students dressed as the Joker from Batman. “We’ll appreciate them more with time,” Nick said.

Nick closed with another quote from a childhood favorite. “I love you, you love me, we’re one big happy family,” he said, referring to Barney, the purple dinosaur.

Goldstein too, reflected on his time at Bacon. As a member of the Class of 1985, Goldstein stood before his fellow Bacon students 25 years ago and spoke as the salutatorian.

As he did in 1985, Goldstein focused on passion. “It’s a very powerful notion, this thing called passion,” he remarked. Goldstein wished for both his classmates, and the Class of 2010 “that you will find your passion and even more importantly, you will follow it.”

Loiselle closed out the speeches. Her speech was based on the movie *Up in the Air* and she asked students how they would fill their hypothetical backpack as they embark on future plans. Some ideas from students included prom photos, soccer cleats and the school bus affectionately known as the “cheese wagon.”

“How will each of you fill your backpack,” Loiselle asked, when you “journey up in the air to reach astonishing new heights?”

On that note, diplomas were passed out, and Principal Jeffrey Mathieu proudly presented Bacon Academy’s Class of 2010.

Members of the Bacon Academy Class of 2010 are:

Matthew David Abbatomarco, \*Eimy Acevedo, Ashley Elizabeth Afonso, Holly Lauren Albani, Chantel Ashley Araujo, Nicho-

las Ashley, Autumn Ashley Avery, Meagan Rose Avery, \*Brian Michael Baker, \*Clayton Anthony Baldi, \*Frank Melvin Ball, \*Martin John Ball, Rachel L. Bandtlow, Andrew D. Bates, Casey Beaulieu, \*Ryan Kenneth Bennett, Casey Blackman, Kellen C. Blake, Tyler Bruce Blanchette, Erik S. Boornazian, Brendon Bourcier, \*Sarah Alexandria Bradner, \*Matthew Cotoner Brion, \*Jordan John Brown, \*Matthew Clayton Brown, Matthew Thomas Brown, Zachary William Brown, Danielle Marie Buckley;

Samantha Marie Cacioli, Luke Anthony Capezzone, Brooke Carissa Carlson, Taylor James Carpenter, Joseph Christopher Caruso, Alexandra Marie Catarino, Brian R. Chalmers, Taylor Alicia Chandler, Giovanna M. Chanona, Chelsea Marie Charbonnier, Elizabeth Amanda Ciccone, Jared Evan Clarke, Thomas Grant Cooper, Gino Michael Cordone, Michael D. Cordone, III, Mary Rose Corrado, William A. Culviner, Macy Lee Cwikla, Thomas Robert Dadona, Jaelyn Damato, Stephen Thomas Davis, Caitlin Renee Dean, Brandon W. Demar, Zachary F. Depka, Mallory Loving Derringer, Andrew DeVoe, Michael E. Dewey, Jesse James Dion, Matthew James Donnell, \*Quinn Duffy, \*Shelby Alexandra Dumond, John Dwyer, Kirby Amber Elmore, \*Elizabeth Dawn Engel;

\*Heather C. Ericksen, Daniel Faski, Victoria Catherine Fearon, Isaac Ferreira, \*Bonnie Marie Fiducia, Dylan Patrick Fitzgerald, Sphynser Alyse Flakes, Craig Frant, Garth Conrad Frantzen, Caleb Anthony Frappier, \*Alexandria Grace Fryer, \*Melanie J. Furman, Raymond L. Gabree, Zachary Josef Gadomski, Corey S. Gallagher, Julen Aris Gallicchio, Philip Robert Gaudette III, Chelsea Gordon, Christian Anthony Gortler, \*Sarah Elizabeth Gosse, James Tyler Grotjan, \*Robert MacKnight Guarino, Ryan Haagenesen, Theodore Rollins Hanlon, \*Alyssa Lorraine Hanson, Heather Elizabeth Harlow, Steven L. Hawes, Ryan M. Henk, \*Megan A. Hennessey, \*Andrew J. Hill, Brian M. Hogan, Caitlyn Hope, Alexander Howard, Jessica Sincerity Inkel, Alexandra Elizabeth Jennes, \*Nicholas John Richard Joaquin, Clayton J. Johnston;

\*Lauren Elizabeth Kaye, Gloria K. Kazibwe, Sean Michael Kelly, Samantha Lynn Kemmett, Daniel James Kenny, \*Carissa Lynn Kimball, Jeramey Peter Klein, \*Jessica Anne Kmetz, Christopher Lamar Knighton, Shawn Knowles, Steven M. Korten, Kayla Nicole Kramer, \*Danielle Elizabeth Krause, Andrew Kyser, Alyssa Marie Lacerte, \*Jacqueline Erin Lagasse, Quinton P. LaMontagne, \*Brittany Lenore Lane, Jeremy Brian Lankford, \*Kaitlyn Larew, Melissa Larabee, \*Joseph Eric LeCourt, \*Cheryl Anne Leith, Andria Lauren Limon, Jake Robert Loskant, Amir K. Lowen, Brandon T. Lukaszewski, Allison Marie Lynch,



**Board of Education member Betsy Ciccone, left, had the chance to call her daughter Elizabeth, left, up to the podium to receive a diploma. Elizabeth was one of 241 students to graduate from Bacon Academy last Thursday.**

Kevin Michael Lynch;

Jacob C. MacLean, Casey Erin Maher, \*David Michael Mahoney, John Maistrelis, Taylor Lindsay Maranda, Daniel Emile Marrara, Rhiannon Danielle Marselli, Nicolette Lin Martin, Kelsey Alba Matteucci, Justin A. McCabe, Elijah Nathaniel McCall, Kevin John McGill, Christopher Patrick McGrath, Jr., Christopher James Mecca, Emily Mednick, \*Matthew James Merkent, Patrick Wayne Mickens, Jr., Jessica Alexandra Milardo, \*Justin Miller, \*Elizabeth Minikowski, \*John G. Mohrlein III, Kyle Randall Montgomery, \*Robert J. Morgan, Matthew Charles Mulholland, Samuel L. Musinski, Nicholas Grady Nebelski, Tyler David Nordgren, Sebastian Arthur Olczyk, Tyler Conlin Overbeck;

\*Kristine Marie Pacholski, Claire Yvonne Paisey, Keith Allen Parent, Ross Gregory Parent, Daric Maran Parker, Richard A. Parker, Dale Michael Patchell, Kerrylee Brie Pelkey, Tabatha O. Peltier, Michael Percy, Adam C. Perez, Alexander Perez, Rubén Marti Pérez, Christian Peterson, \*Hannah Michelle Peterson, Brittany Nicole Pietrzak, Amanda Elyse Pizzoferrato, Nicole Alexandra Pizzoferrato, Jennifer M. Plecan, Jason Peter Psanis, Allen David Pudlo, Avery J. Ratliff, \*Kaila M. Reed, \*Allison Rose Rehr, Shane R. Renfro, Joey Rheaume, Shelby Alyssa Rhodes, Dereck M. Rivera, Seth Thomas Rivera, Samantha Mary

Roberts, Chastity Alyssa Rodriguez, \*Julia Lemelin Ryan, Allison J. Rzewuski;

Alexander Michael Salvatore, Jacob Randal Saxton, Samantha B. Scheibein, Lauren Elizabeth Schnitman, Joseph Matthew Schoenborn, Tyler Edward Scott, Chelsea McKay Seekins, Kourtney Lynn Sein, Cody Shukis, Ethan Shukis, Corey John Silveira, Alvan Simmons, \*Marlei Blair Simon, Breanna Daniels Skelley, Robert Thomas Slason, Sean Slocum, \*Kara Nicole Smith, Patrick Albert Spranzo, Jeffrey Standley, Kevin Douglas Stetson, Christos Stravoravdis, Aaron Sullivan, \*Natalia Svirshchevsky, Elena Rose Tedeschi, \*Jody Lynn Tedford, \*Arlene Jacqueline Thompson, Daniel Thompson, Kyra Ashley Tierney, \*Brianna Emily Townsend, Logan Trama, Xuyen Kim Tran, Brandon Tuck, Evan Turek, Joseph J. Turner, Andrew James Tuttle, \*Rebecca Lee Uliasz, \*Jacob Winfield VanHeest, Melina Isidora Villegas, James Phillip Wall, Timothy William Watrous, Megan Lyn Weakley, \*Melanie L. Weinick, Bryan B. White, Luke D. Whitmore, Gavin Winchell, Evan M. Wojcik, Frank Young, Melissa Ziccardi, Matthew Gary Ziegenhagen, Zachary P. Zimmitti.

\* indicates the graduate is a member of the National Honor Society.

# Marlborough Promoting Education in Tanzania

by Katy Nally

Hundreds of Tanzanian schoolchildren will meet their first American teacher this January, when Elmer Thienes-Mary Hall Elementary School special education teacher Louise Plack will travel halfway across the world to help local educators and students at three schools.

Plack, a board member of Pocketful of Joy, will journey with the organization’s director, who is also her friend, Charlotte Hunter.

“It’s going to be fun for her,” Hunter said. “The kids are going to be grabbing her left and right.”

Now that the school year has finished, Plack said she can begin to “prioritize” for her trip. Hunter recently sent Plack a list of necessities for the three-month journey, and when she read it “I just tingled from the inside out,” Plack said.

In January, Plack will leave Marlborough, armed with teacher accoutrements like songbooks, charts and posters. Plack, who has mentored student teachers in the past, said she would also try to help teachers with their English and offer some advice “without wounding their pride.”

“We’ll try to help teachers raise their standards of education,” Hunter added.

Plack knows teacher jargon, and “speaks the same language” as the African educators, Hunter said, and “that’s why she’s going to be a dynamite addition to this.”

This is the first time Pocketful of Joy has brought an American teacher to the three schools it is affiliated with. Since 2004 the non-profit has provided funds for three schools

through private donations, and brought in educational materials and staff. Hunter, the founder of Pocketful of Joy, said she has provided the children with a sewing program so they can make their uniforms and a garden so they have fresh produce.

“That way they become more balanced learners and they don’t have to rely on just farming,” Plack said.

In addition to studies and extracurriculars, Pocketful of Joy has also allowed for the children’s teeth and eyes to be checked by local doctors. “Most of the kids are very healthy now,” Plack said.

“We provide the best services we can possibly provide, so [the students] can grow up and become really healthy adults and really take care of themselves and their community,” Hunter said.

The changes Pocketful of Joy have made since its inception have been dramatic but slow coming. But this doesn’t bother Hunter. “It happens on a level that the villagers can accept,” she said. “It’s happening very organically.”

And the schools have improved so much, that the Tanzanian government now uses them as models of education.

“You’re not trying to change their lifestyle,” Plack said. “You’re trying to make it better.”

However, for Plack, her lifestyle as an American teacher will change come January. There is no electricity at the schools, except for one library that has a generator, and, Hunter said, there are no toilets or washing machines.

“You have to be a particular type of person,”

she said. “I think you have to have courage.”

Still, Plack said she’s excited for her upcoming journey, but it will be hard to adjust to the “lack of noise” and “slower pace.” “I think it’ll be hard for me to switch from here to there,” she said.

And when it comes to communicating in another language, Plack said “I go on personality and hand gestures.” But, fortunately, the teachers and children speak English.

Plack said she was mostly preoccupied with how to charge her camera, so she would be able to take pictures.

The Elmer Thienes-Mary Hall community first became involved in Pocketful of Joy’s initiative through the school’s dress down day. Plack explained each teacher pays one dollar every Friday of the school year to dress casually. This year the school gave \$700 to Pocketful of Joy and \$300 to a school in Peru, Plack said.

Plack’s church, Quaker Hill Baptist Church in Quaker Hill, also began fundraising for Hunter’s organization. Shortly after that, Plack became a board member for Pocketful of Joy.

The board’s goal this year is to raise \$67,000 from private donors, Plack said. The organization’s dream, she added, is to build a dorm for the girls who walk at least one hour to get to school. Having the housing available would reduce the “dangers of being ambushed” while walking, she said.

Other ideas are to increase the amount of food available at school and to make the teach-



**Elmer Thienes-Mary Hall special education teacher Louise Plack will journey to Tanzania with Pocketful of Joy next January to help teachers and students at three schools.**

ing positions more attractive for teachers.

But for now, both sides of the Pocketful of Joy community will anxiously await their first meeting.

## EHHS Graduates cont. from Front Page

have changed in East Hampton. The jungle gym at Center School is long gone, and the IGA turned into a Shaw's and now a Stop & Shop. And the students no longer trade Pokémon cards – "at least not on a daily basis," John added.

But now, he said, the seniors are at "the beginning of the biggest shift in our young lives, graduating high school." While it would be difficult, he said, for him and his fellow students to leave "our comfort zone," he hoped "we all embrace this new transition whatever our future plans may be and promise ourselves to make the best of it, while not forgetting the lessons we learned and the people we knew."

Josh Gustine, the class essayist, spoke next, and he too touched on the 1990s craze of Pokémon, reminiscing about the start of his first day of kindergarten nearly 13 years ago, when he "was so excited with my Pokémon backpack and crayon box." He added, "Thirteen years ago my naïve excitement did not let me appreciate the journey I was about to embark on. Today, I stand here facing an uncertain future that is the rest of my life."

One of the biggest laughs of the night was generated by class salutatorian Will DeMore, who spoke of a day 12 years ago when Hillary Clinton visited his kindergarten class. Will recalled drawing a spaceship and telling the then-First Lady that the two of them "were going to go to the moon in it." Will said he will now become an engineer and can learn to build some rockets, though, he joked, "I'm sure I can find a different companion for my escapades to the moon. Maybe Sarah Palin. It'll be just like home; she'll be able to see Russia."

Will took a more serious note with his words when he advised his classmates to "keep your goals in mind, but along the way find time to laugh, to love, and to take some risks just for the thrill."

Class valedictorian Walid Ahmad began his address on a bleak note, reminding those in attendance that, as of this past May, the unemployment rate was at 9.7 percent, and another 1.7 million Americans have just dropped out of the workforce altogether, simply because they can't find jobs.

Walid used those grim statistics to encourage his classmates to go above and beyond.

"Do not depend upon the world to fix itself, or on the government to carry us through this crisis; rely only on yourself," Walid said. "Take the initiative to push yourself beyond what you thought you could do."

Due to threat of rain, the commencement ceremony was held in the high school gym. And while conditions inside were hot – with many

in the audience fanning themselves with their programs – spirits among everyone remained high. As the ceremony wrapped up, students threw their caps in the air, shot off some silly string and gave each other high-fives.

Members of the Class of 2010 gathered with their family and friends outside the school after the commencement service, exchanging hugs and posing for pictures.

Meghan Spaulding said it was "really exciting" to finally graduate, and was looking forward to college in the fall. Meghan will attend Pace University, where she will seek a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in acting.

Meghan said Berry wasn't exaggerating when she spoke earlier in the night of her class' love of dancing.

"We're just like a really fun class," she said. "We're all very comfortable with each other and not worried about looking stupid."

Erica Michaud said that, while "it feels good" to graduate, the reality of it "hasn't truly kicked in." Erica, who attended EHHS for her freshman and sophomore years, spent a year in Florida, and then came back for her senior year, said there were "a lot of close friendships" in the class.

Michele Gustine – mother of class essayist Josh – said she had "mixed emotions" about seeing her oldest child graduate high school. When asked what about her son's past four years at EHHS remains most etched in her mind, Michele replied, "His determination. That's what stands out for me. He worked really hard."

But hopefully he, as well as his 139 classmates, took the time to share a dance move or two.

The members of the East Hampton High School Class of 2010 are:

+Ansel Oscar Aarrestae, +\*^Walid Ahmad, Jessica Faith Aleksiewicz, Eric Thomas Amtmanis, Makenzie Eliza Anderson, Arnold C. Baker III, Rachel Elizabeth Balch, Daniel R. Barber, Bruce William Bedrick, +Morgan Leigh Begin, Robert Steven Benjamin Jr., Denis Norman Bernard Jr., Danielle Bohmiller, Brandyn James Bonertz, Dylan E. Bonoff, Michelle Alyce Brahen, Danyel Lisa Brewer, Jodi Renee Brookman, Amanda Lynn Buracchi, Tomas T. Camara, Hadley Elizabeth Carr, James P. Carroll, Anthony John Castronovo, +Johanna Mary Cecilio, +Kelly Ann Chasse, David Christopher Chasseau Jr., Sean P. Claffey, Robert C. Clavette, Victoria F. Collins, Roberto H. Colon, Heather Mary Congdon, +Allison Joy Cowan, Kara Anne Csere, Chloe Marie Cyr;



Two jubilant graduates give each other a high-five at the end of Tuesday's commencement ceremony.

Andrew David DeCrescente, +\*^William G. DeMore Jr., Jessica Maria DiCesare, Lindsay Katherine Erwin, +Meaghan L. Fabrycki, +Victoria Leigh Farkas, Johanna Elizabeth Fielding, David Henry Fitol, +Jason Robert Foberg, +Jamie Lynn Fortin, +Andrea Marie Galanto, +Bridget Denise Galanto, Andrew Wheeler Gates, Evan C. Glaude, +\*John Leslie Gordon, Lindsay R. Gosselin, Loren R. Goulette, William Charles Gronbach Jr., +\*Joshua Nelson Gustine, Liz J. Hall, +Erik-Guy Harper, Rachel Regina Hayes, +Ryan Patrick Heidel, Alan Marx Henzy, +Elisabeth Rachel Hiers, Andrew David Hill, Benjamin John Hill, +Erin Elizabeth Hoffman, Mark Steven Iacino, +\*Sarah Cassidy Ihnat, Sarah Elizabeth Jackson, +Owen Davis Jensen, +\*Melissa Victoria Jordon;

Emily Snow Killilea, +Lindsey Jean Kimball, Stephen Michael Kivlin, Brian R. Klotzbier, Justin Andrew Kohn, Kristina M. Kusiek, Brittany J. LaGrange, Nicholas J. Lamb, Jayson David Lanzi, +Erica Holle Lawrence, Daniel Roger Dufresne LeFoll, Alec M. LePage, Marissa Ann Levy, Loren Ashley Lonsdale, Gina Marie Lorenzetti, Justin T. Mahar, Lindsey Marie Mallory, +Rachael Nicole Mardirosian, Michael Christopher Markham, Carissa Marie Marsiglio, Shelby Elizabeth McInvale, Caroline Amy McManus, Kelly A. Merrill, Erica Y. Michaud-Reilly, +Katie A. Monighetti, Stephen

Arthur Mount, +Courtney E. Muscat, Lauren Ann Musinsky, +Matthew K. Nilson, +Michael A. Nowakowski, Laura Jeanne O'Brien, Addison Davis O'Neil;

Michelle Marie Paquette, Brittany Ann Parker, Alexander Parks, Patrick I. Peaslee, +\*Christopher Alexis Perez-Olmeda, +\*Olivia Susan Picking, Nicole Ashley Pitman, +Elizabeth Ann Plummer, Philip Paul Polo, Meghan Elizabeth Redner, Sierra Riell Reid, +Matthew J. Roberts, Mackenzie Marie Rosano, Shelby Mae Rose, Antonio Rossini II, +Amanda Jane Roy, Haley Russenberger, +\*Stephanie Paige Sammann, Chardé Arianna Sanchez, Megan Elizabeth Sarra, Charles R. Schaub, Patrick R. Schunk, Isabel Seguin, Sarah L. Selavka, Stefan Slossberg, Kristin Jane Somerville, Alyssa Nicole Sorvillo, Megan Leigh Spaulding, Kaitlynn Sperry, Ashleigh Lynn Streich, Brianna Elizabeth Swerko, Kayla Marie Sypek, Kevin E. Thompson, +\*Ian Fulford Tierney, Kevin Peter Toce, Zachary Harry Turner, Peter Allen Villa III, Christopher J. Wallace, Shannon Theresa Wesner, MaryCallie Wilson.

+ indicates Ferrigino-Bell Chapter National Honor Society

\* indicates the top 10 students

# indicates National Merit finalist

^ indicates National Merit commended scholar

# Marlborough Future Problem Solvers Place Fourth

by Katy Nally

After devising a virtual reality simulation as a way to protect eco-tourist hot spots, four sixth-graders from Marlborough placed fourth in an international Future Problem Solving competition.

The Marlborough Elementary School team only had a few weeks to research the topic of "Green Living," because the students received a surprise invitation to the international competition.

A team that placed first in the state competition did not accept its international invitation, so the spot went to Julie Caron's team. When she told her four students about their opportunity she said it seemed like "the blood just rushed from their faces. They all looked like ghosts for a minute." But, after a short deliberation, the team accepted the challenge and immediately got to work.

The team, which included Tara Peng, Kellan Navarre, Arya Vrabie and Kyle Hunt, only had a few weeks to research the issues before the international competition that began Thursday, June 10, in La Crosse, WI.

During that time, Caron said the students "really rose to the challenge. ... They just have this focus that is unbelievable." The team monopolized every minute before the competition, including the plane ride. "On the plane they did a lot of studying and quizzing each other," Caron said.

When they finally reached Wisconsin, Caron said her students were up against 58 other teams worldwide in the team competition.

The future problem to solve asked students how to preserve eco-tourist hot spots (like the arctic and Africa) that can be degraded by pollution and foot traffic.

lution and foot traffic.

The solution – "we decided to make it all virtual," Arya said. "It's kind of a futuristic idea."

But, unlike traditional virtual reality, the team's simulation allows vacationers to "really touch and feel everything," Arya said, as well as smell and taste things.

"You can go there without leaving a footprint," Arya said.

"It really was quite a clever idea," Caron added.

Arya said the booklet portion, in which the team has two hours to write a solution for the presented problem, was difficult for her and her team. But, she said they just imagined they were back in Marlborough "in our cafeteria."

After the team submitted its answer, the judges considered the booklets, and called up teams in random order, Arya recalled. The teams that placed were announced from last to first and "as they called each team, we got more and more excited," Arya said. Finally, the Marlborough group was called for fourth place.

Another team from Marlborough, the Virginia Rail Homeschoolers, placed 12th in the booklet competition.

There are four aspects to the Future Problem Solving event: scenario writing, skit, individual and team or "booklet" competition. The Virginia Rail Homeschoolers also placed fourth in the skit portion.

In addition to Marlborough Elementary School team's trophies, the four kids took home other, less scholarly, mementos – cheeseheads, Caron said. "It was really fun," Arya remembered.



A team of four students from the Elmer Thienes-Mary Hall Elementary School placed fourth in the international Future Problem Solving team competition. Above from left are Tara Peng, Kellan Navarre, Arya Vrabie and Kyle Hunt with their trophies.

Competition in Wisconsin was not only a new experience for the Marlborough teams, but this was Caron's first year as a Future Problem Solving coach. "She's new but she really helped us to get to the internationals," Arya said.

Caron, a reading teacher, said she plans to

coach next year's team. She urged Arya's team to stick with Future Problem Solving when they enter RHAM Middle School in the fall.

Arya said she already plans to compete as a seventh-grader.

# Marlborough Library Expansion One of Four STEAP Ideas

by Katy Nally

With the application for another round of STEAP grants due July 20, the Board of Selectmen (BOS) Tuesday looked at four potential projects that could be funded with the state money.

Two members of the Richmond Memorial Library Board and the library director were present at Tuesday's meeting to advocate for more space at the library.

Town Planner Peter Hughes announced the three other projects eligible for STEAP (Small Town Economic Assistance Program) money: extending sidewalks down to the Shoppes at Marlborough Barn complex, as well as Cheney Road and Jones Hollow Road; creating public water wells in the town center area; and installing 1,250 linear feet of road off of Route 66, heading into the business park. The third option would cost the maximum amount offered by STEAP, at \$500,000.

Selectmen agreed to hold a special meeting some time in early July to decide what project would be submitted in the STEAP grant application.

Only selectwoman Riva Clark offered an idea of which projects she thought should take priority for the STEAP funds. At the top of her list was expanding the library, then the road into the business park, then sidewalks and finally public wells. "[The library] is part of a value of life issue," Clark said.

Library Director Nancy Wood presented the board with an engineering firm's draft of a five-year capital plan for fixing up the library. What

she referred to as an "unbiased professional opinion" found the most needed changes were additional lighting in the attic and replacing the main electric distribution board on the first floor. Most of the first-year suggested changes included electrical and piping work. The firm told Wood, "What we [have] for our electric [is] antiquated and obsolete," Wood said.

At the end of the first year, the firm estimates the total cost at \$65,715, which includes inflation and contingency. The total five-year plan calls for \$161,557, again with inflation and contingency.

One item listed by the engineering firm was expansion of the attic to "better suit current or planned usage," which raised the question from the BOS: What is the future usage of the attic?

Wood said there are no plans yet, because the library board agreed to discuss the issue at its September meeting. However, library board president Michael Quincy said "the board discussed it at nauseum a few months ago."

"The bottom line," library board vice president Deborah Bourbeau said, "is we know the library is packed beyond capacity."

Two possible renovation plans include finishing the second floor and expanding the ground floor. Wood said expanding the first floor, specifically the children's section, would cost less than renovating the attic because of the number of staff members required. With a second floor, Wood said she would probably have two employees upstairs and two downstairs, but the first-floor expansion would re-

quire three employees. "That's a big savings for us," she said.

First Selectman Bill Black said, "I think I'm hearing" staffing will be a problem if the second floor is renovated. Wood did not exactly agree, saying, "Do we still want to expand? Yes. Do we want to expand by finishing the second floor? We don't know yet."

"The goal is the same," Black concluded. "You need the space."

Last September, the library was awarded \$250,000 from a STEAP grant for renovations. However, by November the plans were put on hold because the grant would not cover engineering and designing, which was needed to commence the project.

With no money coming forward from the library for design and engineering, Black said, "We've been kind of in a quandary. ... So we've had to seek alternatives."

But Quincy said the quandary has actually been caused by a lack of communication between the selectmen and the library board. "We have made several attempts to meet with the first selectman," Quincy said. "If you're wondering what we want, perhaps we could meet and talk about it."

Clark said she would like the library board to come before the BOS with a decision between expanding the library and adhering to the engineering firm's maintenance plan. She called the second-floor expansion a "gamble," because the worst-case scenario is the STEAP money won't be awarded at all, and the other option

merely offers "band-aids."

"I feel bad," Clark said. "It's a tough choice you have to make."

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The BOS also gave an update on the Nature Trails and Sidewalks ordinance and the town's probate court.

Black said the town had received an answer from counsel about regulating horses on trails, and the board moved to only allow leashed dogs on local trails.

Originally, the 14th Probate Court District was to be housed in East Hampton, but the owners of the building decided not to renew the lease. So, Black said, Marlborough will house the regional probate court on an interim basis.

Because the town pays to lease the probate court space, Black said having the regional court will be "somewhat of an offset." The probate court administration is still looking at other locations for the court, and Black mentioned an old middle school in East Haddam as one possibility.

There was not a definite timeline as to how long Marlborough would house the court, but Black said it would remain in town "as least for the upcoming fiscal year."

There are three years left on the town's current lease.

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The next regularly scheduled BOS meeting will be Tuesday, July 13, 7 p.m., at Town Hall.

# New Sign for Veterans' Park in Andover Almost a Reality

by Lindsay Fetzner

With the help of several private donors, one resident's campaign to raise funds to erect a veterans' monument park sign to pay tribute to Andover veterans is a step closer to completion.

Dianne Grenier began her quest to raise money for the park sign in December, and has made significant headway. But, the story behind the .6-acre parcel that the sign will stand has a much longer history behind it.

The town acquired the monument park property in two different pieces, Grenier said. The first piece was received in 1992, when the state Department of Transportation (DOT) realigned the routes 6 and 316 intersection, as well as removed the rail bridge over Route 316. Shortly after, it was decided to use the property to display different war monuments, including ones honoring those who served in the Revolutionary War, the Korean War and WWII.

The same year, the town beautification committee began planting geraniums on the property. They continued this each year, decorating the area with American flags for Memorial Day as well. First Selectman Bob Burbank said the memorial is the first stop for the parade procession.

Ten years later, in 2002, the DOT widened Route 6 as part of an intersection improvement project to the road. In addition to straightening the road and lowering the grade, some houses along the route were moved by the DOT. One of these houses was the former site of the Andover Creamery Building. The creamery was open from 1886 to 1915, and then later transformed into an apartment building. When the building was removed, Grenier said the DOT was urged to save the well on the property, but was later buried after a picture of it was taken. The area the creamery occupied completed the second and final piece of the park.

By 2007, the property had become "a mess," Grenier said, with weeds estimated between four and six feet tall. "No one was taking care of it," she said. In an effort to make it "the people's park," Grenier sent notices out in town to form a group to clean up the area. Every year since that time, a group of about 15 volunteers has cleaned up the property before both Me-

morial Day and Veterans Day.

For a number of years, a handful of instrumental residents have become the "caretakers" of the park. George Collette and Barbara Foran are among those who care for the property, along with Grenier, and are the "keepers of the park." Grenier added that both Collette and Foran spend countless hours tending to the park and watering the 36 geraniums planted this year alone. "They are very dedicated and do a wonderful job," she said. And due to the fact that water must be transported to the park because there is no water source, Foran lightheartedly said, "We're just hoping it will rain more often."

Knowing that a well had once been on the property and had been buried when the DOT improved the road, Grenier set out on a quest to find the well and use it as a water source for the plants decorating the park. However, the Town of Andover did not own the property, as it belonged to the state, and did not want to do any major renovations, such as installing a well, without owning the property first.

Burbank said the state wanted to lease the town the parcel of land on a 100-year lease, which was later turned down by the BOS. The original promise from the state to deed it back to the town, Burbank said, eventually occurred in November 2009 after a "back-and-forth game for a couple of years." One month later, the Board of Selectmen (BOS) named the park the Andover Veterans' Monument Park.

With the property officially in the hands of the town, Grenier said the next logical step was a sign. Five days after the BOS meeting in December, Grenier spearheaded a fundraising campaign for the sign. After speaking with three different companies, Grenier said the cost for the sign was estimated to be between \$3,500 and \$5,000 installed.

Grenier said the "real shopping" for the sign will occur once the \$4,000 mark is hit, but she said a large part of the project is still discovering the well, which she hopes to accomplish before the sign is installed. "It's been a long journey," she said.

Geoff Bayersdorfer, of Griffin Dewatering New England in Bolton, has offered to volunteer his time to try and find the well, as well as



The "caretakers" of the Andover Veterans Monument Park, pictured from left, are Dianne Grenier, George Collette and Barbara Foran.

install a pump when the well is found. "All we have to go by is this photograph," he said. "We've narrowed it down to a 12' by 12' area." Bayersdorfer added, jokingly, "We just have to dig." Although he has looked for the well twice to no avail, he hopes to find the well in the future, as he thinks the whole project "is a great thing."

As of Tuesday, Grenier said, \$3,505 had been raised from local donations. "We've been really good about not spending tax dollars," Grenier said. All of the work for the project has been in the form of donations. "Residents are coming together to provide the manpower," she said.

The plan for the sign, she said, is to install a two-sided sign made of composite material that will not splinter or warp. In addition, Grenier

hopes to have the letters carved and gold-leafed, and also be lit at night.

With Route 6 serving as the main road in town, and the memorial sitting on this route, many residents have come to take pride in the location.

"It is something that Andover residents are very proud of," Grenier said, adding that the residents in town should have a "spot in town that says this is Andover."

Foran agreed with Grenier, and said, "Route 6 is our main center."

Anyone who is willing to donate for the project can send a donation to "Andover Veterans Monument Park," Andover Town Office Building, 17 School Rd., Andover, CT, 06232. Checks should be made out to the Town of Andover.

# RHAM Board Again Rebuffs Columbia Request

by Lindsay Fetzner

The RHAM Board of Education (BOE) reviewed a Columbia tuition proposal Monday, and received Superintendent of Schools Bob Siminski's recommendation to not move forward.

BOE chair Mike Turner said the topic "comes up every couple of years," and again, the board was faced with looking at the feasibility of sending Columbia students to RHAM.

Siminski recommended that RHAM does not accept any Columbia students at this time, due to capacity issues. RHAM High School, he said, is very close to capacity.

Referencing the New England School Development Council (NESDEC) projections, Siminski said enrollment was estimated to be 1,149 for grades nine to 12 for the 2010-11 school year. This year's enrollment was 1,084 at the high school and capacity is about 1,200, he said.

"We are having difficulty just fitting in the students that we have," said James Cherry, board member.

Siminski said if enrollment were to drop, it "could be a discussion." But with the space the

school has and the projected enrollment as key factors, Siminski made his recommendation to the board.

"Unfortunately right now, we can't do it," he said.

According to Columbia BOE member Lisa Jurovaty, the Columbia school system services students from kindergarten to grade eight, with approximately 50 to 60 students in each grade level. The town does not have a high school.

For high school students, the school system reaches out to area schools to form a contract. Right now, Columbia is reaching out and exploring other schools nearby to "add a different option" for the students, Jurovaty said.

A three-year member of the BOE, Jurovaty said the proposal comes up "every couple of years." In the past, she said, RHAM has been able to accommodate only a couple of slots for students, which, had they accepted, would have put the town in a tight spot for deciding which students would go there.

"It puts us in a tough spot," she said. If a lottery was put in place, she said people could be disappointed if they were not chosen and

that the situation could create hard feelings.

Columbia BOE member Nelson Petron said the town reviews high school choices every five to six years to determine if there are additional choices for the students. He said Columbia looked at RHAM back in the late '90s and again in 2005, when he was on the board. Petrone has been on the BOE for seven years.

In 2005, Petron said when the town did another study of high school options, they added Bolton as an option. Currently, Columbia has contracts with Lyman Memorial High School in Lebanon, Windham High School and Bolton High School.

Both E.O. Smith High School in Mansfield and Norwich Free Academy have conducted presentations at recent BOE meetings and are interested in accommodating Columbia students. Petrone said Windham has also expressed interest in keeping a contract with the town as well.

Petrone said Glastonbury school board was recently contacted to see if its school system was interested in accepting Columbia students, but it declined, due to a board policy dealing

with accepting students from other towns.

"We look at our options to see what schools provide the best fit for our kids," Petrone said.

And although the lack of a high school in town could be viewed as a downfall, Petrone said a number of individuals have selected to live in Columbia because of the high school choices their children have. Over the years, Petrone said families have sent siblings to different high schools because the chosen high school was a good fit for one child, but not another.

"We have a very open policy for children to choose," she said. "They choose where they want to go." Overall, Jurovaty said, the students "have some nice options."

One of the reasons that Columbia has contacted RHAM over the years is proximity. Jurovaty said out of all the high schools, RHAM is one of the closest. Petrone said the town of Columbia provides their own transportation to the schools they have contracts with.

Columbia Superintendent of Schools Francine Cross was out of the office this week and not available for comment.

Portland • East Hampton • Portland • East Hampton

## Towns to Benefit from Clean Energy Grant Award

by Claire Michalewicz

Portland and East Hampton are among a group of 14 Connecticut towns that are expected to benefit from a \$4.1 million grant the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) presented through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA).

The funds will go to the Neighbor to Neighbor Energy Challenge, a program run by the Connecticut Clean Energy Fund (CCFE). The program is designed to get residents and community organizations to use cleaner energy, and work to be more energy efficient. With the grant money, the towns will work to find more ways to get residents using clean energy, and help fund energy improvements they make in their homes.

Kerry O'Neill, cofounder of Earth Markets, a company that develops energy efficiency projects for consumers, said the 14 towns were "the cream of the crop" in terms of their work toward energy efficiency. She said in applying for the grant, the CCEF approached some "really amazing towns" in Connecticut. The towns were also grouped together in geographic clusters, she said, to foster cooperation between them.

Along with East Hampton and Portland, Bethany, Cheshire, East Haddam, Glastonbury,

Lebanon, Mansfield, Ridgefield, Weston, Westport, Wethersfield, Wilton and Windham will also benefit from the funds. The money is distributed through nine companies, including Earth Markets, which will develop new clean energy programs for the towns involved. This consortium, which includes the towns and companies, was one of 20 such groups around the country to receive grant money through the program. (It is not known exactly how the money will be divided between the towns and programs.)

The program, O'Neill explained, is about "using friendly competition to get citizens to take action." One of the main projects funded by the grant will be an online social network, where residents can sign up to receive customized suggestions on the steps they can take to make their homes more energy efficient.

"I think this is an out-of-the-box type of thing," said Portland Clean Energy Task Force Chairman Andy Bauer. "We're really trying to get people to think about what they might do on their own."

In addition, O'Neill said, the consortium is working on a community outreach program, recruiting students from around the state for internships. These interns, O'Neill said, would

work with residents and local organizations to help them

"They'll really get to know the community groups," O'Neill said, "and work with spreading awareness about clean energy."

"It's really exciting," O'Neill said about the grant. "We just can't wait to get into towns and work with the community groups."

East Hampton Clean Energy Task Force Chairman John Tuttle said the grant would help the task force use the expertise of the other people involved. His task force, he said, was made up of volunteers, who were interested in clean energy but had other obligations. By bringing in experts, Tuttle said, the task force would learn more about energy, and have help in marketing their projects to local residents.

Bauer agreed. "We're not professional energy managers," he said. "We're people who have worked on a local level." Bauer said he knew the grant was competitive, and said one of the reasons Portland was chosen was that the town has been working on clean energy since 2005, longer than many other towns.

"It'll help us achieve our goals," Tuttle added. One of East Hampton's goals, he said, is the '20% by 2010' program, in which towns aim to

have 20 percent of their energy come from renewable sources by this year. East Hampton, he said, has already met this benchmark, with 27 percent of its energy renewable.

Another project the town is still working on, though, is getting 200 residents to get the energy in their homes from renewable sources, for an extra fee. Residents can choose this option on their Connecticut Light & Power bills. At the moment, Tuttle said, 135 households in town have chosen to do this, but he's hoping 65 more will be interested. When the town meets that goal, he said, the Connecticut Clean Energy Fund will give the town a solar lighting system, which they could install on the library.

In addition, Bauer said some of the grant money could be used to create a revolving loan fund, which residents could use to make energy upgrades in their homes, such as improving their insulation or buying more efficient appliances.

O'Neill said she was unsure exactly when these projects would start, but said the grant money should be available by the end of the summer.

"We're just thrilled about the grant," she added.

### Container Labeled 'Land Mine' Left at Marlborough Legion

by Katy Nally

Police received a rather unusual call last Monday, June 14, when the American Legion reported someone had found a container labeled "land mine" while cleaning out a house.

American Legion Post 197 Commander Bernard Hoyland said this week he didn't know who left the container at the Legion, but whoever dropped it off, thought the organization would be interested in the old items. He said he was unsure what the container held exactly, but he surmised it was from the WWII era.

State Police said they found "a plastic container with ammunition, a land mine and other explosive devices." Hoyland said he did not know if the items were disarmed or active. But, he added, "nobody wanted to take a chance on this stuff."

When Post 197 found the materials, the police were called immediately, Hoyland said. According to Troop K in Colchester, the State Police emergency services unit responded to the scene and "removed these items without incident."

Hoyland said the bomb squad came to Post 197 to take the container away and police blocked off the building.

In light of last Monday's event, State Police are reminding citizens to not touch or remove explosive devices if they are found. Instead the police should be called immediately to remove and properly dispose the devices.

When asked if a situation like this had ever happened at the legion, Hoyland laughed and said "this has never happened before and it sure won't happen again."

### Portland BOE, Teachers' Union Agree to Salary Concessions

by Claire Michalewicz

The Board of Education (BOE) has reached an agreement with the teachers' union that will save an estimated \$300,000 over the next two years.

Superintendent of Schools Sally Doyen explained that the union, the Educational Association of Portland (EAP), had agreed to smaller raises in the next few years. Their contract, which has been extended to 2013, spreads their expected raises over a period of years.

"They're sacrificing salary raises that were in some ways significant," Doyen said.

Teachers were originally supposed to receive a 4.6 percent raise, Doyen said. Under the renegotiated contract, that raise will be split between the next two school years, for a 2.3 percent increase this year and next, and a 2.85 percent increase the year after.

The Board of Selectmen cut \$125,000 from the original school budget earlier this year, before the budget went to referendum in May.

EAP President Sue McDougall said the

BOE needed the concessions to make up for a lack of state funding. "We are sacrificing a lot," McDougall said, by giving up part of their salary increase.

"We were looking at the future, looking three years out and not just at this one," McDougall said.

Doyen said the negotiations would help mitigate that cut. She said that while the teachers had agreed to smaller raises, the BOE would still cover a projected 1.5 percent increase in teachers' health insurance costs. In addition, Doyen said, the agreement will help mitigate the loss of federal stimulus money, which Portland will no longer receive in the 2011-12 school year. She said stimulus money had helped the town keep teachers' positions in the past few years.

"I'm just very pleased to see that the school board, teachers' union and management reached a cooperative agreement that's best for our town," said First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield. "I like to see it when everyone cooperates."

# Portland PZC to Study Five Sites for Affordable Housing

by Claire Michalewicz

The Planning and Zoning Commission (PZC) voted last Thursday, June 17, to study five sites to evaluate for the possibility of building new affordable housing developments.

A state program, called Grow Smart Residentially – Incentive Housing Zones, rewards towns for building developments that include a certain number of units designated as affordable housing. Portland received a grant to conduct this preliminary study, and the town may apply to this program after the study is completed.

The five sites to be considered for an Incentive Housing Zone (IHZ) include the office building at Main Street and Victoria Road, the area including Brownstone School and Geato's Flower Shop, an area near the Brownstone Quarries at the end of Commerce Street, an antiques store on Route 66, and an empty lot at the corner of Freestone Avenue and High Street.

Karen Cullen, from Concord Square Development in Boston, will conduct the study. After the study, Planning and Land Use Administrator Deanna Rhodes said, the town could consider applying for the state program. Rhodes explained that while the application was still in a preliminary phase, it was worth looking into.

"Portland's choosing their own destiny," she said, explaining that the zoning for IHZs was flexible, and the town would have input into the planning process. By state law, towns are required to work toward having 10 percent of their housing designated as affordable. Currently, Rhodes said, Portland has about 8 per-

cent affordable housing, and adding more units in IHZs would help the town move toward its goal.

During a presentation to the PZC in May, Cullen explained the zones as "build-your-own zoning," which could allow for housing or mixed-use development on the sites. The town could choose design standards for the developments.

Under the law, at least 20 percent of the units must be designated as "affordable," set aside for families earning less than 80 percent of the median income in the area, which is \$64,400. In return, the town receives payments of \$2,000 for each potential unit with in IHZ district, and an additional payment for each affordable unit that is built.

At last week's meeting, Rhodes presented the PZC with a map of properties that could be considered for the IHZ. Cullen had chosen some of them, Rhodes explained, based on the IHZ program's criteria for development sites, which include proximity to transit, a densely developed area, or a vacant lot.

Reviewing the six sites Cullen had proposed, the PZC and Rhodes decided against them for a variety of reasons. Two lots near the river were too wet, Rhodes said, and two off Penny Corner Road were too steep. The others, Rhodes said, didn't meet the aforementioned criteria.

Rhodes said she had added several other properties to the map after residents suggested them, volunteering their properties for consideration. (These were the five properties that the

PZC eventually voted to study.)

PZC member Alan Kenney said he worried putting people of different income levels into the same development could cause problems, explaining that he had friends who lived in a condominium building in which some residents paid lower fees. In this building, Kenney said, tensions sometimes flared between neighbors because some of them were paying less.

"There's a lot of friction in these types of situations," Kenney said. "I'd prefer to have 100 percent [affordable housing]."

Commission member Carl Fitzgibbons expressed concerns about the study. "Does the town want this?" he repeatedly asked. Fitzgibbons suggested that the PZC hold a public meeting to see if Portland residents were interested in the program.

Rhodes told Fitzgibbons that the program was still at a very early stage, and residents would be able to offer their input later on, if and when the town developed more concrete plans.

In an earlier discussion of extending water and sewer services, Director of Public Works Richard Kelsey said the town could probably extend them to the intersection of Routes 66 and 17 for a cost of about \$5 million. Commission member Bruce Tyler also expressed concerns about the project, saying that he felt developers wouldn't want to build on lots that did not have water and sewer connections. The town, Tyler said, should be doing more to at-

tract customers.

"I would prefer that you not put words in the town's mouth," said First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield to Tyler. "You're reaching concerns that we're not talking about." Bransfield listed several projects that Portland is currently undertaking, and added that the cost of extending sewer and water services might be prohibitive.

"I'm trying to point out, Bruce, a lot of the things we have going on now," Bransfield continued.

"A good planning process separates the creation of the plan with the funding of the plan," Tyler said, urging Kelsey to extend the sewer lines.

Other PZC members disagreed, including Mike Woronoff, who had to leave the meeting before the vote. "We do need to conserve our costs," Woronoff said. Developers who buy the land, he said, were free to build their own septic and well systems. Kelsey agreed, adding that commercial buildings were not typically high water users.

"I'm just gonna shut my mouth," Tyler concluded.

The study process is expected to take a few months, Rhodes said, and upon its conclusion the town could submit an application for the program to the state Office of Policy and Management.

The next PZC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, July 1, at 7 p.m., at the Portland Library, 20 Freestone Ave.

# RHAM Grad Enjoying Softball Success at ECSU

by Lindsay Fetzner

Molly Rathbun says she has been playing softball since she "could stand up and hold a bat." And since she picked up that bat, Rathbun hasn't looked back, earning significant recognition for her exceptional game.

The first-team All-American player said she took up softball when her older sister was playing. The Rathbun family, she said, has always been very sports-oriented. She, along with her other two siblings, has been involved in sports "from the beginning."

"I just fell in love with it and loved playing it," Rathbun said of softball. And when she was 9, she starting her pitching career. "I grew to love the game," she said. "I've played on a team ever since."

Rathbun, a student at Eastern Connecticut State University (ECSU), said she has always wanted to play college softball, a goal she has worked toward for a long time. Her coaches at RHAM High School, Rathbun said, "pushed me to achieve that goal." The 2008 graduate played volleyball and softball all four years at the school.

ECSU head softball coach Diana Pepin said Rathbun was the lead hitter of the 22 players on this year's team, and slugged nine homeruns. Rathbun also managed a .402 average and led the team with 38 RBIs. Pepin also commended Rathbun for being one of the top pitchers in the nation. "She has done amazing things," Pepin said, adding that she is not only a "unique individual," but also a very humble player who works "extremely hard."

"She is someone who just goes out there and does her job," Pepin said. "It is not about her statistics."

This year, the Warriors ranked third in the NCAA Division III national tournament and were the NCAA regional champions. The team also competed in the Little East Conference Tournament and was the 2010 regular season champions.

"I always tell Molly's parents she is a better person than player," said Peter Maneggia, assistant softball coach at ECSU. After Rathbun's freshman year, Maneggia said the two of them were talking about a college pitcher who won the national championship, but did not make All-American status. "Molly, who did receive that award as a freshman, looked me right in the eye and stated she would give up her All-American award for a national championship," he said. "I believe her."

Rathbun will be a junior in the fall, majoring in sports and leisure management, with a concentration in exercise science and sport performance. Rathbun said she is considering going into personal training or strength and conditioning, in an effort to help better athletes.

"I always wanted to open my own indoor softball/baseball academy," Rathbun said, adding that she has visions of the academy having pitching and batting lanes.

As a start, Rathbun has been taking business classes.

In addition to playing softball at ECSU, Rathbun played volleyball her first year. At the end of her freshman year, during softball season, she said she started getting shin splits, which turned into a stress fracture. Rathbun was put in an air cast for 14 weeks and due to the fact that she "wasn't in the right shape to play volleyball," took the year off to rest the fracture and prepare for the next softball season.

As a pitcher, Rathbun's impressive record this year was 30-2. "It's surprising," she said. "I'm kind of speechless about it. I am so happy that I can help my team out in that way." The Warriors' record was 39-6-1 for the season. Pepin added, "That just tells you where she is."

Off the field, Rathbun said scrapbooking is one of her favorite activities. But Rathbun said she "loves to play any sport" and enjoys playing football, basketball and baseball. Aside from constantly being active with sports, Rathbun

said she "just likes being outdoors."

Pepin said that, for Rathbun, "nothing really changes" off the field.

"She does well academically, and her teammates absolutely love her," she said. "She will do anything, as far as team needs, off the field."

Being on a team, Rathbun said, has been one of her favorite aspects of her sports career. "I really like team sports," she said. In addition to having teammates and the competition of the game, she said sharing successes with "all these other girls" is "an awesome feeling." Rathbun said her fellow teammates have become "like a second family."

Pepin said Rathbun has taken many pitchers "under her wing" and helped them with their game. And even when she isn't pitching, "she is always cheering [the team] on."

Softball has literally taken Rathbun around the world. During her senior year of high school, she traveled to Australia for a week and a half over winter break, where she played softball with other females from all over the United States.

And earlier this month, Rathbun traveled to Curacao, an island in the southern Caribbean, with the United States of America Athletes International. Rathbun not only played games over the course of the one-week stay, but also got the opportunity to sightsee. Among the highlights, she said, were snorkeling, off-roading in dune buggies and going out on a yacht.

As for the future, Rathbun said she would like to continue playing softball after she graduates from college. "If I could find a team to play for after college, I would absolutely keep playing," she said. "I don't know what I would do without it."

Looking back, Rathbun said, "Softball has given me a lot of experience. It has opened up a lot of doors and I have met a lot of great people along the way. Overall, it's been a huge part of my life."



**Molly Rathbun notched a 30-2 record for the ECSU softball team.**

# Padre's Run Marks 10 Years in Hebron

by Lindsay Fetzner

This Sunday, the Church of the Holy Family's 10th annual Padre's Run will kick off full-throttle...quite literally.

Participants will ride on their motorcycles for 50.5 miles in northern Connecticut, escorted by state police, to raise money for U.S. soldiers serving overseas. Last year, approximately \$2,000 was raised, which was used to make care packages for the soldiers, according to Melissa Jordan, who has organized the event for the past seven years.

The goal for this year is to again reach the \$2,000 mark. Jordan said in the past, over \$10,000 has been raised through the help of local donors. Given the economic climate, she said, "whatever we can get is great."

The ride originally started as a fundraiser for the church's sister parish, Immaculate Conception, located in Fonds Baptiste, Haiti. According to Father Michael Smith, the parish was in need of a truck to deliver agricultural goods. Drawing on their love to ride and the need in Haiti, the church decided to start the fundraiser.

"We love to ride," Smith said. "Why not have our riding do something for our brothers and sisters in Haiti?"

Collectively, over the years, Smith said the event has raised about \$12,000 for the church.

Jordan said as the years progressed and many United States' soldiers went to war, the church decided to partner with an adopted soldier program, started by a late parishioner and veteran. Eventually, it was the confirmation students who took over the event, which serves as their service project. The students make the care packages for the soldiers utilizing the money raised from the run.

When the ride first started, only about 10 bikes were part of the run. Now, Jordan said, between 150 and 200 motorcycles take part. "Every year, it gets bigger and bigger," she said. "And every year, we add different things."

Smith said a fair amount of parishioners and local people have come to support the run over the 10 years.

On Sunday, registration will begin at 9 a.m. in front of the church, located at 185 Church St. For the first time, the American Legion will

be on site in the morning, selling breakfast sandwiches and coffee, Commander Joe Fetta said. All the proceeds that the Legion raises will go back to the organization for veteran causes.

"It is a nice way to partner with another service organization in town who supports the troops," Jordan said.

A memorial Mass will follow registration at 9:30. Smith said the national anthem will be sung along with a color guard presentation by the American Legion. And, at about 11 a.m., Smith will bless the motorcycles. Shortly after, the ride will depart, with Smith leading the run.

After traveling through Marlborough, East Hampton, Portland, Colchester and East Haddam, the ride will travel back through Colchester and Hebron to the church. After the riders return, a barbecue will be held, along with raffle prizes and entertainment. The local band Kindred Spirit and the acoustic duo Inception will provide the music.

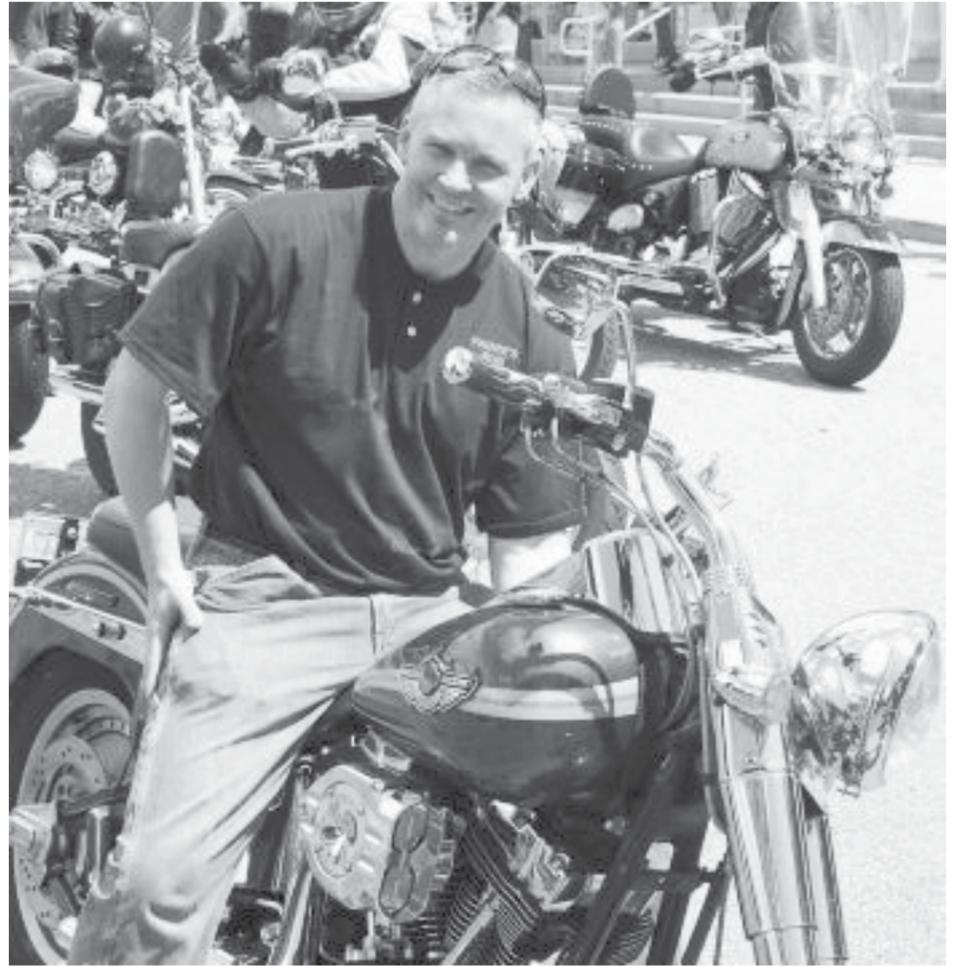
"We know everyone doesn't ride," Smith said, adding that everyone is encouraged to attend the barbecue. "It's always good to bring the community together. With most of the events we have at the church, we want to include as many people as possible."

This year, Ted's supermarket donated a large portion of the food for the barbecue, Jordan said. In addition, Highland Park Market in Manchester donated hamburgers. Along Party Lines in Colchester provided balloons and other paper products.

Jordan and Smith said the weather has cooperated for the ride in past years. Jordan said lightheartedly, "I don't even watch the weather." She recalled years where Sunday had been forecast to be one of the "top 10 days of the year," but come Monday, showers were forecast and, she joked, as the week went on, "a monsoon" was projected to occur. "Only one year it was rainy," she said.

Smith recalled driving to the church one year in 55 degree weather with rain, and by the time the ride took off, it was in the 80s and sunny.

"We are hoping we have a good year," Jordan said. Smith agreed, and said, "We've al-



Father Michael Smith of the Church of the Holy Family will lead the 10<sup>th</sup> annual Padre's Run this Sunday, June 27. Smith is pictured above at last year's ride.

ways pretty much lucked out."

The cost to participate in the ride is \$20 per person, which includes registration and the barbecue. For those not participating in the ride, the price for dinner is \$10 for adults, \$5 for children and is free for kids under 3.

The church is still looking for volunteers to help with all aspects of the run, including set-

up, assistance on the route, cooking, clean-up and selling T-shirts and tickets. "The more people, the better," Smith said.

Donations can be mailed to the church for the cause with checks payable to the Church of the Holy Family. T-shirts (\$20-25) and hats (\$15) will also be on sale at the event. For more information, call parish office at 860-228-0096.

# Hebron Selectmen Form Bifurcation Study Committee

by Lindsay Fetzner

The Board of Selectmen (BOS) voted at last Thursday's meeting to form a bifurcation study committee. The committee will look at the pros and cons of splitting the annual budget vote to allow taxpayers to vote on individual components, such as the Board of Education (BOE) spending plan, separately.

The committee, consisting of five citizens at large, will research the topic for just over 100 days, reporting back to the board on Oct. 7. Specific members of the committee were not appointed at the meeting Thursday evening, as the town is currently soliciting interest for committee members.

During public comment, before the BOS voted to form the committee, Jane Dube spoke in favor of bifurcation. Dube said in the past, she did not support it, but now believes that "bifurcation has some merit." (Dube is chairwoman of the BOE, but said she was speaking as a resident and not on behalf of the school board.)

"I have advocated that we proceed with the committee," selectman Mark Stuart said. He added that it would allow for "weighing out the pros and cons" as well as studying the topic without opening up the charter.

Although it only came up in May, the idea of bifurcation has been on the minds of several residents throughout the budget season. In an exit poll conducted by the BOS at the May 4 referendum, 975 people agreed that the BOE budget should be voted on separately. Only 293 voted 'no.' Similarly, in a question asking whether the open space allocation fund should

be voted on separately as well, 827 voters were in favor and 421 were opposed.

After the town budget passed on its third trip to the voters, there was again discussion by the BOS on the matter. At the board's June 3 meeting, selectman Mark Stuart suggested that an unbiased committee be formed to look at bifurcation.

One of the downsides to the charter revision commission that was brought up was that both the public hearings and the work of the members would be during the summer months, when many residents go on vacation.

Since that meeting, the BOS met with past charter revision commission members to receive their feedback and this past Thursday, voted to move forward with the search committee.

Among the topics the bifurcation committee would research are looking at different forms of government and which would fit Hebron best, looking at how other towns go through the budget process, whether the town should have a "definite end" to the voting process and, lastly, to research the experiences of other towns who have chosen bifurcation.

BOS chair Jeff Watt voiced support "to have a bifurcation committee do the initial research with a time frame."

Watt also added that it would be "good to have a charter revision commission in place" as well. Selectman Dan Larson said he too was an "advocate of getting a charter revision commission reformed."

"We've got a lot of work to do," said select-

man Brian O'Connell. In addition to doing a "thorough job" and looking at the "pros and cons," O'Connell said he hoped the committee would "get people involved in the process."

\* \* \*

Also at the meeting, the town's resident state troopers (RST), Mark Gendron and Jim Nolting, gave an update on the school resource officer and Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) programs.

Due to budget constraints, effective July 1, the school resource officer program will be suspended. RHAM's resource officer, Denise Sevigny, returned to patrol duty, as her last day was on June 16, the day of the RHAM graduation.

Gendron said both he and Nolting will answer all requests from the schools going forth, along with the other officers in town.

He said he is "not overly concerned with the workload" and can get extra help if needed. The good relationship with the school, Gendron said, has "put us one step ahead."

"The school has been very good in identifying when to call us and when not to call us," Gendron said.

Because Sevigny shared her time between RHAM and East Haddam, Gendron said in her absence, the troopers covered the schools. The other Hebron officers are not concerned with the additional school functions either, Gendron said.

The officers and the school administration plan on meeting in the future, before school

begins, to "get things set in place" and discuss how things will move forward with the changes.

Gendron also offered an update on the DARE program, offered at the elementary schools in town. When Officer Bette Simpson taught DARE in the past on days she worked, the RST on duty would take her shift and swap back when she ended the class. On days that classes were taught that Simpson was not on duty, she was paid overtime.

Going forward, Gendron said this could be an overtime issue if Simpson taught classes on her day off. Gendron said the department is looking for grants to offset costs, as he wants to "lessen the burden of the town for the program."

Town Manager Bonnie Therrien announced that at the June 15 BOE meeting, the board discussed a state grant of \$31,563 that was awarded to the board. The board voted to give it back to the town. But out of the \$31,563, the BOE suggested setting aside \$1,000 for the DARE program. Therrien suggested a maximum of \$2,000.

Dube said she thought it was "ethical to give [the grant] back to the town" with a small part of it earmarked for the program. She said the "kids get a lot of out" DARE and is an "important" program for the students.

\* \* \*

The next meeting of the BOS will be Thursday, July 1, at 7:30 p.m., in the Town Office Building, 15 Gilead St.

# Play Ball! Cody Camp Memorial Field Makes Debut in Colchester

by Katy Nally

When her 6-year-old son Cody died from lymphoma, Pat Camp worried the community might soon forget her happy-go-lucky boy. But Cody, who would be entering fifth grade in the fall if he were alive today, managed to leave his mark on Colchester, and his short life was celebrated last Saturday with the grand opening of Little League field.

A gorgeous June day was the backdrop for the grand opening of the Cody Camp Memorial Field, which was just an idea four years ago.

"It went beautifully," Pat said. "I just feel like it was the field of dreams."

In addition to kids and parents, Wally, the mascot for the Boston Red Sox, also came out for the opening. The Sox were Cody's favorite major league team.

After speeches from First Selectman Gregg Schuster, Superintendent of Schools Karen Loisel and a blessing from Father Michael Giannitelli of St. Andrew Parish, Cody's friends played the inaugural baseball game. Giannitelli also spoke at Cody's funeral and baptized him as a baby, Pat said.

Bob McGovern, a friend of the Camps who orchestrated the event and was instrumental in constructing the field, said more than 1,000 people attended Saturday.

His son Alec, who was Cody's best friend, also participated in the baseball game. "He loved it," Bob said about his son. Although two teams played at the grand opening, all the boys wore A's hats, because that was Cody's tee-ball team.

Alec said he was more nervous to play in Saturday's scrimmage than other baseball games because it was to honor Cody, and he was among the first players to break in the new field.

Still, Bob said, "I think they had a blast. ...

The smiles on their faces were just precious."

Pat and her husband Don attribute much of the credit for creating the field to Bob. "He just put his heart and soul out there," Pat said about Bob. "He was the force behind it all."

When Pat first told Bob she thought Cody might be forgotten, Bob said "the significance didn't sink in right away."

"[Cody] died so early," Pat said. "I can't imagine what he would have become if he had lived."

Bob said he soon realized Pat might, regrettably, be right. "Kids don't have an opportunity to have a lifetime of achievements," Bob said.

So, as a tribute to Cody, and other children who have passed before they could leave their marks, Bob set to work on the memorial field.

It took three years for the town to approve the project during which time Bob attended about 15 Planning and Zoning Commission and board of selectmen and education meetings. In July 2009 the Cody Camp Memorial Field Foundation got the "ok" for construction. In November of last year the project was wrapping up with a fence and sod installation. Bob said the Kentucky bluegrass alone cost \$30,000.

All the funds for the field came from donations. Volunteers also dedicated their time to construction, making the field "state of the art," Bob said.

"It looks like it'll be a pleasure to play on," Schuster said.

At the opening ceremony, Bob spoke about how the entire four-year process was really a community endeavor. "It was just an enormous community effort, without which the field we were standing on wouldn't exist," Bob said.

Schuster agreed, adding it was great that Colchester "could turn such a tragedy into something positive for the community."

Even the opening ceremony featured a wide



The Cody Camp Memorial Field behind Jack Jackter Intermediate School opened last Saturday, June 19. Kids and parents enjoyed the inaugural baseball game, free hot dogs and hamburgers and a meet 'n greet with Wally from the Boston Red Sox.

variety of local sponsors. The Lions Club was on hand flipping burgers, Scottie's Frozen Custard provided over 450 cones of ice cream and Pepsi donated 1,000 cans of soda.

But, toward the end of the day, Bob said the "weirdest thing" happened; something that might have confirmed Cody was pleased with the event. The entrance to the field was outlined with dozens of balloons in different colors, donated by Along Party Lines. The balloons were about 15-20 feet high and attached to a

wire, but, Bob said, at the end of the say "it got windy" and the balloons detached.

They floated up and "all of a sudden that thing formed a perfect 'C' over the field," Bob said. The crowd watched it until it dropped out of sight.

Even if the big 'C' was just a coincidence, Pat said she was still happy with the event and the field to commemorate her son. "There's no words that can express my gratitude," she said. "Nothing can top this memorial to Cody."

## Colchester's Joe Broder Seeks Seat in House Again

by Katy Nally

Joe Broder, a former Republican legislator, is making another run for state representative of the 48th District for 2011, against incumbent Linda Orange.

The 48th District includes Colchester and East Haddam.

Broder, an East Haddam resident, said the state is in dire need of cutting back on spending and should look for new ways to increase revenue.

"There are times when you just don't have the funds to do everything you'd like to do," Broder said. "It's going to be impossible next year without some serious cuts in state spending."

And Broder didn't hesitate to list his ideas to cut spending, but he warned, "even if you did everything I want to do, you wouldn't get to \$3 billion" (what's needed to balance the state deficit).

As a lawyer, one of Broder's suggestions involved increasing the number of attorney trial referees. Instead of having a judge tie up his or her time with minor cases, a referee would hear the case then make a recommendation to the judge, who would ultimately decide. Broder, who has worked as an attorney trial referee, said, "It's an opportunity to move cases without have to have so many judges."

Broder's other ideas ranged from changing Medicaid to making Connecticut more business-friendly.

For those who are on Medicaid, studies show having a nurse administer care at home, as op-

posed to living in a facility, can cost less, Broder said. And, because "a lot of people... don't ever want to be in a nursing home," opting for at-home care should be an accepted change.

Aside from making Connecticut's legislation more welcoming to new businesses, Broder noted the strong union presence in the state. He gave the example of tenured teachers, saying it was a backward system because "it doesn't allow you to reward the good teachers and penalize the bad ones."

At the state level, Broder said there are several agencies designed to protect minority rights that could be consolidated. "That makes a lot of sense to me," he said. Once consolidated, instead of having four or five program heads, to whom the state pays "big money," there would be one, Broder said.

"I think you have to look at a lot of different places to find waste," he said.

Lastly, Broder said the attitude within the legislature needs to change. During good financial times, lawmakers look to expand programs, but during more tying times, Broder said the same people should look to cut back, but don't. "I'm afraid that's the way my opponent... and her similarly-minded legislators do business there," he said, adding "I'm not saying republicans don't do that either."

Broder, who said he'd been "a fiscal conservative all my life," continually stressed the need to cut back on programs and spending. "I don't spend my money foolishly, and I don't spend yours either," he said.

To spell out his message, the former legisla-

tor cited a quote from his own letterhead he used during his House term from 1981-83. It states, "Government cannot be all things to all people. Priorities must be established, and we must differentiate between what is necessary and what is merely desirable." The austere words came from Broder himself.

As a freshman legislator, Broder, now 71, made a splash by openly opposing the state budget and advocating his strict financial views. In 1982 he pushed for a law that increased penalties against drunk drivers. "If I wasn't in the legislature, that bill wouldn't have passed," he added.

During his time at the capitol, Broder worked full-time as an attorney. Now, he said, he's "just about retired" from his firm in Colchester, because he's not accepting any new clients. For 15 years Broder was the Colchester town attorney, and he still works as counsel for East Haddam's Zoning Board of Appeals.

He is also on the board of directors for the Colchester Business Association, director of the Yankee Institute, a past present of the Rotary Club and a member of American Legion Post No. 56.

Broder's competition, Democrat Orange, was elected to the House in 1997. She said last week she "certainly welcomes the challenge," and noted her history of "vigilantly watching over this district." In her years on the legislature, Orange said she's worked to help East Haddam with environmental issues and Colchester with



Republican Joe Broder is running for state representative of the 48th district, against Democrat Linda Orange.

sewer and water grants. "I'm definitely proud of my record," she said.

Still, Broder said it was time to appoint new legislators who aren't afraid to say "no."

"I think I have the mindset needed in the legislature if we're going to survive," he said.

# Former Colchester Explorers Revisit Deep Freeze

by Katy Nally

A group of former Antarctic explorers had their chance to reminisce about living on the world's coldest, driest and windiest continent June 12, at a meeting of the New England chapter of the Old Antarctic Explorers Association (OAEA).

About 50 former and current explorers attended, one of whom was Colchester resident Jim Kelly, who made three trips to the chilly continent from 1972-74 with the U.S. Navy.

"It's quite a country; it's unbelievably beautiful," Kelly said. "You have the bluest skies and the whitest snow you can imagine."

The guest speaker at the OAEA meeting was Rich Wolak, who worked and lived in Antarctica for a total of 44 months; spending ten summers and one winter there from 1972-94. For the most part, Wolak was the station manager at the South Pole, but he also coordinated the research program at McMurdo Station, which is 800 miles from the pole and the largest station on Antarctica.

At the OAEA meeting Wolak spoke about a "combination of nostalgia, a travel log, current events and new science," he said last week. He updated the people in attendance about changes made to the face of Antarctica and NASA's endeavors with balloons.

Kelly said the discussion was "interesting to hear what [older explorers] went through, then compare it with what you went through."

When Kelly lived on Antarctica he spent most of his time at McMurdo, which housed 16 men in double bunks, with no running water and very limited heat, he said.

Now the station can house over 1,000 people, many of whom visit the continent for scientific research.

"The changes were really pretty dramatic at

McMurdo," Kelly said. When McMurdo was first constructed in 1955, Kelly said the builders had to sleep in tents on the ground. "From '55 to now, it's like going from an early settler in Plymouth to living in a mansion," Kelly said. "To build any thing at the poles is a huge accomplishment," he added.

Besides McMurdo, Wolak also touched on geographical occurrences that have changed the face of Antarctica. He cited one rare event that recently happened, in which a 24-mile wide piece of the Mertz Glacier snapped off. Wolak said tidal action and water currents can cause these pointy glaciers, also known as ice tongues, to weaken.

Once it began to weaken, the giant piece of ice was no match for, what Wolak called, another "massive iceberg," that came off an ice shelf and made contact with the tongue, snapping it off.

Kelly said Wolak showed aerial photos of these icebergs that were larger than Rhode Island and Connecticut combined.

When Kelly visited the world's coldest continent he usually left in October – just in time for Antarctica's summer. Kelly, who worked as a weather observer for the Navy, would spend 12 hours on the ice, and 12 hours off it, for seven days each week. In his time there, he said he never saw the sunset, because of the extreme latitude.

In addition to the constant sunshine, Kelly also had to adjust to showering only once a week. Because Antarctica is the driest desert in the world, showering more often than once a week could dry out skin.

But, on the plus side, Kelly said there are no native germs in the arctic, so during his entire time at the pole, "I never got a cold or a sniffle." Kelly also noted the cold continent is "prob-



A group of Antarctic explorers met at Gilbertie's Place Saturday, June 12 and discussed the state of the world's coldest continent. Above is Jim Kelly, an Old Antarctic Explorers Association member, at the geographic South Pole in January 1972.

ably the best place in the world to lose weight." He said the body is constantly burning carbohydrates just trying to keep warm.

Although the Antarctica they remember has

somewhat changed, the OAEA meeting gave Kelly, and the other explorers in attendance, the chance to walk down an icy memory lane.

# Owner Hopes to Make Best Burger a Family Destination in East Hampton

by Claire Michalewicz

Residents looking for a place to eat and relax this summer can look no farther than Best Burger, a new restaurant on Route 66 in Cobalt Center. The restaurant opened in April, and its owner, Kevin Knislis, is trying to turn it into a destination for family fun.

"It's exactly like what you could do in your backyard," Knislis said of his menu. Eating out, he said, offers his customers a chance to take a break from cooking.

Many new burger places have been opening in recent years, Knislis said, and he's been checking them out for menu ideas. But what sets him apart, he said, is affordability. Knislis said a family of four could have dinner at Best Burger for under \$25, which was his goal.

"Burgers are my favorite meal," he said, explaining why he decided to open the restaurant. "It's the number one American food."

Knislis, who's trained as a meat cutter and who previously worked managing a grocery store, spent two months restoring the building, putting in hardwood floors, painting the walls a cheery yellow, and putting in interior seating. While the building used to be a burger restaurant, Happy Days, it had been vacant for two years.

Happy Days, Knislis said, had been more focused on a retro 1950s atmosphere, frequently hosting car and motorcycle shows. While he's planning on hosting some of those events, Knislis said his main focus is creating a fun atmosphere for people of all ages.

For Knislis, Best Burger is partly a family affair – while he's the sole owner of the restaurant, he buys his produce and meat next door at Jerry's Market, which his father owns. Knislis said he uses the most local produce he can find, and grinds his beef at the market several times a day, so it's always freshly ground. Because he has a background in meat cutting, Knislis said he knows which cuts of meat to use in his burgers, and he's developed his own blend of

Black Angus beef.

"It makes a difference in putting out the best product possible," Knislis said, explaining that many other burger restaurants used frozen burger patties, and weren't lucky enough to have daily access to a meat grinder. "We don't like that word 'frozen.'"

Knislis said he's had a good response from customers so far, both from local residents and from people passing through the area on Route 66. Despite the focus on burgers, Knislis said he tries to offer something for everybody in his menu. Veggie burgers are available, as well as clam strips, salads, and fries. For dessert, Best Burger offers several ice cream flavors, and makes sundaes, milkshakes and root beer floats.

Knislis lives in New Haven, but he's worked in East Hampton before and is familiar with the area. He said that while he liked the rural atmosphere of the town, he wanted to offer more activities for local residents, and turn his restaurant into a gathering place for families.

To do that, Knislis has been busy organizing events, designed to appeal to many local residents. To attract the crowd that used to eat at Happy Days, Knislis is planning to host car and motorcycle nights on Mondays and Wednesdays, and movie nights every other Thursday. But his main focus is the weekend, when he hopes to draw families. He's hoping to host flea markets, and offer attractions like pony rides and a bounce house for children.

Dan Slasky, one of the cooks at Best Burger, said he enjoys working there. "Kevin's very nice," he said. "He's very caring, and you can tell he really cares about the customers." Slasky said that while he's worked in restaurants before, he likes this job better than the previous ones. "I don't get tired of the smell here, and usually I do," he joked.

Customers don't seem to be getting tired of it, either. Naomi Allbee was eating lunch outside with her granddaughter, Paige. Allbee said



New Haven resident Kevin Knislis opened his new restaurant, Best Burger, in April.

she and Paige had come here before for dinner, and they came back to order the same things – a bacon cheeseburger for herself and a cheeseburger for Paige.

"It's delicious," Allbee said about the burger, adding that she lives in East Hampton and Best Burger is convenient for her. "We like eating outside and watching the trucks go by. It's a good place to sit."

Best Burger will be a seasonal operation – Knislis plans to close it for the winter on Nov. 1. But he said he'll keep busy over the winter, scouting for more locations. Eventually, Knislis

said, he wants to open multiple restaurants, running them as franchises.

"We really just make a fun atmosphere for our customers," Knislis said. "Customers can sit outside and enjoy the best burger in the universe."

Best Burger is located at 363 West High St. (Route 66) in Cobalt Center, and is open from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. Sunday through Thursday, and 11 p.m. to 9 p.m. Friday and Saturday. Visit [www.bestburgercobalt.com](http://www.bestburgercobalt.com) for more information.

# EH Middle School Baseball Team Celebrates Perfect Year

by Claire Michalewicz

When the middle school baseball year wrapped earlier this spring, East Hampton Middle School's team achieved something its head coach had never heard of happening in his 10 years of coaching at that level – a perfect season.

Head coach Michael Mercaldi said he knew his team was talented, but the biggest challenge this season was going out and proving it in 15 different games. The other teams, he said, would all be trying as hard as they could, and it was important to keep his team focused.

Jesse Wheeler, one of the team's captains, said many coaches would have gone easier on the players, knowing that they were so successful, but Mercaldi didn't. "He started emphasizing that we had to practice harder," he said. "He made us try harder, and we got a lot of stuff done."

The coaches said they were impressed with the players' dedication, and the fact that they never got distracted by their perfect 15-0 record.

"It's hard to go into a game undefeated," assistant coach Drew DeBowsky. "There's a lot of pressure, but these guys didn't give in under pressure." DeBowsky said in several games, EHMS started off losing, and managed to come from behind to win.

"They're a great group of kids," DeBowsky said. "They made it enjoyable every week, and every day."

The four captains, along with the rest of the team, have become close over the seasons they've played together. Jesse and his three co-captains, Tanner DeBowsky, Marv Gorgas and Vin Langenfeld, are all in eighth grade, and said this season was a good way to finish their team at the middle school.

Unsurprisingly, the captains say their favor-

ite moments from the season were beating the other teams. Tanner said his most memorable moment was playing Berlin twice, since Berlin has a larger school with a better reputation.

"We knew they would be tough," added Vin. But East Hampton beat them twice, 4-3 the first time and 5-2 the second.

Similarly, Marv said one of his favorite moments was beating Cromwell for the first time, when the team went into the game worried that they were unprepared. They ended up narrowly winning in the last inning, with a score of 13-12.

Mercaldi said his players were not only individually talented, but played well as a team. "They seemed to play very well as a group," Mercaldi said. "The returning guys and new guys all got along very well on and off the field."

His players agree. "Everybody was always in a good mood," said Jesse. "It was really loose. We'd just have fun."

"It just brings everybody together," Tanner added.

Marv agreed, saying that one of the things he liked best about baseball was meeting new people, and was looking forward to continuing playing in the future. Marv, who led the team in hitting with a .667 batting average, said he eventually hopes to make it to the major leagues.

"I've just grown up around [baseball]," Jesse added. "It's a part of my life."

Vin said his favorite part of playing is the unpredictability, and sometimes being surprised by his abilities. "Some plays you don't think you can make," he said, "but you find a way to make the play."

Now that middle school is over for them, all four captains say they're looking forward to try-



The East Hampton Middle School baseball team had a perfect season this year, going 15-0.

ing out for baseball in high school. Tanner said he's excited about being able to play against other high school teams in a different athletic conference. Jesse said that while he's looking forward to high school, he knows the atmosphere will be tougher and more competitive than in middle school. In middle school, he said, the players "have more room to have fun."

For Mercaldi, the final game against Hale Ray Middle School in East Haddam, which East Hampton won 4-0, was one of the biggest highlights of the season. The teams played at night,

which Mercaldi said made the game more exciting. Mercaldi said he knew the players wanted to soak him with Gatorade if they won that final game, and he was happy to oblige. "I'm 6'4, so I crouched down and let them douse me so I didn't get clocked," he said, laughing.

After the game, Mercaldi said, his players asked him if they would have practice after school the next week. Mercaldi said he had to tell his players that the season was over, but was impressed by their dedication. "They didn't want it to end," he said.

# Town Shocked as East Hampton Police Chief Ousted

by Claire Michalewicz

Police Chief Matthew Reimondo is out of a job after Town Manager Jeffery O'Keefe eliminated Reimondo's position on Tuesday.

O'Keefe said the move will save the town money, but others in town think different motivations might be at play.

After a Town Council executive session with O'Keefe and town attorney Jean D'Aquila, the council voted 5-1 to temporarily appoint O'Keefe as police chief, and offer Reimondo a severance package.

The town will also cut two other officers' positions (one through not filling a budgeted position) and an administrative position in July. In addition, O'Keefe has decided not to purchase two new police cars, and will combine the three part-time animal control officers into one full-time and one part-time position, Town Council Chairwoman Melissa Engel read from a press release.

"The police department's costs, for whatever reason, have spiraled out of control," Engel read, later explaining that East Hampton's police costs were 18 percent higher than surrounding towns. In the upcoming year, she said, the town could lose up to \$1 million in state funding. This "rightsizing" of the police department, as Engel and O'Keefe called it, would save the town \$429,000.

Engel said Reimondo learned about the move during a meeting with the town manager on Tuesday afternoon, about an hour and a half before the executive session. With D'Aquila, the town had negotiated the severance package for Reimondo, which he would have three weeks to decide to accept or decline, Engel said.

O'Keefe will serve as acting police chief until the town's ordinances are amended to remove the police chief position. Police sergeant Michael Green has temporarily been promoted to lieutenant, overseeing the daily operations of the department and reporting to O'Keefe. Later, Engel explained, the town would start recruiting for a permanent lieutenant.

"This is a sham," said council member Susan Weintraub, the lone dissenting voter (council member Bill Devine was not present). "This is an absolute sham."

Weintraub also expressed concerns about O'Keefe's ability to manage the police department, asking what his background in police work was. Weintraub drew a connection between the town's suggestion to eliminate Reimondo and the recent sexual harassment allegations against another town official. That official's identity had never been officially con-

firmed, but Weintraub said in a statement on Wednesday that it was O'Keefe who had been accused of sexual harassment by three employees. After an investigation last month, the Town Council voted to take no action against O'Keefe, and Weintraub was the only council member who disagreed.

Firing Reimondo, Weintraub said, was retaliation for the allegations against O'Keefe.

"The people of East Hampton must demand a full investigation and take back their town," Weintraub said. "The wrong man has been fired."

O'Keefe denied the move was retaliatory. "The two situations are completely isolated from each other," he said, adding that the Town Council had thoroughly investigated the harassment allegations and decided to take no action. O'Keefe said he wasn't sure what Reimondo's involvement in the allegations was, but if Reimondo had handled the complaint, he said, "I certainly wouldn't hold anything like that against him."

O'Keefe said he had started looking at police costs in the fall, when he started preparing the 2010-11 fiscal year budget. He said he had been "somewhat hesitant" to discuss cutting the police department with the Board of Finance earlier in the year, but recently made the decision as he learned that the town would be about \$1.5 million in debt in the next fiscal year. The downsizing, he said would substantially reduce that deficit.

Town Council Vice Chairman John Tuttle defended O'Keefe's decision to bring the issue forward without previous discussion. Otherwise, Tuttle said, Reimondo and other officers could have heard about the layoffs through rumors around town hall, which he said could be hurtful to them.

"It's certainly very unfortunate that it affects people," Tuttle added, "especially Matt, who's been a loyal contributor to our community. It's sad, frankly." But, he said, it was O'Keefe's responsibility to do what he could to save money.

As of press time, Reimondo could not be reached for comment.

Green, who said he had just learned about his sudden promotion before the meeting, called the restructuring a "dicey situation." Still, Green said he was confident in his own abilities to run the police department, which includes four other sergeants and 10 patrolmen. He said that while he was happy to take on the responsibilities of a lieutenant, he wished it could have

happened without seeing Reimondo, with whom he'd worked for his entire career, lose his job.

Many of the residents who attended the meeting seemed shocked by the town's sudden move.

"My head is still spinning," Mary Ann Dostaler told the council during the public comment portion of the meeting. "If you think the town was a hostile environment before, just wait." Dostaler asked the Town Council why the issue had never been discussed with the Board of Finance. BOF Chairman Mattie Walton later confirmed that this was the first he had heard about cutting the \$1.73 million police budget, which, along with the rest of the town's budget, passed by referendum in May.

Many residents drew a connection between Reimondo's firing and the recent sexual harassment allegations against O'Keefe.

"It's quite clear on how this was orchestrated and who this was designed to protect," Dostaler said later on in the meeting.

"This is simply payback for one senior town official to keep their job while another loses their job," said Kyle Dostaler, Mary Ann's husband. He added that he felt less safe without a police chief.

"This is ridiculous, and you should be ashamed of yourselves, but you're not," Dostaler continued. His comments were met with applause from several audience members.

Angela Sarahina also questioned the town's motives. "If there's going to be a layoff, taking police out of the picture makes it look bad," she said.

Later on in the meeting, Green tried to allay the public's concerns about safety. He stressed that while he had not been involved in the decision-making process, he was confident that the police would still fulfill their duties. "The police department is still gonna be there," Green said.

\* \* \*

In the regular meeting that followed the special meeting, the council agreed to adopt the Community Water System water rates. Public utilities administrator Vincent Susco explained that to keep the rates consistent with those in surrounding towns, the commodity rate would have to be increased to \$4.72 per 1,000 gallons, and the monthly meter rate to \$11.10, bringing the average monthly bill to \$39.42. The current average bill, O'Keefe said, is \$33.25.

"There's a thought process out there that water should be free," Susco said, explaining

that this was not possible. The rates the council voted to adopt were lower than those necessary to fully support the water system through customer bills, which would be about \$56.50.

In other water-related business, the council voted to schedule a town meeting on a bond resolution for continued development of the municipal water system. O'Keefe explained that East Hampton is ranked number one among communities in Connecticut for eligibility for the state Drinking Water Revolving Loan Fund. The grant is given for "shovel-ready" projects, O'Keefe said, so the town should move toward creating more concrete plans. The cost of the project is \$3.41 million, O'Keefe said, some of which could come from the state grant. The town meeting is scheduled for July 12.

The council also voted to approve the police overtime cost and insurance coverage for the Old Home Days celebration in July. In total, police coverage at the event would cost about \$4,000, O'Keefe explained. Sue Weintraub voted against the motion, explaining that if the town didn't have enough money to support its police force, they should not be paying for coverage.

In their ongoing search for a new location for the Town Hall Annex, Engel said the council had visited several sites in town to evaluate whether they would be appropriate for town offices. Engel said the town had an offer to buy the Goff House for \$150,000, and they would consider entering negotiations. The museum section of the house would remain intact, Engel said. The council also voted to reestablish the Facilities Implementation Task Force to continue studying options for the town hall annex relocation. Engel said the task force would start meeting within a few weeks.

In another major agenda item, the Town Council provided an update about the ongoing issue of noise control near the lake. Council member Thom Cordeiro explained that he and town council vice chairman John Tuttle had recently taken the town's decibel meter to the area around Angelico's Lakehouse Restaurant.

"We believe Angelico's is on to us," Cordeiro said, explaining that the band had switched to an acoustic set when he and Tuttle were nearby. Cordeiro said he and Tuttle would continue taking noise readings, to see what typical decibel levels were on Friday and Saturday nights.

The next Town Council meeting will be held Tuesday, July 13, at 6:30 p.m. at Town Hall, 20 East High St.

# East Hampton School Board Adopts Budget

by Claire Michalewicz

The Board of Education (BOE) voted to officially adopt the school budget at its meeting last Monday, June 14.

Earlier this year, Town Manager Jeff O'Keefe cut \$200,000 from the 2010-11 school budget. In March, the BOE reached an agreement with the teachers' union to spread their expected raises over a period of three years, to help cut costs. This reduction, Superintendent of Schools Dr. Judith Golden explained at the time, would save about \$164,000 in the next fiscal year, which starts July 1.

The BOE took several steps to make up the rest of the reduction. Karen Asetta, director of business services for the district, explained that the savings from the renegotiated contracts were almost equal to what the school system had hoped to save from offering early retirement packages, which no teachers took. Later, how-

ever, two teachers decided that they would retire without taking the package, Asetta said, which saved the district about \$78,000.

The district also saved money by moving Nancy Briere, the former science and math coordinator, to an assistant principal position at the middle school, and by moving science teacher Clive Tucceri to Briere's former position. Tucceri will be replaced by a .4 science teacher position at the middle school.

Additional savings, Asetta explained, came from a reduction in off-site conferences, an agreement from the administrators' union to take three furlough days, and a decision not to lease new copiers. In addition, Asetta said, the district had recently started charging students athletic participation fees at the middle and high schools, and had received \$15,000 more than originally expected.

The changes, including the reductions and the unexpected increases (for the lack of early retirements and a part-time teacher to replace Tucceri) worked out to a savings of \$200,000.

"It did work out well that no one lost their jobs," said Karen Asetta, director of business services with East Hampton public schools, pointing out that all position reductions were through attrition, not layoffs.

BOE member Don Coolican, the only BOE member to vote against the budget, said he didn't like the way the cuts were being managed.

"There's other areas where we could have spent the money," Coolican said this week. He said he feels the town is spending too much on all-day kindergarten, when that money could be used to hire another language arts teacher at the middle school. Coolican said he also dis-

liked the athletic fees, calling it "a tax on the parents of the kids."

BOE member Josh Piteo said he was satisfied with the solution that the BOE had worked out. "The most important thing was that we retained jobs with teachers," Piteo said this week. "The majority of the board were comfortable."

Piteo stressed that while this upcoming year's budget was workable, that didn't mean that the BOE wouldn't have to keep adjusting budgets in the future. "There are so many unknowns," Piteo said, about the ongoing issues with state funding. "It's hard to make these decisions now."

The next BOE meeting will be held on Monday, June 28, at 7:00 p.m. in the high school library.

## Salem Police News

6/20: Tiff Pescatello, 47, of 24 Maynard Rd., was charged with disorderly conduct and third-degree assault, State Police said.

## Colchester Police News

6/15: Dominick Lombardo, 30, of 48 Kmick Ln., was charged with disorderly conduct and risk of injury to a minor, State Police said.

6/15: Robert Kempesta, 49, of 40 Chapman Rd., Marlborough, was charged with disorderly conduct and threatening, State Police said.

6/17: Steven Mundahl, 60, of 26 Thames St., Springfield, MA, was charged with failure to drive in proper lane and DUI, State Police said.

## Portland Police News

6/15: James Fritz, 61, of 39 Carrier Ct., Southington, was charged with DUI and evading responsibility, Portland Police said.

6/20: Adam Wood, 24, of 83 Bayberry Rd., Glastonbury, was charged with fourth-degree sexual assault and risk of injury to a minor, police said.

## From the Editor's Desk

# Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

As Lindsay Fetzner writes about in a story in this week's *Rivereast*, the Hebron Board of Selectmen is considering bifurcating its budgets. In other words, the selectmen are thinking about holding separate votes each May on the town (i.e., general government) and the Board of Education budgets, as opposed to lumping the two of them together as is currently the case.

It might not be a bad idea.

If you followed the Hebron budget saga this year, you've probably guessed that the first referendum defeat for the spending plan – as well as the second one – didn't have a whole lot to do with the general government side of things. People were displeased (in some case, very vocally displeased) with the Board of Education end, chiefly with the proposal to expand all-day kindergarten and also with decisions regarding administrative staffing.

But when the Board of Finance decided, after the second failed referendum, that enough was enough, and cut the school board's proposed spending increase down to zero percent, it did so to the general government side too, because it obviously wouldn't have been fair otherwise. So town government saw its budget cut, even though, were it not for the strong feelings regarding the BOE, the spending plan likely would have been approved at the beginning of May, on its first trip before the voters.

So, basically, general government saw its budget cut because voters weren't happy with the school board's budget. That doesn't seem quite right, and bifurcating the budgets could help address that.

(And lest anyone think I've got it out for the Board of Ed., I really don't. There could just as easily be a scenario where people are fine with the school board's spending plan but upset with the spending at Town Hall. This year just happened to be the other way around.)

Another benefit to bifurcating: When a budget fails at referendum, it's the job of the Board of Finance to make any adjustments to spending plans' bottom lines. Bifurcating could give finance board members a better idea of how much they should cut, if any. For example, if the Board of Education budget fails by 50 votes, but the general government one fails by 300, the finance board might guess that a few minor nips and tucks would probably be all the school budget needed, whereas the general government one might need more extensive refurbishing.

So, bifurcation could help point the Board of Finance in the direction it needs to go, and that wouldn't be a bad thing either.

Obviously, since the selectmen just formed a bifurcation study committee at their meeting last week, we're a ways off from any sort of decision on the matter. But I'm interested

to see how it all turns out.

\* \* \*

Those of you who read my column last week, and agreed with me about Gov. Rell's veto of the off-track betting facilities in Manchester, New London and Windham, were probably pleased Monday when the state General Assembly overturned that veto, along with five others.

The vote on the OTB veto wasn't close, with the House voting 110-28 to override it and the Senate 26-10, but there was some discussion up at the Capitol about it. Senate Minority Leader John McKinney, a Republican, was quoted by the website [ctnewsjunkie.com](http://ctnewsjunkie.com) as saying, "Shame on us if gambling is the key to our success for economic prosperity in Connecticut."

But Senator Edith Prague, a Democrat whose 19th District includes *Rivereast* towns Andover and Hebron, made it clear that if the bill led to new jobs, she was for it.

"I wish there were other ways that we could create more jobs. I guess I have to choose between my dislike of the expansion of gambling and the creation of jobs," Prague said.

Okay, so Edith isn't exactly gung-ho about the OTB expansion. But at least she supports it, and for a good reason. While in my column last week I dwelled on the apparent hypocrisy in Rell's veto, the fact is the proposed OTB expansions in the three towns would have led to more jobs. And in at least one of the towns where the expansion was proposed, Rell's veto would have cost existing jobs. Damian Fox, part-owner of the Thirsty Frog in Windham, was quoted in last week's *Journal Inquirer* as saying his business would close for good after the veto, as he was "just not financially able to continue." The entire establishment, it seems, was undergoing renovations and being structured around its OTB parlor.

But now the new OTB facilities can be added and business will likely increase not just at the Thirsty Frog but at Shea's in Manchester, where a betting parlor had been proposed. (The New London OTB location would be in a yet-to-open downtown restaurant.) Overriding the veto was a good decision.

\* \* \*

In closing, as I mentioned last week, extra photos from the graduation ceremonies in the *Rivereast* towns are now available on our website. This week's paper includes stories about the Bacon Academy and East Hampton High School graduations, so pictures from those ceremonies have been added to the website. (Don't worry, the RHAM and Portland High School graduation photos from last week are still up there.) Just go to [glcitizen.com](http://glcitizen.com) and click on 'Event Photos.'

\* \* \*

See you next week.

# Obituaries

## East Hampton

### Margaret L. Brideau

Margaret L. Brideau, 90, of Farmingdale, ME, formerly of East Hampton, passed away June 14 at the Hospice House in Auburn, ME, with her family at her side.

Margaret was predeceased by her son, Dwight Robertson.

She is survived by her husband, Donald Brideau of Farmingdale, ME, daughter, Lynette Stevens of East Hampton, grandson, Terrance Robertson Sr. of Enfield, and two great-grandchildren, Kelly Marie Snell and Terrance Robertson, Jr. of East Hartford.

Per her request the burial will be at the convenience of the family.

In Margaret's memory, donations may be made to the Hospice House, 236 Stetson Road, Auburn, ME 04210.

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

## Marlborough

### Cameron Markham Merritt

Cameron Markham Merritt, 3 months, completed his journey on earth and passed quietly in his parents' arms at home in Marlborough on Friday, June 18.

Though his time was limited here, he touched many lives and was an inspiration to his family. Faced with insurmountable odds upon birth, he defied them and fought hard to spend 14 weeks with those who loved him the most.

He leaves his parents, Mark and Melanie Merritt of Marlborough; his stepbrother, Michael Figueiredo; his maternal grandparents, Mark and Cathy Ribera of Middletown; his fraternal grandparents, Richard and Betty Merritt of Marlborough; and a number of aunts, uncles and cousins.

A memorial service will be held at the Marlborough Congregational Church today, June 25, at 4 p.m., with a reception immediately following.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the NICU at John Dempsey Hospital 263 Farmington Ave., Farmington, or to the Marlborough Congregational Church.

## Colchester

### David William Fitzgerald

David William Fitzgerald, 78, of Colchester, beloved husband of Anne (Blashke) Fitzgerald, passed away Monday morning, June 21, at home. Born Sept. 5, 1931 in New Bedford, MA, he was a son of the late William and Catherine (Purcell) Fitzgerald.

Mr. Fitzgerald served proudly with the U.S. Marine Corps as an Aircraft Mechanic during the Korean War for three years. Following his honorable discharge at the rank of corporal in September 1954, he went to work for Pratt & Whitney, retiring as foreman of fuel cells after having worked 37 years before his retirement in 1991. Over the years, he was an avid reader and loved everything about the water, especially watching the boats from the beach on his yearly trips to Maine.

He was the loving husband of Anne for 53 years, devoted father to LeeAnne Wambolt of Plainville, Suzanne Rutchick of Woodsville, NH, Paula Smith and her husband, Stephen of Phoenix, AZ, Kathleen Anderson and her husband, Steven of East Hampton and Thomas Fitzgerald and his wife, Marianne of Annapolis, MD; poppa to Vincent, Matthew and Jonathon Rutchick, Molly and Emily Wambolt, Ryan, Sean and Julia Anderson, Courtney and Paige Smith and Jack and Brady Fitzgerald; Great Grandfather to Eleana Rutchick; brother to Frank Fitzgerald and his wife, Lois of Essex, Joan Marino and her husband, Robert of Niantic and Catherine Deane of East Hampton; uncle to numerous nieces and nephews; and friend to many.

Friends can call starting at 9:30 a.m. today, June 25, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. The celebration of the memorial liturgy will follow at 11 a.m. at St. Andrew Church, 128 Norwich Ave., Colchester. Committal with full military honors will follow in the New St. Andrew Cemetery, Colchester.

In lieu of flowers, donations in his memory may be made to the Haitian Health Foundation, 97 Sherman St., Norwich, CT 06360 or to his church.

For online condolences, visit [www.auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com](http://www.auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com).

## Portland

### Sebastian Milardo

Sebastian "Mickey" Milardo, 91, of Michael Drive, Portland, husband of the late Delena (Scaglia) Milardo, died peacefully Thursday, June 17, at Middlesex Hospital, surrounded by his loving and devoted family. Born in Portland on Jan. 8, 1919, he was a son of the late Joseph J. and Eleanor (Salemi) Milardo and had been a lifelong resident of Portland and member of Saint Mary's Church of Portland.

He studied music at an early age and formed his own band called Mack Miller's Orchestra, which played locally. He joined the Army in 1940, where he played for the Army Air Corps marching band and the dance band. After his honorable discharge in 1945, he toured with many well-known groups including Gene Wisniewski and His Harmony Bells Orchestra and the Walt Solek Orchestra, and they made many recordings. He enrolled in the Julius Hart School of Music, where he graduated with a teaching degree. He opened and was co-owner of the Portland Shoe Mart.

While still playing locally in clubs such as the Old Town Hall Inn in East Hartford, The Cloud Nine Lounge in Bradley Field, playing for the Landerman Orchestra, he was co-owner of Milardo Brothers Inc. in Portland from 1957 through 1999. He continued to play music with the Lloyd Gillian Trio until 2000.

He is survived by his son Michael Milardo of Westbrook and his wife Dodie, his daughter, Lenore Trifiro of Wethersfield and her husband Allan, daughter Sheryl Milardo of Old Lyme; brother and leader of the Musical Cavaliers, Joseph J. Milardo of Portland and fiancée Rita Smithwick; sisters Angelina Nagle of East Hartford and Mary Jean Little of Portland and her late husband Pat Little; grandson Joseph Sebastian Milardo of Avon, his wife Kristen and his great-grandchildren Anthony and Cole; granddaughter Nicole Delene Trifiro of Wethersfield and her fiancé Alex DiCicco; his sister-in-laws, Anne Elliott and her late husband Bill of San Leandro, CA, Doris O'Rourke and her late husband Jack of Glastonbury, and many nieces and nephews, in particular his Godchild Karen Milardo of Portland.

Besides his wife, he was predeceased by brothers Salvatore J. Milardo of Middletown and wife Josephine, Anthony J. Milardo of Portland and wife Lorraine, Louis Milardo of Barefoot Bay, Florida, and sisters Josephine Russo of Portland and her husband Frank, Rose Golia of Middletown and husband Tom, and Valentina "Dolly" Pizzaferrato of Melbourne, Florida and her husband Joseph, and his sister-in-law, Gustina Scaglia of New York, NY.

Besides his great talent and passion for music, and wood craftsmanship, Mickey is most remembered for his love of his family, of people and entertaining, his keen business sense, his refined taste in automobiles, dapper fashion and quick wit, his faithful black lab Mandy, and recent interest in impressionistic painting which donned him the nickname "Mickasso."

Mickey's family would like to acknowledge their gratitude for those individuals who most recently shared in his care-giving, in particular his dear Mila Schmiedel of Cromwell. In his final days, Mickey was comforted by the compassionate staff of the Middlesex Hospital Hospice Unit, in particular his niece Linda Milardo of Portland, and for this his family is especially grateful.

Funeral services were held Monday, June 21, from Biega Funeral Home, 3 Silver St., Middletown, followed by a funeral liturgy at St. Mary's Church, 51 Freestone Ave., Portland. Burial in St. Mary's Cemetery, Portland. Friends called at Biega Funeral Home Sunday, June 20.

Donations may be made to the Middlesex Hospital Weiss Hospice Unit, c/o Dept. of Philanthropy, 28 Crescent St., Middletown or to the Portland EMT Team, PO Box 71, Portland, CT 06480 or the Portland High School Music Department, 95 High St., Portland, CT 06480.

Messages of condolences may be made online at [www.biegafuneralhome.com](http://www.biegafuneralhome.com).

## Salem

### Mary Louise McCready

Mary Louise (Anderson) McCready, 90, of Salem and formerly of Greentree, PA, widow of the late Thomas McCready, passed away Monday morning, June 21, at the Harrington Court GHC Center in Colchester. Born March 28, 1920 in Snohomish, WA, she was the daughter of the late Lawrence and Nettie (Redfoot) Anderson.



On Dec. 23, 1939, she and Thomas were married in Washington, PA and shared 70 beautiful years of marriage before he predeceased her on Jan. 5, 2010. Together, they raised their family in Greentree, to whom she was ever devoted. After her husband's retirement, they lived in Belle Vernon, PA, and Steubenville, OH, before moving to Salem to be close to family.

She is survived by four daughters and sons-in-law, Dona McCready-Lewis and William of Sun City, AZ, Sandra McCready-Bianco and Rick of Sun City Center, FL, Cherile and Rick Johnston of Macks Creek, MO, and Timi and David Bronson of Salem; a brother, James Anderson of Pennsylvania; seven grandchildren; 12 great-grandchildren; and numerous extended family members and friends.

In lieu of flowers, donations in her memory may be made to the Ross Adult Day Center, 165 McKinley Ave., Norwich, CT 06360 or to the Gardner Lake Vol. Fire Dept., 429 Old Colchester Road, Salem, CT 06420.

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

For online condolences, visit [www.auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com](http://www.auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com).

## East Hampton

### Ruby Armstrong Dimock

Ruby (Virginia) Armstrong Dimock, wife of the late Jared Gilbert Dimock, passed away peacefully Sunday, June 20, at Cobalt Lodge in Cobalt. She was born Jan. 11, 1915, to Clifford and Luella Armstrong.

Most of her adult life was spent in the Middletown and Cromwell area. She was a long-time member of the First Church of Christ of Middletown and later in life became a member of the Rocky Hill Congregational Church. She was a graduate of the Teacher College of Connecticut in New Britain (CCSU). She taught for most of her 25-year career at the Farm Hill School in Middletown and retired in 1968.

She leaves behind a son, Robert J. Dimock and his wife Ann, a daughter, Susan D. Griswold and her husband, Robert all of Portland. Besides her children she leaves four grandchildren, Peter Dimock of Freehold, N.J., Gayle McGowan of Rocky Hill, Kristen Zajac of Portland and Beth Roccapriore of Hebron, and six great-grandchildren.

Ruby was a loving mother and grandmother who was an avid card player, enjoyed boating, vacationing at the Connecticut shoreline and most of all spending time with her family and friends.

The family would like to give special thanks to the staff at Cobalt Lodge and Rehab Center for all their support and loving care while she was a resident.

Funeral services will be private and at the convenience of the family.

In lieu of flowers, contributions may be sent to the Cobalt Lodge Recreation Fund, P.O. Box 246, Cobalt, CT 06414.

## Hebron

### Joseph Alan Laws

Joseph Alan Laws, 44, of Palm Coast, FL, formerly of Hebron, died Sunday, June 20, at the Stuart Meyer Hospice House in Florida. Born in Hartford on Dec. 13, 1965, he lived in Connecticut until moving to Florida in 2006. He was employed by Wal-Mart in Palm Coast, FL.



He was predeceased by his father Melvin Laws and mother Sandra Laws.

He is survived by his loving wife, Jennifer; three children Kyle Shipman, Sarah Laws and Nathan Laws; two brothers, Brian and wife Robin of Colchester, Michael and wife Charlene of Hebron; sister Stacey Bigoness and husband Kevin of Willimantic; and numerous nieces and nephews and other family members.

Joe was a devoted and loving father. He leaves behind many friends, old and new. He enjoyed spending most of his free time with his children. He will be greatly missed.

Services were held in Palm Coast, FL, on Wednesday, June 23. A gathering will be held in Connecticut for friends and family Saturday, July 17, at 1 p.m., at the Hebron Sportsman's Club. All who knew him are welcome.

He will be buried along with his mother whom he loved and missed dearly, in a private service in Avon.

## Andover

### Paul Joseph Kessing

Paul Joseph Kessing, 61, of Andover, died Wednesday, June 23, at home at Rockwall Farm surrounded by friends and family. He was born July 10, 1948, in Elmira, NY, to the late Francis and Helen (Forsyth) Kessing.

Paul and his wife Rita (Rodrigue) Kessing recently returned from a beautiful trip to Scotland in celebration of their 40th wedding anniversary. He was a kind, gentle, loving soul who will be missed by all. Paul had just celebrated 35 years as manager of the West Hartford UConn Co-op bookstore. Besides Rockwall Farm – his family's beloved horse farm – his passions included the Boston Red Sox, UConn women's basketball, taking trips out west, antiques, woodworking and water color art. He also loved his dog, Katie.

Besides his wife, he is survived by his son, Christopher Kessing and his fiancé Christina Gagliardi - whom he loved like a daughter; his brothers, Russell and Kim Kessing of AZ, Robert and Rachel Kessing, Jerome and Blanche Kessing and Frank and Shelly Kessing, all of PA; his sisters, Kathleen Kessing of Elmira, NY, and Ginny and Mike Sheehe.

He was predeceased by a sister, Patricia Kessing Ham.

Family and friends may gather for a visitation to celebrate Paul's life at the Coventry-Pietras Funeral Home, 2665 Boston Tpke. (Route 44), Coventry, today, June 25, from 4-8 p.m. A Mass of Christian Burial will take place Saturday, June 26, at 10 a.m. (please meet at church) at St. Maurice Church, 32 Hebron Rd., Bolton, CT 06043.

In lieu of flowers the family requests all memorial donations be made to the: Multiple Myeloma Research Foundation (attn: Team Pop's Posse), 383 Main Ave., No. 5, Norwalk, CT 06851.

For online condolences, visit [Pietrasfuneralhome.com](http://Pietrasfuneralhome.com).