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This time, the 'yes's had it in Hebron, as residents voted 796-572 Tuesday to pass a \$33.66 million 2010-11 budget.

Hebron Budget Passes On Third Try

by Lindsay Fetzner

The phrase "the third time's the charm" proved true Tuesday, when the \$33.66 million town budget proposal for the 2010-11 fiscal year passed at referendum, after two failed attempts in May.

But not everybody was thrilled with the budget approval, as some in town felt the spending plan was too low.

A total of 1,368 voters turned out Tuesday, who cast 796 'yes' votes and 572 'no' votes.

"I am very happy that it passed," said Jeff Watt, chairman of the Board of Selectmen (BOS). Watt said the vote proved that "enough had been done [for residents] to come out and support" the budget.

After the referendum results were announced, the BOF held a special meeting to set the mill rate. The mill increase is .77 mills, which translates to a 2.72 percent tax increase from the current year. The new mill rate is 28.94. The budget will go into effect July 1.

The budget reflects a zero percent increase to the town and education budgets, which was the result of a decision made by the Board of Finance (BOF) after the budget was defeated the second time in a 773-705 vote on May 18. The town budget was trimmed \$19,546 and the Board of Education's spending plan was cut by \$127,239.

Out of the 6,259 registered voters in town, about 22 percent of residents came out to vote on Tuesday. The turnout is slightly lower than

the May 18 referendum, which drew nearly 24 percent of the registered voters. The first referendum, on May 4, had a turnout of roughly 28 percent.

The town government portion of the budget sits at \$8.83 million and the local school board at \$11.716 million. The total budget is a 1.52 percent increase over the last fiscal year.

BOF member Mal Leichter said the budget that was approved by the voters is "under funded."

"I can't help but believe that we're going to have either the Board of Ed or the Board of Selectmen coming back looking for supplemental appropriations," Leichter said, which he will have a "difficult time approving" due to the fact that they will be "essentially getting more."

Although the town will not have any additional referendums, and the budget has been passed, Leichter said, "I don't think there's anything to be joyful about." He drew attention to the nearly \$9,000 that the town spent over the past month to approve the budget, something he is "not thrilled about."

Leichter said the residents that were initially opposed to the budget, but after the the BOF cuts changed their views to approve the budget, are "saying it's behind us." However, Leichter said the schools and the town will now have to deal with a zero percent increase to their budget and the implications it will have on the

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Portland Pride Shines Through on Memorial Day

by Claire Michalewicz

On a warm, sunny Sunday afternoon, Portland residents gathered to watch the town's 93rd annual Memorial Day parade. With horses and bands and lots of miniature cars, the parade made its way down Main Street and ended with a solemn ceremony at Veterans' Memorial Park behind town hall.

Local organizations in colorful floats, town officials on foot and in cars, and the town's Boy Scout and Girl Scout troops all joined in the parade. Other highlights were the First Company Governor's Horse Guards, the oldest continually-active mounted cavalry unit in the country, collections of antique cars and fire trucks, and the marching bands from Portland's high school and middle school.

"The parade was great," Portland High School Band Director Kristin Novak said after the parade. "I couldn't have planned it any better." Novak noted that the band, which rotated between four songs in the parade, played "You're A Grand Old Flag" just as they marched under the massive flag hanging between two fire truck ladders near Middlesex Avenue.

Despite the serious nature of the holiday, the parade wasn't entirely somber —dozens of Shriners from two temples, the Sphinx Shrine in Newington and the Melha Hadji in Springfield, MA, joined in the festivities. The Sphinx

band played from a brightly colored bus, while other Shriners circled down Main Street in a variety of go-karts, motorcycles and miniature cars.

The parade floats were entered in a competition, and with their model of a soldier shooting a water gun from a tank, Cub Scout Pack 15 took first place. YMCA Camp Ingersoll came in second, with a truck decked out in the theme of "Protecting Our Freedom." Smiling volunteers in American flag hats walked alongside the truck, carrying signs representing different sections of the Bill of Rights. In third place was the Middletown Power Squadron, which is based in Portland and advocates safe boating.

After turning onto Waverly Avenue and stopping behind Town Hall, marchers and spectators gathered for speeches and a 21-gun salute from a military honor guard in a ceremony to honor those who fought and died in wars. Parade marshal Major Tommy DeRing, from the American Legion Ormont Post 29, pointed out the new sign that had been constructed behind Town Hall, officially declaring the area to be Veterans' Memorial Park. DeRing also read the names of several Portland veterans who had died since Memorial Day last year.

Reverend Jane Hawken, from the First Con-

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Members of Portland's Veterans Affairs Committee stop under the huge American flag hung over Main Street while marching in the town's 93rd annual Memorial Day parade on Sunday.

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community. Leichter was one of two BOF members who did not vote in favor of trimming the town and BOE budget to a zero percent increase on May 18. The vote was 4-2, with Leichter and Donna Ferree opposed.

Tina Marie Blinn, a BOE member, said the results of the referendum were “disappointing.” “We were actually hoping that it would not pass so that money could be restored,” she said, “and it wouldn’t be such a hit.”

Although Blinn had suspected that the voters would pass the budget, still, she said she “expected more from people.” Blinn identified parents as the “one demographic that you think would support you.” However, she said she understands that “they are busy” with the demands associated with being a parent.

The BOE has a lot of work ahead of them, Blinn said, in deciding where to make cuts. “Members on the board each have their own ideas,” she said. “And they are very different from one another.” The board will discuss budget cuts at their next regularly scheduled meeting Thursday, June 10, at 7 p.m., at Gilead Hill School.

Before the votes were tallied, many residents still voiced unease with the proposed budget. Although Bill Custance said “the town did a responsible job of keeping [the budget] at a minimum,” he felt that the “administrative portion of the [BOE] budget is too high.”

“It never gets cut,” he said. “And by default, it hurts the kid’s by cutting their programs.”

Kathy Segerson said she thought the budget was “too low,” but still voted ‘yes.’ “I was afraid if I voted ‘no,’ they would lower it even more,” she said.

On the contrary, an Amston Lake resident said the budget was “still too high.” Karl, who

did not provide his last name, said, “there are a lot of cuts that can be made and a lot of wasteful spending.” Karl said in light of today’s economy, people should “learn to live within their means and stop overspending.”

Karl also addressed elected officials. “They work for us,” he said. “We don’t work for them.” He said he felt they too needed to “learn to live within a budget.”

Resident Bruce DeGray, a 50-year resident, agreed with Karl. “I still say, in my mind, it’s too much,” he said. “It could go lower.”

However, DeGray predicted that the budget would pass. “Everyone is saying ‘vote yes,’ ‘vote yes,’” he said.

Seven-year BOE member Mark Allaben conducted an exit poll in an effort to gauge residents’ feelings on the proposed budget. The poll, which he conducted entirely on his own, contained four questions. The first asked ‘Did you vote’ with a choice of ‘yes’ or ‘no.’ The second and third questions asked if the town and school budgets, respectively, were ‘too high,’ ‘about right’ or ‘too low.’ The last question asked, “Should the Board of Finance add back money for music, Spanish and challenge and enrichment (C&E) in the schools?” with a choice of ‘yes’ or ‘no.’

Allaben said he was inclined to conduct the poll due to the fact that the town did not organize one, and sentiments from residents who wanted one to be completed.

“It is very difficult for elected officials to understand from a yes/no vote,” he said. The poll, he hoped, would offer a “little more information on the process,” which he said is “the key.” “The more information the better,” Allaben said.



As the foremost sign indicates, not everyone was thrilled with Tuesday’s budget passage, as some in town thought the spending plan had been cut too much.

Less than an hour before the results were announced, Allaben estimated that 40 percent of voters took the time to complete the exit poll. “I got a lot of comments from people,” he said. Allaben said if the budget passed, he would target the June 10 BOE meeting to reveal the results.

With the budget now approved, Watt said, the next steps for the town will involve identi-

fying core services and priorities in the community. He said Town Manager Bonnie Therrien will focus on highlighting those services with elected officials and residents. The goal is to prioritize the core services before the end of the year, identifying the costs associated with them, and then to present them to the public. The recommendations will be used as a guideline for the 2011-12 budget.

Portland Pride cont. from Front Page

gregational Church of Portland, gave the invocation, and Reverend James Reemts, from Zion Lutheran, gave a blessing later in the ceremony.

“We honor the bravery and commitment of those who have fought and died,” said Hawken in her prayer. “On this day of celebration, lift up the hearts of those who hunger for justice and peace.”

“Every year, I think it’s a better parade,” said First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield, “and this year is no exception.” She thanked the residents who came out to view the parade, and also thanked the parade volunteers, who she said showed “the true American spirit.”

Parade Committee Chair Sara Sterry Rutter also spoke, noting that it was the first time she decided to publicly speak in her 12 years of organizing the parade. Rutter said Portland owed a debt of gratitude to those who had served in the military, and went on to thank several businesses and residents who she said were a huge help in keeping the parade running smoothly.

DeRing then introduced U.S. Army Sergeant

David Kuzminski, the parade’s keynote speaker, who recently returned from Afghanistan.

“I feel honored to be able to address all of you today,” Kuzminski said. He explained that when parade organizer Rutter asked him to speak, he started thinking about the looming deadline for writing a speech.

“I kept on thinking of time, and how time turns into experience,” Kuzminski said. He talked about some of the monumental experiences that people have in their lives – graduations, weddings, the birth of children – and said that “some of these wonderful experiences have been forgone by those who served.”

After the parade, Rutter explained that even though the town had reduced the parade’s budget this year, the parade was still a success. Because many residents came forward with donations, Rutter said, she didn’t find the preparation process more difficult than usual. “The community came together to honor our veterans,” she said. “When push came to shove, people came through.”

“I am very, very proud of the community I live in,” she added.

Andover BOS Appoints New Member, Discusses Tax Issues

by Lindsay Fetzner

The Board of Selectmen (BOS) appointed Linda Knowlton to the board on Wednesday evening, filling the Democratic position that Susan England had vacated the day before.

“Sue is an outstanding representative,” First Selectman Bob Burbank said. “It is very unfortunate that we are losing a member of her caliber.”

England submitted her letter of resignation on May 5, citing family issues as the reason for leaving her post. The resignation took effect June 1. She was a member of the BOS for almost seven years.

The recommendation to appoint Knowlton came from the Democratic Town Committee. Presently, Knowlton is the chair of the Economic Development Commission.

“I agree we have an outstanding candidate,” Burbank said. “She is an extremely capable person. I am sure she will be a really good, informative member.”

Burbank also announced that the town received an A1 rating from Moody’s Investors Service, based in New York City. In the corre-

spondence with Andover from Moody’s, Associate Analyst Matthew Wong said that the town has a “stable outlook.”

Moody’s conducts credit ratings, research and risk analysis, and assigns various ratings rankings, ranging from a low of NR to a high of AAA, according to their website.

“A1 is a stable rating,” Burbank said.

Burbank also discussed a list of real estate, personal property and motor vehicles on a “suspense report” compiled by the tax collector. “These particular taxes are deemed uncollectible,” Burbank said.

For a majority of the motor vehicles, Burbank said either the owners have passed away or have moved out of state and cannot be located. For much of the real estate, the town is unable to attach any assets due to the fact that the people have no assets in their name. Burbank said this has gone on “for a multitude of years.”

Burbank said the town has “aggressively gone after non-taxpayers for a number of years” and is now down to “the hard core group” which have been consistently unavailable or have not

paid taxes during the “multitude of collection proceedings.”

The town will continue to try to collect the taxes if the opportunity becomes available, Burbank said, but quarterly mailings are costing the town a large sum of money.

“All avenues have been checked,” he said. “And we did in fact turn them over to a collection agency.”

Also, in a letter to the BOS dated May 26, resident Dianne Grenier urged the board to compile an annual town report. “The Andover Town Charter stipulates very clearly under Chapter IV: Board of Selectmen, Section 402: General Powers and Duties, item E. to compile the Annual Town Report,” Grenier said in her correspondence. “In the past five years, only one Andover annual report has been issued (2006-07 year ending June 30, 2007).”

Grenier requested that an annual report committee be established consisting of three residents who have volunteered to be on the committee, “so they may start to gather information and formulate a plan for the 2009-10

Andover annual report.”

In response to Grenier’s request, Burbank said this is something he will “jump into,” along with the help of the volunteers. Burbank said he will contact the interested parties and “get all the information needed for the annual report.”

However, Burbank said he felt it was not necessary to form a committee, due to the fact that it would be subject to the rules of boards and commissions. “Assigning certain duties to certain people,” Burbank said, in addition to gathering information, “compiling it and putting it in the right form” would be enough to get the process started.

“I agree it is something that should be forthcoming,” Burbank said.

Selectman Jay Lindy agreed with Burbank, and urged that the town “should get back on track” with compiling the report.

The next scheduled BOS meeting is on July 7 at 7 p.m. in the Community Room of the Town Office Building.

Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

Not that it had much of a carry-over effect, but the Mets had a pretty phenomenal week last week. From Tuesday to Thursday, they beat the division-leading Phillies three straight times. Not only beat them, shut them out for three straights games.

Yes, the defending National League champions went 27 straight innings without scoring a single run.

It was the first time the Mets had shut out the same team for three consecutive games since 1969 – the days of Seaver and Koosman. And, it was just the third time since 1876 that a team took three straight games from a first-place opponent without allowing a single run. The Orioles did it to the Red Sox in 1974, and the Washington Senators did it to the Philadelphia A's in 1913.

It's been a year of rare feats in baseball – and the season's just two months old. Last Saturday, the Phillies' Roy Halladay pitched a perfect game. It was just the 20th perfect game thrown in all 100-plus years of baseball history but, oddly, it was the second one thrown this season. Heck, it was the second one thrown during *the month of May*. (Oakland's Dallas Braden threw one on May 9.) The only other time there have been two perfect games in one season was 1880, when Worcester's Lee Richmond topped Cleveland 1-0, and just five days later Providence's Monte Ward blanked Buffalo by a 5-0 score. (Yup, there used to be big-league baseball teams in Worcester, Providence and Buffalo.)

Also last weekend was one of the strangest on-the-field baseball injuries I've ever heard of. (There have been plenty of freaky off-the-field injuries over the years.) The Angels' Kendry Morales hit a game-winning, walk-off grand slam. As has become baseball tradition, as Morales rounded third he started happily bounding home, while his teammates waited to mob him at the plate. In Morales' first attempt to jump on home plate, he apparently missed the base, so he tried it again, and landed awkwardly on his ankle.

Morales had to be carted off the field, and X-rays later revealed he'd broken his left ankle. He was supposed to have surgery last Sunday, but the swelling was too severe, so doctors opted to wait a week. He's not expected back until September.

It's terrible that something so joyful – a boisterous celebration of a winning hit – ended so, so badly. And you can be sure it has teams all over baseball re-thinking how they cele-brate walk-off hits. Like I said, it was one of the freakiest on-the-field injuries I've ever seen. Hopefully, it never happens again.

So yeah, in a season of strange baseball occurrences, you have the Mets and their incredible three straight shutouts of the Phillies. As I said at the start of the column, it didn't have much of a carry-over effect. The Mets have been a lousy road team this season; they've got a *much* better record home at Citi Field than away. After the Phillies series, the

Metropolitans traveled to Milwaukee, and proceeded to lose two of the next three games. They then got crushed in San Diego on Monday, 18-6.

But the Mets are still in good shape in the standings. As of Tuesday afternoon, they were just 3 and a half games out of first. Of course, so were two other teams in the division; it's been an incredibly tight first two months for the National League East.

* * *

If you read the *Rivereast* cover to cover each week – or at least do so with the Colchester section – you've no doubt seen the Colchester fire calls, a collection of incidents the town's volunteer fire department responds to every week. This week, one particular incident caught my eye: On May 26, at 8:29 a.m., a call came into the fire department for a "cow rescue." Naturally, I just had to get more details about this.

A cow at a Prospect Hill Road farm was feeding at its trough when it apparently decided to really dig in; I guess it was hungry. So, it stuck the front part of its body through the feeder bars, and apparently got stuck. (*Winnie the Pooh and the Honey Tree* immediately sprang to mind.) Fortunately, one of the firefighters that responded to the scene was able to help the farmer lift up the cow's front legs and push it back through the bars. The cow was none the worse for wear, although, fire department administrative assistant Jean Walsh supposed, it was perhaps "a little freaked out."

* * *

It's National Doughnut Day! (Yes, I still prefer the old-fashioned way of spelling "doughnut.") And lest you think this is just a promotion cooked up by a certain ubiquitous chain of doughnut shops, National Doughnut Day is a tradition that goes back more than 70 years. According to the *San Francisco Chronicle*, the Salvation Army started the holiday in 1938, as a way to remember the period in World War I when Salvation Army volunteers handed out doughnuts to soldiers on the front lines. (The volunteers who provided the treats, by the way, were all women, and they were nicknamed "doughgirls.")

During the World War I era, the *Chronicle* says, doughnuts were "exotic European creations." But after the war ended, and the soldiers returned home, they grew nostalgic for the doughnuts (as for the female volunteers who served them, the *Chronicle* surmises), and, boom, a fatty but delicious industry was born.

So, even if you don't normally chow down on them, have a doughnut today; it's practically your patriotic duty. The aforementioned Dunkin' Donuts is giving away a free one with each medium beverage purchased. While several different varieties of doughnut tickle my fancy, my favorite is perhaps the Boston Crème. The chocolate on top, the custardy filling inside....it's terrific.

* * *

See you next week.

Hindsight is Crystal Clear Success in Marlborough

by Katy Nally

Although Marlborough is his former home, for young filmmaker Sean Hanley, it's still where his heart is – and his homage to the town, *Hindsight*, proves this.

For the past two years, Hanley has dedicated hundreds of hours documenting small town life and editing the footage to create his senior thesis project, a 14-minute film called *Hindsight*.

Hindsight premiered last Saturday, May 29, at the Marlborough Arts Center. About 125 people packed into the center, and some were left with standing room only, Marlborough Arts Center director Donna Ulloa said. "It was spectacular," she said. "He pulled it all together."

Hanley's project was a eulogy, a celebration and "one last hurrah," all rolled into one, he said.

Hanley's parents lived in Marlborough for 25 years, until they decided to move to Michigan in 2006, just after Hanley wrapped up his first year at Emerson College in Boston. Now, having just graduated, Hanley said *Hindsight* was his chance to "look back at it all...so you can start to move on from it."

"I felt like my time in Marlborough was actually cut short compared to my friends," he said. "It was almost like there wasn't that natural transition out of the town when I went to Boston."

Hindsight follows the progression of time in reverse and uses the seasons as a back drop, starting with fall, to summer, to spring, to winter. "In a small-town community like Marlborough, the lifestyle, rituals and activities people do are essentially controlled by the seasons," he said.

In the film, RHAM High School's graduation comes before the prom, then goes to the Memorial Day parade and so on. Hanley said he chose the backward timeline as a "way to try and interpret the way that memory works."

"That was a way to reflect on the whole process of the film and the act of looking backward," he said.

Not only was the progression of time altered,

but Hanley also "played with the speed a lot." Some moments in his life went rushing by – like high school, which he called "a blur." Others "kind of lingered" and Hanley depicted those moments in slow motion, capturing a waving flag and a marching band at the parade.

"I wanted it to be an experimental documentary," he said.

Hanley also used time lapses to shoot at RHAM and the center of town. From the onset, he said he knew he wanted really "stylized cinematography." In fact, *Hindsight* was nominated for two Evvy Awards at Emerson, for Outstanding Editing and Cinematography, and it won in the Cinematography category, Hanley said.

For most of 2009, Hanley was shooting throughout Marlborough and dragging his equipment from events to scenic areas. Because he worked by himself most of the time, Hanley said many of the sounds were not recorded. *Hindsight* also never had a script, so narration wasn't an option.

Originally, Hanley said, he wanted to combine his home movies with his new footage, but this never happened. Instead, he used the sound from many home videos and overlapped them onto his new shots. Hanley said he filmed a photo shoot before prom and used sound recordings from his sister's prom in 2002. He also used his own swimming lesson sounds from 1990 over footage of kids at Lake Terramuggus. The outcome "worked perfectly."

"Everything had the feeling of nostalgia to it," he said.

Other, scenic shots, Hanley said he sometimes used the sound library available at Emerson, or recorded around Boston.

From September 2009 to February 2010, Hanley edited *Hindsight*. After amassing about six hours of footage, he said the hardest part was whittling that down to a short film. Because there was "such a variety of footage," Hanley said he chose "themes" like the Hebron Harvest Fair and summertime at the lake.

"I knew I had these chunks and I had to fig-



Sean Hanley, a former Marlborough resident, recently finished his short film *Hindsight* about small town life, which premiered last Saturday, May 29 at the Marlborough Arts Center.

ure out how to join these scenes together," he said.

Some scenes were cut entirely, but, in the end Hanley said he "really picked the best of the best."

After nearly two years of work, Hanley said he was glad he chose Marlborough as the focal point for his senior thesis. "I think it was a very interesting subject to document," he said. In making the film, Hanley said he discovered new areas in town and had the chance to reminisce about old ones.

Although *Hindsight* is personal in nature, Hanley said those who did not grow up in Marlborough, or New England for that matter, can still relate to the material. "The film is a

little vague," he said. "It's both a straight portrait of the town...and a very subjective portrait based on what I experienced."

Many of the shots, like the Easter service, the fair, the parade and graduation are "things that I see as Americana," Hanley said.

"Young and old I think people can relate to it in some way," he said.

Indeed, those who attended the screening of *Hindsight* appreciated the film and its creator. "There was a standing ovation at the end of it, which was really great," Hanley said.

For more information about Hanley or *Hindsight* visit www.seanthanley.com. For information about the Marlborough Arts Center visit www.marlborougharts.org.

Marlborough School Board Agrees on New Reading Program

by Katy Nally

After a successful pilot program, Board of Education (BOE) members voted unanimously last Thursday, May 27, to adopt a new research-based reading program.

Also at the meeting, the BOE also adopted the \$6.906 million final line item budget for fiscal year 2010 and voted to rescind non-renewal notices for non-tenured teachers.

Only two people spoke during public comments: Sophie Burrows and her daughter, Cassandra, a third-grader at Elmer Thienes-Mary Hall Elementary School. Both urged the board to provide students with education and training on bullying.

Three women from the school's reading department, Kristine Friend, Julie Caron and Deborah Rand, presented a PowerPoint, outlining a pilot reading program that two fourth grade classes participated in this year. The Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Journeys Core Reading Program used Scientific Research Based Instruction (SRBI) and sought to provide vocabulary, grammar and fluency development through a balance of fiction and non-fiction.

The program included shared reading lesson plans to address Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) strands, advanced guided workshops and several avenues for parent involvement.

The presentation last Thursday displayed a list of pros and cons created by the five fourth-grade teachers and it showed the pros of the program far outweighed the cons. The teachers surveyed listed technology, vocabulary, grammar and fluency development, as well as materials and guiding questions among the pros. On the cons side, they said the questions were not always aligned with the CMTs, the fiction was contrived in the guided reading text and there was an insufficient amount of practice activities.

Students who were also surveyed largely agreed with their teachers. Seventy-four percent said they found the stories used in the program interesting and motivating and 84 percent said they enjoyed the balance of fiction and non-fiction, but only 36 percent reported using new reading strategies.

Based on the pilot program, the reading department endorsed the Journeys program for next year, for every fourth grade class. The BOE agreed and unanimously adopted the Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Journeys Core Reading Program for the 2010-11 school year.

Superintendent of Schools David Sklarz said "at the beginning of the year we all expressed concerns" regarding reading scores, but with this method, he said, "I think we're gonna see

the results we're looking for." "This is the model of how to go about it," he said.

* * *

During public comments, Sophie and Cassandra Burrows took turns relaying their story about bullying and the support group they organized. "My 9-year-old daughter, who is just finishing third grade, has experienced all of these forms of bullying, as do other children," Sophie Burrows said.

She cited the recent survey that went out to parents and showed over 50 percent of them were not sure there is no evidence of bullying at the school. She said she asked the elementary school for a record of verified acts of bullying and received a list with five incidents, but the dates were not included.

In the end, Sophie and Cassandra asked the BOE to uphold regulations from the school handbook and laws governed by the Connecticut State Board of Education, "which are meant to help us children have a healthy, safe and happy experience in our school," Cassandra said.

The school prohibits bullying and calls for "appropriate disciplinary action up to and including suspension, expulsion and/or referral to law enforcement officials." The state directives require school staff to investigate reports

of bullying and to have an intervention strategy to deal with the hazing.

BOE Chair Betty O'Brien said Tuesday, "Our whole school system is in compliance with everything to do with bullying."

* * *

The board also voted to withdraw non-renewal notices for two teachers. "There's going to be two relieved teachers [Friday]," Sklarz said.

The meeting concluded with an executive session to negotiate two contracts and to discuss the superintendent's evaluation, however there was no action taken on the evaluation.

O'Brien said the BOE agreed to a three-year MECCA contract that will charge the organization \$100 per day for the 2010-11 school year to rent space in the school, \$125 in 2011-12 and \$150 in 2012-13.

The BOE also approved a collective bargaining agreement with the school's 19 full-time paraprofessionals. The 2010-11 budget, which passed May 10, eliminated the equivalent of one full-time paraprofessional.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, June 17 at 7 p.m. at the elementary school. There will be a goodbye reception for retiring principal Loraine Giannini from 6-7 p.m. before the meeting.

In Close Vote, Hairy Walks Away With ‘Top Dog’ Title in Hebron

by Lindsay Fetzner

A two-vote margin separated the winner of the town’s Top Dog competition from the runner up. But in the end, it was 3-year-old Hairy who Town Clerk Carla Pomproicz reserved the No. 1 dog tag for.

Hairy, a Shih Tzu mix, was adopted by Janice Smart just over a year ago from the dog pound in Hartford. According to Janice’s daughter Joanne, he was found on the streets of Hartford and relocated to the pound. The family found Hairy on the website www.petfinder.com, where they “first fell in love with him” after setting eyes on his “pound puppy picture,” Joanne said.

When the Smarts adopted Hairy, Joanne said he was “a big ball of matted fur with a little nose hanging out.” The Smarts got Hairy as a companion for Missy, a Lhasa Apso, who passed away from cancer shortly thereafter. The Smarts found Missy on the same website and was adopted from the Animal Center of Queens. When the family introduced Hairy to Missy, Joanne said, “he fell in love with her.” Not only would Hairy “follow her everywhere,” but Joanne said he always looked up to Missy when he wasn’t sure what he should do.

Joanne said she always wanted to enter the Top Dog competition and, after submitting Hairy’s picture for the 10th annual competition, “went around campaigning.” Joanne said she campaigned at one of the town’s budget referendums, encouraged her neighbors to vote and even told her chiropractor that Hairy was a candidate. “When I was in line [at the referendum], I told people that checked you in and behind me in line” to vote for Hairy, Joanne said, smiling.

“We went through a lot of pictures trying to find the cutest one,” Joanne said. When asked if she thought Hairy would be named No. 1,

Joanne said, “we really hoped so. We thought he was really cute.” When Janice heard the news, Joanne said, “she was so excited.”

In addition to two cats, Shadow and Chloe, Hairy is accompanied by two hermit crabs in Joanne’s childhood home. Both Shadow and Chloe were adopted from the Connecticut Humane Society. Prior to Missy, the family adopted Dusty Rose, named by a Long Island police officer who found her. Adopted from the nonprofit animal rescue group For Our Friends in New York, the 10-year-old Husky dog lived with the Smarts for 10 months before passing away from cancer.

Although Hairy has only mastered commands to sit and lie down, Joanne joked, “we’re working on ‘quiet.’” Nicknamed “Hairy Monster” and “Munchkin,” his favorite activities are walks, treats, raw hide bones and his beloved pink toy Piggy, Joanne said. In an effort to be more like his human counterparts, Joanne said Hairy often uses his paws “like hands” to grab a treat and scoot it back closer to him.

As far as his personality, Joanne said, “he has spurts.” Some days Hairy sleeps all day, she said, but other times he loves to play and is highly energetic. His high-pitched bark is “his way of saying ‘hey, come over and play with me,’” Joanne said.

Pomproicz estimated that between 80 and 90 residents cast votes for the competition. Courtesy of the town clerk, the winner was issued the No. 1 license free of charge.

This was the first year that voting was opened to the public, instead of just members of the Russell Mercier Senior Center, although voting was still conducted at the center. “It was well-received,” Assistant Town Clerk Ann Hughes said, and offered an opportunity “to introduce [the senior center] to a few more people.”



Janice Smart’s dog Hairy, a Shih Tzu mix, won the 10th annual Top Dog contest. He is pictured above rolling around with his toy Skunky.

Senior Services Coordinator Sharon Garrard agreed with Hughes. “It was great because we did get several members of the public coming to vote,” she said. “I think certain dog owners encouraged their friends to vote.” Garrard lightheartedly said, “sometimes, people aren’t even sure that we are down at the bottom of the hill.”

Voting took place at the Russell Mercier Senior Center May 17-21 and culminated with a senior center picnic on May 26, where the win-

ner was announced. Garrard said in addition to the luncheon and the drawing for the three winners, there was also musical entertainment for the attendees. A total of 25-30 dogs were candidates for the Top Dog title, according to Hughes.

The second-place finisher in the competition was Halo, owned by Michele McNaughton. Voters chose Baby Belle as the number three dog in town, who is owned by Michael Gifford and Paula Verrier.

New East Hampton Business Offers Variety of Construction Materials

by Claire Michalewicz

Local residents and contractors looking for construction materials won’t have to go far to buy them anymore – there’s a new business selling them in the East Hampton village center.

Multi-Phase Specialty Building Materials, which sells a variety of masonry materials and tools, opened on Niles Street in May, and the owner, Gerald Marquis, is excited to bring business back into the old industrial area.

Multi-Phase is Marquis’ first business, but at just 24 years old, he already has years of experience in construction. Marquis studied construction management at the Wentworth Institute of Technology in Boston, and has worked as a superintendent on several large construction projects. Marquis said he was originally considering pursuing a career in larger construction projects, but was drawn to masonry because it’s his family business – his father, John, is a mason.

When Marquis found out that the land and warehouse next to an empty factory on Niles Street was for sale, he jumped at the opportunity. “I just thought I’d go for it, see what comes of it,” he said. Marquis, who lives in Marlborough, said he liked the idea of bringing business back into East Hampton’s village center, which was once a busy industrial area.

Multi-Phase is one of the only retailers of its kind in the area, the elder Marquis said, so people looking for masonry materials won’t have to drive to Middletown or Hartford to buy them. Marquis’ father has been helping him get Multi-Phase started, and his mother Kristy is doing the bookkeeping. But Multi-Phase belongs entirely to him. While the elder Marquis said he’ll be willing to help out, he’s leaving the major decisions and the work to his son.

For his part, Marquis said that getting his

business running has been a challenge, and he’s been putting in long hours getting it ready. The hardest part so far, he said, was getting the warehouse restored and turning it into a bright, clean store and showroom. “It’s been a ton of work to get this open, and make sure everything is right,” he said.

Multi-Phase opened three weeks ago, and Marquis said that while business is picking up, his main focus right now is getting the word out about Multi-Phase.

“Every week we find more and more people coming down,” he said, adding that he’s hoping that he can attract not only contractors, but also local residents working on their own projects. He said that while he likes his business so far, he’ll enjoy it more once more customers come in. Right now, he has four employees, but when business picks up, he said, he’ll look into hiring more employees and possibly expanding to another location.

Marquis said he was drawn to construction not only because of his family, but also because he likes working in an environment that’s always changing. “It’s an exciting field,” he said. “I get to do something different every day.”

Masonry is Multi-Phase’s main focus, and as Marquis’ father explained, the store sells “pretty much everything related to masonry.” In addition to bricks and paving stones, the store also offers cement, fireproofing materials, all kinds of insulation, specialty coatings for construction materials, and tools.

Right now, Marquis is also working on a display area, with mockups of walls built from different materials. He also wants to set up an area where contractors can post pictures of their work to advertise to people looking for a contractor.



Marlborough resident Gerald Marquis has opened his first business, Multi-Phase Specialty Building Materials, located on Niles Street. The store features a variety of masonry materials and tools.

Marquis said he’s hoping his business will bring more life into the East Hampton village center, and he also wants to get involved in the community in other ways. On July 17, Multi-Phase will host an antique car show, with all profits going to benefit Epoch Arts, the theater and filmmaking group located just around the corner.

Multi-Phase is located at 12 Niles St., and is open from 7 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday and 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Sunday. The location is accessible from Niles Street or Skinner Street, off South Main Street near the library. The store also has a website, multi-phase.com.



Marching band members, town officials and dozens of youth athletic teams came out for the annual Memorial Day Parade, Monday May 31. Pictured from left waving to the viewers are Probate Judge Stephen Kinsella, selectmen Riva Clark and Joseph La Bella and State Rep. Pam Sawyer. Pictured right is the Marlborough Junior Ancient Fife & Drum Corps marching down School Road.



Another Successful Memorial Day Parade in Marlborough

by Katy Nally

The air was buzzing with electricity around Elmer Thienes-Mary Hall Elementary School as RHAM band members hoisted their instruments, Brownies and Daisies shuffled into formation and the fife and drum corps rat-tat-tatted their snares.

The annual Memorial Day parade was about to take off down School Road.

Selectmen, State Representative Pam Sawyer and American Legion members kicked off the celebration of veterans in the Marlboro Cemetery Monday, May 31, with a presentation of symbolic geraniums and a five-gun salute. There was also a moment of silence to remember veterans who have served, and are currently, in the U.S. armed forces.

After the cemetery ceremony, selectmen Riva Clark and Joseph La Bella, along with Sawyer, Jeanne Webb (who is running against Sawyer for the house seat) and Probate Judge Stephen Kinsella, made their way down School Road. After them came several solemn youngsters of the Marlborough Junior Ancient Fife and Drum Corps, which included four fife players and two drummers. Jessica Pelletier, a color guard member, brought up the rear with a Betsy Ross flag that was taller than she was.

Then came the Marlborough Volunteer Fire Department, with a shiny silver axe in tow. Girl Scouts and Daisies trailed after them in their

matching vests and sashes. The boys followed in their Cub Scout and Boy Scout uniforms.

Kids from Frank Corbo's Marlborough Martial Arts came next, with one carrying a large toy machete. Then the drumming picked up as another fife and drum corps marched by. This time it was the Connecticut Valley Field Music that maintained the beat, with all its members clad in dark blue coats and hats to match.

The parade colors brightened a bit as a slue of baseball and tee ball players meandered by in their yellow, red, blue and orange uniforms. The soccer teams followed, led by a gigantic billowing sign.

Then finally, with trombones raised and saphones blaring, the RHAM Middle School and RHAM High School bands marched by in even rows. But even when the brass and winds sections weren't belting out a patriotic tune, the beat still went on, as percussion players kept drumming. In between measures of drum beats, band members threw in a few borrowed lyrics from hip-hop star Lil Jon, and in unison, they shouted "what!" "yea-a!" and "okay!"

The high school band played the "Washington Post March" and the medley called "Armed Forces on Parade."

The two bands closed out the long procession of parade marchers and followed the line onto South Main Street. The hundreds of par-

ticipants stopped at the new town green and organized in front of Town Hall to hear a few words from officials. The selectmen later noted this was the first town-wide activity to utilize the new green. "I'm very pleased we're able to use it today for the first time," La Bella told residents.

Commander of American Legion Post 197 Bernie Hoyland introduced the first speaker, Clark, who said that during Memorial Day, it's important to remember veterans who have paid "the ultimate price" — their lives. "It's freedom we value the most," Clark said.

La Bella echoed Clark's speech and also mentioned the importance of veterans' sacrifice. Without them, La Bella said, Marlborough citizens couldn't enjoy their Memorial Day parade, go to school or have the chance to gather on the town green. "Take a moment the next time you run onto the ball field," to remember those who have fought for that freedom, he said.

Sawyer spoke next and noted the flag was flying at half-staff in honor of National Guard Staff Sergeant Edwin Rivera of Waterford who died May 25. Rivera died after injuries he sustained from indirect fire that occurred May 20 in Laghman Province, Afghanistan.

"Connecticut has lost one of its own," Saw-

yer said. Rivera was 28 and was serving his second tour in Afghanistan, Sawyer continued. He left behind a wife, children, parents and "a very grateful state of Connecticut," she said.

On a personal note, Sawyer listed her own family members who have served. Her grandfather fought in World War I, her father in World War II and her husband in Vietnam. "I am blessed every day because they came home," she said.

Sawyer closed out her speech by reciting "In Flanders Fields." She said poppies, like the ones in front of the Marlborough Senior Center, grow when the soil is turned. In France during WWI, the soil of the graveyard depicted in the poem was turned a lot, and Sawyer said the poet looked out at a "sea of flowers."

Iraq Veteran Richard Schadtler closed out the speeches and the Marlborough Junior Ancient Fife and Drum Corps followed with a slow roll of the snare and a song medley that began with "Amazing Grace."

Four Boy Scouts then placed a flower wreath on the new veteran memorial on the town green.

The celebration ended on a somber note as the American flag was lowered and raised back to half-staff.

Papillon Pooch Named Colchester's Top Canine

by Katy Nally

Rosie Liverant, the new star in town, can be spotted strutting her stuff near Chestnut Hollow Road, but you'll have to look down to see her because she's only about a foot tall.

Rosie is a 6-year-old Papillon, and the winner of this year's Top Dog contest.

Her owner, Goldie Liverant, said she was somewhat surprised Rosie won because many of this year's contestants were also cute.

According to Town Clerk Nancy Bray, there were 75 entries and just over 300 people cast votes, making this year's contest the biggest one to date. This marks the 19th year of Top Dog, which was originally created to remind people to register their dogs during June.

As a grand prize, Rosie won a free license from Town Hall. Dog licenses are \$8 for spayed and neutered dogs, and \$19 for all others. The deadline to register a dog is June 30 and there will be an additional \$1 charge each month thereafter.

Rosie, who is already a popular dog in her neighborhood, attained her 55 votes with the help of Goldie, her son and his friends. "Everyone loves her, that's why she got so many votes," Goldie said.

Rosie and Goldie were paired up together five years ago, when her son's friend saw a photo of the small pup at an animal shelter in Cromwell. Through the grapevine, Goldie's friend told her she had found a dog "that would be perfect" for her.

After meeting Rosie at the shelter, Goldie was sold and took home the 10-month-old Papillon.

Employees at the shelter told Goldie that Rosie was found wandering around in Old Wethersfield. Goldie hypothesized Rosie had escaped from her former owners and was not abandoned, because Rosie likes to run up to people. She can be a bit rascally and enjoys chasing squirrels and birds, Goldie added.

Rosie is not the first pup Goldie has owned, and she's also a Top Dog veteran. Several years ago, Goldie and her Tibetan Spaniel Dali won the title.

But, before she met Rosie, Goldie said she told herself she didn't want to own another dog because saying goodbye to pets who have passed was too difficult. But the tiny Papillon won her over.

In fact, it seems Rosie wins everyone over.

Goldie said her pup is a people person and "is the most loveable" dog she's owned. "When she sees someone, she just runs to greet them," Goldie said. "She's very friendly."

Rosie is a black-and-white Papillon with pointy ears. Goldie said Rosie doesn't have "quite the big ears that others have," so she might not be a purebred. Historically, Papillons had floppy ears and were called Dwarf Spaniels during the 16th and 17th centuries, according to the American Kennel Club.

Over time, the breed grew to include those with pointy ears, like Rosie, and it was dubbed Papillon (which means butterfly in French) because of their butterfly-shaped ears.

The Papillon pedigree also has a dash of royalty. The small pups have been depicted in paintings on the laps of French and Spanish noblewomen, the American Kennel Club said.

So whether she's a royal descendant, or just a small-town celebrity, the next time you see Rosie, be sure to snap a photograph or ask for an autograph because you'll be in the presence of this year's Top Dog.

For more information about dog licensing, contact the town clerk's office at 860-537-7215.



Rosie Liverant was named this year's Top Dog, beating out 74 other contestants.

New Low-Income Housing May Be On the Way in Portland

by Claire Michalewicz

Portland could be getting some new housing developments, after the Planning and Zoning Commission (PZC) completes its application to a state grant program that pays towns for building housing. The PZC reviewed the program at a special meeting on May 27.

The Grow Smart Residentially – Incentive Housing Zones project, funded by the state Office of Policy and Management (OPM), pays towns for building housing developments and reserving some of the units for low-income families. Karen Cullen, the principal planner at Concord Square Planning & Development, a Boston-based planning firm, outlined the program and how it could work for Portland.

According to state requirements for the program, Cullen explained, at least 20 percent of the housing units in the developments had to be set aside at a lower rate for households earning under \$64,400, which is 80 percent of the area's median income. The other 80 percent of the units would be offered at market rates, but Cullen said they would still be less expensive than other housing.

In return, OPM pays the town a zone adoption permit payment of up to \$2,000 for each potential unit in an Incentive Housing Zones (IHZ) district, and a building permit payment

of another \$2,000 for each townhouse or multifamily unit for which a building permit is issued.

"Everyone loves the traditional New England town center, but no one can build it," Cullen said. She explained that the IHZs included design standards that would assure the town that the projects would fit in with the overall character and appearance of the community.

Cullen described the program as "build-your-own-zoning." She said the developments could be built using existing zoning regulations, or the town could choose to overlay other regulations, zoning the area for mixed-use development.

To be eligible for the program, Cullen explained, sites had to be near transit, in an area of concentrated development or in a vacant site. While Portland is not a transit hub, it does have some vacant lots.

Cullen presented the PZC with a list of proposed sites, and explained that they could choose up to five of them to submit with their application. (Cullen said she did not have the time or the money to plan more than five sites.) At the moment, OPM is not accepting applications, Cullen said, and the program was on hold for at least six months. She recommended that

Portland apply soon, so OPM could review it as soon as they were ready to.

PZC Chairwoman Bette Jenak agreed to review the sites, and submit the sites to Cullen within a month. PZC member Bruce Tyler rejected several sites in the western part of the town because they are not connected to the sewer. The other lots available for consideration include a medical office at the corner of Freestone Avenue and High Street, an empty lot off Coe Avenue and some larger spaces off Main Street near the quarries.

Cullen explained that she had only included lots over one acre in size, but that the PZC could consider other parcels of the land if they wished.

"You're never gonna pick the right sites," said PZC member Mike Woronoff. He said that no matter which lots were included in the application, some residents would be upset with their choices.

Woronoff also said he worried that being able to change zoning regulations to build new developments wasn't fair. "It's nice to have a zoning book that's just fair regulations for everybody," Woronoff said. "We're dictating what they can do with their property."

Cullen said state legislation that defined IHZs

prevented anyone from challenging the zoning decisions as spot zoning, but resident Ben Srb said he was concerned that people would still perceive the changes as spot zoning.

At present, there are 311 households in Portland that receive housing assistance, but the proposed Incentive Housing Zones would be the first housing units in town which would be required by deed to be rented at reduced rates, explained Jim Watson from the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development.

Portland is funding the IHZ study through a grant from the state OPM, First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield said. She said that while the study was still in its early phases, she was grateful to the OPM for helping them hire consultants to study the potential for new housing developments.

Planning and Land Use Administrator Deanna Rhodes said the PZC would take a month to review the proposed sites, talk to property owners, and develop a list of five potential sites to submit to Cullen.

The PZC will revisit the issue at its next meeting, which will be held on Thursday, June 17, at 7 p.m., at Portland Library.



About 1,500 people came out to watch the annual Hebron Memorial Day parade, Monday, May 31. Pictured left are parade participants waving to onlookers and making their way down Main Street (Route 66). Pictured right are people gathered in the center of town to hear speeches that honored veterans.

Hebron Honors Local Veterans, Fallen Soldiers

by Lindsay Fetzner

Monday, May 31, was a day to reflect on the local veterans in the community and those who have given their lives in the name of freedom. "We gather today to honor those of all wars," said John Tuttle, commander of the Hebron American Legion Post and grand marshal of the town's Memorial Day parade.

Tuttle, a veteran of Vietnam and sergeant of the United States Army, estimated that approximately 1,500 people attended the parade on Monday. The honorary Grand Marshal for this year's parade was Joseph Zachmann, a veteran of the United States Navy who served during World War II.

Commencing at RHAM High School, the procession traveled onto Route 66 and continued to St. Peter's Cemetery on Church Street. Services to honor those who served were held at St. Peter's Cemetery and at the town green, after which those in the parade followed the route back to the high school.

Veterans, in addition to members of the Legion, Lions Club, local sports teams, scout troops and more, marched down the road alongside hundreds of fans waving flags on the roadside. The fire department, town and state officials and band members were also among those in the procession.

The town-wide event drew not only residents from town, but also many from surrounding

communities. Whether it was their first parade, like 3-year-old Hebron resident Ty Russo, or an annual tradition, like Susan Morrison, many came out to show their respect for the veterans.

Maddy Fraleigh, a Vernon resident, said she has been attending the Hebron parade for about seven years to cheer on her grandchildren. "The kids are involved in sports and the band," she said. "We come every year." Between the two families, Fraleigh said she has a total of seven grandchildren in town. It is a day "to honor all veterans and support our grandchildren," she said.

Danielson residents Norma and Peter Harrelle also came to town to support their grandchildren too, who are in the band. "We come every year to watch the kids march," Norma Harrelle said.

Peter Harrelle is a veteran of the United States Army who served during the Vietnam era, and is currently a member of the American Legion in Danielson. He said many do not realize the number of people who have served their country and "lost their lives for what we call freedom."

Accompanying the Harrelles was Plainville resident Jean Kelly, whose late husband John was a Korean War veteran with the Marines. Born in England, Kelly said "Memorial Day is a very special time."

"Our veterans mean a lot," she said. "They mean everything."

Part of Kelly's morning on Monday included a visit to John's grave in Plainville to pay her respects.

"Without veterans, we'd be in a very different circumstance," Kelly said. "People often don't realize what they've given. Freedom is because of them."

Despite the many observers from out of town, Hebron residents came to show their support as well. "I come every year," said Morrison, a resident for over 30 years. "My husband David is marching in the parade. He's a vet in the Air Force."

Forrest Kocher, adjutant of the American Legion Post and retired lieutenant commander of the United States Navy, spoke on prisoners of war (POW) and those missing in action (MIA) during the services honoring those that have served or died. "You are not forgotten," Kocher said. "We honor you and your service."

Kocher said the sorrow of those POWs and the MIA "is our sorrow" and until they return home, we "won't be whole."

"You are not forgotten," he said. "You will never be forgotten."

Ronald Parkyn recognized local veterans, those currently serving and those who have been lost. Parkyn is commander of the Veterans of

Foreign Wars (VFW) Hebron post, was a sergeant in the United States Marine Corps and a veteran of Vietnam. In his speech, he rendered "a final salute to those who have passed." Today's military is "outstanding," he said, and they "believe in what they are doing."

"We are grateful to have them defending our country," Parkyn said Monday.

Tuttle said it is customary for the flag in the center of town to be raised to half-staff at dawn on Memorial Day, and then at noon, to be raised to full staff. However, Tuttle said the flag had been at half staff since last Tuesday to honor Staff Sgt. Edwin Rivera of Waterford, who died from injuries sustained in Afghanistan.

"Sgt. Rivera has given his life," Tuttle said. "We must give it meaning."

In his speech, Tuttle drew attention to the over 1,250,000 Americans who have lost their lives in the various wars over the years. "How do you comprehend such a number?" he asked the crowd. When coupled with those who have been injured in the line of duty, Tuttle said it is "almost more staggering," giving the phrase "all gave some, some gave all" a "new meaning."

Tuttle concluded his speech by saying that the "truest way to commemorate sacrifice is to live our lives to the fullest everyday."

"May God bless our fallen heroes and their families," he said.

Still No Answers for Mandated Budget Cuts in Portland

by Claire Michalewicz

The Board of Education (BOE) voted at its meeting on Tuesday to officially adopt the 2010-11 school budget, though board members still have to work out how they will manage the budget cuts.

The \$18.10 million budget took a \$125,000 cut during the Board of Selectmen's budget workshops during March and April. However, board members at the time wanted to wait until the \$29.62 million 2010-11 town budget was passed by voters; the spending plan was approved May 10.

At Tuesday's meeting, Superintendent of Schools Sally Doyen suggested the money come from the health insurance portion of the budget, though union contracts were still being negotiated.

Also at the meeting, the BOE also reviewed the end-of-year spending requests that they had reviewed at the last meeting, which included several maintenance projects throughout the

school system. Director of Buildings and Grounds Paul Bengston said he also wanted to replace the cafeteria tables in Gildersleeve School, which he said could be dangerous.

Last week, Bengston said, he discovered that the locking mechanisms on the tables, which fold into the walls, were broken. Bengston said he worried that the tables could be in danger of falling. He suggested that the tables be replaced soon, before installing a guard rail at Valley View School and a new ramp and pavement at the field house at the high school and middle school, the two projects that he added to the list at the last meeting.

"It's just something that just last week popped up," Bengston said about the tables, "and they scare me." He explained that the BOE could consider replacing parts on the tables, but there were not enough replacement parts to fix all the lifting mechanisms.

"The best thing is to just replace all of them,"

Doyen said, and the BOE agreed unanimously. BOE member Christopher Bongo pointed out that since the existing tables are 45 years old, "we certainly got our money's worth."

In what Doyen called "an item that we always look forward to," the BOE voted to rescind the non-renewal notices that they had sent to the school system's 21 non-tenured teachers in March. The notices, given to all teachers with less than four years of experience, informed them that their contracts would not be renewed until after the budget passed. Since the budget was passed on its first try, the teachers' contracts could be renewed.

"I'm glad everyone's coming back," Doyen said.

In her report to the BOE, Doyen said First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield had approached her about using Brownstone School for voting on Election Day in November. Residents usually vote at Portland Library, but Doyen said

Bransfield was concerned that the library was too small for a major election. Doyen said she was apprehensive about using Brownstone for voting, since she would have to close the school that day, and also hire security to prevent voters from entering the rest of the school from the cafeteria.

The BOE also voted to close the main soccer field at the high school from June 18 to Aug. 20, to reopen when the high school soccer season started. Doyen said the soccer fields were closed every year. BOE member MaryAnne Rode explained that the track around the field would remain open to the public, and that signs would be put up to explain this.

The next BOE meeting will be held Tuesday, July 6, at 7 p.m., in the high school library. (A meeting was originally scheduled for June 15, but the BOE voted to cancel that meeting because it conflicts with Portland High School's graduation.)

School Facilities Study Committee Moving Ahead in Portland

by Claire Michalewicz

The Board of Selectmen (BOS) is moving forward with the School Facilities Study Committee, and interviewed several interested candidates for the committee at its meeting Wednesday evening.

The committee, which First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield said would probably begin meeting in September, will study the use of space in all of the town's schools except the high school. Bransfield said the committee would look at projected future enrollments to determine whether the schools will provide adequate space for the town's future needs.

Two selectmen, John Anderson and Sharon Peters, and two Board of Education members, Christopher Bongo and MaryAnne Rode, will serve on the committee, along with three community members. Bransfield said the BOS was considering expanding the committee, since they were "very impressed with all the candidates." In addition, she explained, having a larger committee would be helpful in case some members were unable to serve.

The BOS interviewed eight candidates on Wednesday, asking why they were interested in serving, and how they felt about the possibility of closing Brownstone School, among other questions. Bransfield explained that the selectmen would subjectively score each candidate's responses on a scale of one to five, and then tally the scores when they were finished with the interviews.

There are still at least three other commu-

nity members interested in serving. Bransfield said they would interview them in July, and would discuss expanding the committee at its next meeting on June 16.

Also at the meeting, the BOS voted unanimously to transfer \$2,000 from the contingency fund into the fire marshals' budget. Fire Marshal Ray Sajdak explained that he and the two other marshals were unusually busy this year, and were running out of money for payroll.

"There's more work than we can do," Sajdak said. He said the construction project at 270 Main Street was taking up a lot of the fire marshals' time, as the builders were eager to complete the project and get Middlesex Hospital's offices installed in the building. "It's the nature of the business," he added, noting that the builders were working under a deadline to get Middlesex Hospital's offices into the building.

"It's a battle," Sajdak said. "We can't get out there to do the work that we have."

This is the second time the fire marshals' office requested additional funding – the BOS voted to give them \$2,000 in March.

Also at the meeting, the BOS briefly reviewed their monthly expense report, but voted to continue their discussion at the next meeting, when Finance Director Tom Robinson would be able to attend.

The next BOS meeting will be held on Wednesday, June 16, at 7 p.m., at Portland Li-

WJJMS Mourns One of its Own

by Katy Nally

The title "para-professional" doesn't even begin to describe Sophia Holden's role at William J. Johnston Middle School (WJJMS).



Sophia "Gram" Holden

Holden not only worked in the school district as a teacher's aide for 37 years, but she was a friend to many staff members and a pseudo-grandmother to all. In fact, her nickname around the middle school was "Gram."

Math teacher Amanda LaSaracina said when she walked down the hallways during Holden's tenure she routinely heard "Hey Gram," and "Hi Gram" from passing students. "The staff adored her and the kids loved her," WJJMS principal Chris Bennett said.

Gram was a math paraprofessional in the school district until she retired in 2004 at age 87. She died Monday, May 10, just two days before her 93rd birthday. She left behind a daughter, a son, six grandchildren and one great-grandchild, as well as the entire WJJMS community.

Holden was especially close with Bennett. "She was an outstanding, warm lady," he said. He described her as "an elderly Polish lady who connected with just about everyone she came in contact with."

Bennett and Holden's relationship began when he walked into the middle school as a new teacher. Bennett said Holden immediately stopped him and asked if he knew anything about filing taxes. The two had never met before, but Holden asked Bennett if he would do her taxes, and he agreed. Over the next 15 years "she became a grandmother for me really," Bennett said.

For the past five years, Holden lived in Kentucky with her family. But, Bennett said, the distance was hard for Gram, who also missed her friends in Colchester. "It was her extended family," he said.

Like Bennett, LaSaracina also considered Holden to be like a second-grandmother. And in true granny fashion, Holden would sometimes come in with an extra doughnut for LaSaracina, if she thought the teacher wasn't getting enough to eat.

During the last four years Holden worked at WJJMS, her desk was in LaSaracina's class-

room. There, Gram kept an eye on students and made sure they had sharp pencils and stayed on task, LaSaracina said. If they didn't she probably doled out her usually empty threat that, LaSaracina said, was "I'll bop you one."

"She was a grandmother with good math skills who could keep them in line," Bennett said.

Besides the middle school staff, LaSaracina and Bennett said the students completely "adored" Gram.

Bennett said Colchester families who went through the school system "couldn't wait for their kids" to have Gram.

"She really did touch so many people in this district," Bennett said.

LaSaracina said many of her students would turn to Gram for extra help on their math work and often times there was a long line of students at Holden's desk seeking advice.

And the relationship with students went both ways, LaSaracina said. On several occasions, Gram begged LaSaracina to let students redo their assignments because "she was just so helpful she couldn't stand to see a kid make a mistake."

But, being daughter of Polish immigrants, LaSaracina said Gram always "had a special place for the Polish students." Holden spoke to these students in Polish, but inquired about all the kids' families and what they did outside of school, LaSaracina said.

"She just cared so much about the kids," she added. "She connected with so many of them."

And even though Gram was a frail 87-year-old when she left the middle school, she never lost her touch or passion when it came to math, LaSaracina said.

"Working with math kept her mind sharp, it kept her active," Bennett said. "She lived alone and this gave her purpose in her life."

Before Holden acquired the name Gram, she worked at Pratt & Whitney Aircraft during WWII and at Macy's personnel department in New York City.

She graduated from Bacon Academy in 1934 as her class's valedictorian. In 1967 she returned to Colchester with her husband Lloyd Holden to raise their two children.

As a longtime resident, and a revered staff member of Colchester's schools, in her 92 years, Gram left her mark on the town. "She really was just a phenomenal person, who touched Colchester in so many ways," Bennett said.

Andover Police News

5/26: There was a four-car accident at the intersection of Route 6 and Lake Road at about 4:45 p.m. Wednesday, and two people were sent to Manchester Memorial Hospital, State Police said. Piotr Pietrucha, 53, of Kensington, Sharon Roberts, 39, of Moosup, and David Oppelt, 41, of Hartford were all stopped at a red light, State Police said, when Tendo Wynter, 26, of Windsor, failed to stop and slammed into Oppelt's Toyota Carrola, totaling the vehicle. Wynter and Roberts were transported to the hospital for neck and back pain, State Police said. Oppelt sustained lacerations to his right

arm but was not transported to the hospital and Pietrucha was not injured, State Police said.

5/28: At about 10 p.m. Friday night, a 49-year-old Coventry man crashed his motorcycle and was transported to Hartford Hospital for "incapacitating injuries," State Police said. Timothy Ausburger was traveling northbound on Hebron Road when he lost control of his 2005 Harley Davidson and slid approximately 150 feet. Ausburger fell off the bike about 50 feet before the vehicle came to a final stop. He was reportedly not wearing a helmet, State Police said.

Colchester Police News

5/26: An 18-year-old Colchester woman was transported to the Marlborough Clinic after a two-car accident at the intersection of Nelkin Road and Heatherwood Drive, State Police said. Kaleigh Vincent was traveling northbound on Heatherwood Drive and proceeded to make a left turn onto Nelkin Road, when Stephen Doyle, 22, of Colchester, hit her 1998 Pontiac Grand Am. Doyle was traveling eastbound on Nelkin Road and was issued an infraction for failure to obey a stop sign and failure to renew his license, State Police said.

5/26: Kathryn Ellen Pietrowski, 26, of 59 Broad St., Norwich, turned herself in for sixth-degree larceny, State Police said.

5/27: James Gibb, 26, of 155 Westchester

Rd., turned himself in for third-degree assault and disorderly conduct, State Police said.

5/28: Dustin Cote, 22, of 530 Norwich Ave., was charged with fourth-degree larceny and credit card theft, State Police said.

5/29: Justin Mikan, 27, of 288 Lake Hayward Rd., was charged with fourth-degree larceny and credit card theft, State Police said.

5/29: John Simon, 44, of 17 Walden Ave., New London, was charged with DUI, stop sign violation and failure to drive right, State Police said.

5/31: Gary Mastrandrea, 57, of 19 Jay St., New London, stole food from the Stop & Shop on Linwood Avenue and was charged with fifth-degree larceny, State Police said.

Hebron Police News

5/29: Robert Russo, 23, of 62 Miller Rd., Colchester, was charged with DUI and making an improper turn, State Police said.

East Hampton Police News

5/21: Bryan Kneeland, 26, of 12 Lakeview St., was arrested for assault and breach of peace, East Hampton Police said.

5/27: Ryan Cleveland Dorflinger, 27, of 311 Town Colony Dr., Middletown, was arrested for driving under the influence of alcohol, possession of narcotics, illegal storage of narcotics and failure to drive right, police said.

Obituaries

Glastonbury

John L. Preston

John L. "Jack" Preston, 88, loving husband to Carolyn C. Preston and longtime resident of Glastonbury, passed away on May 2, 2010, at Avery Heights in Hartford. After a long battle with Alzheimer's Disease, he passed peacefully in his sleep.

Jack was born December 29, 1921, in Auburn, NH son of the late John E. and Ora (Dugay) Preston. After high school Jack served his country proudly in the United States Air Force as a B-24 Pilot stationed in Italy. He flew 51 combat missions, successfully returning his crew and plane every time...including the mission from which he returned with all bombs intact rather than risk injuring numerous civilians. Jack was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Air Medal with three Oak Clusters, and the Certificate of Valour among other commendations.

After returning from the war Jack returned to his beloved wife Carolyn, and received his Engineering degree from the University of New Hampshire. Following graduation he was hired by Pratt & Whitney Aircraft, and they moved to Connecticut. They spent a brief time in Durham, CT, and ten years in Manchester before moving to Glastonbury, where they lived for thirty-nine years. Most recently Jack had lived in Arden Courts in Avon, CT.

A long time employee of Pratt & Whitney, Jack managed the Wilgoose Testing Laboratory, East Hartford, CT, for many years before retirement. Jack was a supporter of the "Bradley Air Museum" in Windsor Locks, and loved to tinker with anything mechanical or automotive...especially his 1967 convertible, cherry red Ford Mustang. An avid boater, Jack and his family spent many summers boating along the CT shore as well as in New Hampshire. Above all he was a devoted husband, father, grandfather and great grandfather. Jack most enjoyed being surrounded by his family.

Along with his adored wife Carolyn of sixty-six years, he is survived by three children: John L. "Larry" Preston, Jr., and his wife "Judy" (Judith Farnham) of Hebron, CT; Joyce Preston Hopkins of Durham, NC; and Judith C. "Judy" Preston of Old Saybrook, CT; two granddaughters, Christi Preston McFatter and her husband Rob of Bolton, CT, and Linsay A. Preston of Arlington, MA; a great granddaughter Zoe Elyce McFatter; and several nieces and nephews.

Jack was predeceased by his brother Donald of Keene, NH, and his daughter Lynne C. Preston.

A Memorial Service will be held at the convenience of the family. In lieu of flowers memorial contributions may be made to the "Bradley Air Museum" also known as the New England Air Museum, 36 Perimeter Road, Bradley International Airport, Windsor Locks, CT 06096, or the Alzheimer's Association - CT Chapter, 279 New Britain Road, Kensington, CT 06037.

To send a tribute or condolences on line please visit www.glastonburyfuneral.com



Portland

Angelo W. Ortisi Sr.

Angelo W. Ortisi, Sr. of Port Charlotte, FL, formerly of Portland, beloved husband of Wanda Woodward Ortisi, peacefully entered eternal rest Thursday, May 13, at home, with his devoted wife of 60 years by his side.

He was born June 1, 1924 and was the son of the late Sebastian and Carmelina (Cannata) Ortisi. Angelo was educated locally, graduating from Middletown High School, and received his BA from the University of Colorado at Boulder, and an MA and administrative degrees from the University of Hartford. He began his career as a middle school teacher and was the principal at Hebron Avenue Elementary School in Glastonbury for the remainder of his career.

A veteran of World War II, Angelo served as an aviation topographic draftsman. He was a rifle marksman and awarded the distinguished unit badge, given the good conduct medal and also a victory medal. He was a member of St. Mary's Church in Portland prior to his move to Florida, the American Legion and many national and local teacher and administrative organizations.

Besides his loving wife, Angelo leaves his cherished children, S. Michael and wife Carolyn Ortisi of New Hampshire, Patricia and husband Bernie Heizman of Portland, Susan Smith of New York, Angelo Ortisi Jr. and wife Karen of Mansfield Depot, Marsha and husband Dennis Stevens of Ohio, and Daniel and wife Jayne Smith of Colorado; a brother, Sebastian Ortisi of Portland, devoted brothers-in-law, sisters-in-law and many nieces, nephews, and friends. With love and thanks to his caregiver Fiffie and his special caring neighbors Frank and Carmelina, who lovingly and faithfully cared for him.

He was pre-deceased by a brother and two sisters.

"Papa," as he was affectionately known, was such an instrumental and devoted part of his adored ten grandchildren and six great-grandchildren's lives. He was so proud of all their accomplishments and will be deeply missed by them. His legacy will live on through them all. Angelo took pride and pleasure in helping anyone he could. He was an extremely intelligent man and shared his knowledge openly with all. His children and grandchildren loved to listen to him tell stories of his childhood and experiences in life. As a hobby, he built two homes in the Berkshires for his family to enjoy. There wasn't anything he couldn't fix or create if needed.

A celebration of his life was held Wednesday, June 2, in St. Mary's Church, Portland. Burial was in the State Veterans Cemetery, Middletown, with full military honors.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to St. Mary's Church, Freestone Avenue, Portland, CT 06480 or to the Alzheimer's Association, 2911 Dixwell Ave., Suite 104, Hamden, CT 06618.

The Coughlin-Lastrina Funeral Home, 491 High St., Middletown, is in charge of arrangements.

Portland

Robert St. Paul Sr.

Robert St. Paul Sr., 70, of Foley Road, Portland, beloved husband of Carolyn (Weston) St. Paul, died Sunday, May 30, at his home surrounded by his family. He was born in Middletown, the son of the late Joseph and Viola (Smigel) St. Paul-Raicik. Prior to his retirement, he worked in the construction business as a union laborer for 18 years, later he was employed in State of Connecticut Department of Transportation sign shop.

Besides his wife, he is survived by his son, Robert St. Paul Jr. of New Britain; his daughter, Diane St. Paul of Somers; two brothers, John St. Paul of Cromwell and Michael St. Paul of New Britain; a sister, Joyce Mukusick of Simsbury; three grandchildren, Kristina (Ingraham) Nemecek and her husband Thomas, Joshua Ingraham, Elizabeth St. Paul; one great-grandson, Triton Nemecek; also several nieces, nephews and many dear friends.

He was predeceased by a brother, Joseph St. Paul.

Bob's family is very grateful for the care and compassion from Dr. Levy and the staff of Middlesex Cancer Center.

Funeral services were held Thursday, June 3, at Church of the Holy Trinity, 381 Main St., Middletown. Burial was held at Trinity Cemetery in Portland. Friends called at the Biega Funeral Home, 3 Silver St., Middletown, Wednesday, June 2.

In lieu of flowers, those who wish may send memorial contributions to Hospice Home and Palliative Care, 51 Broad St., Middletown, CT 06457.

East Hampton

Nancy J. Caffyn

Nancy J. Caffyn passed away on May 26 at the age of 75. She was born in Middletown and grew up in East Hampton, the youngest of five children. She lived in the town of South Windsor and later Mashpee, MA.

She was a business entrepreneur, working with Allan Caffyn to build Industronics Inc. in South Windsor from a three-person company to a 200 person manufacturing firm. She participated in politics first as a public advocate, and then a politician. She was mayor in South Windsor and then spent six years as selectman, three years as Head Selectman in Mashpee and then as state representative for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, representing the towns of Mashpee, Bourne, Falmouth and Sandwich.

During her political career in Massachusetts she was instrumental in getting funding for a free health clinic for upper Cape towns, legal services for battered women, economic development and Job Bank, and senior and low-income tax credit programs. Her work as co-founder of RAGE and member of the Governor's Education Aid Review Commission resulted in increased state educational aid of millions of dollars each year for Cape towns. She was a member of the senior management board (Otis Clean-up) and involved in getting the federal government to speed up the clean-up of the Otis Air Force base toxic plumes, as well as being a constant watchdog over public funds; initiating many cost saving programs that saved taxpayers millions of dollar over the years.

In 1998, she was given a Woman of Achievement award by the Upper Cape BPW. Also in 1998, she was awarded an EPA Environmental Merit award. In 2000, she was awarded as the Legislator of the Year in her last year at the State House.

Nancy was an extremely attentive and caring parent, who dearly loved and cherished her children, and family life. She was always there for her children, Christopher, Brian, Bradley, Allison, Timothy and Sean; and grandchildren, Mitchell, Jennifer, Ryan, Kelsey, Keegan and Dayton. In good times and bad she provided for them both materially and spiritually. She was also there for you when the waters of life got rough and assisted many people and friends through tough times, she will be sorely missed.

Her memory will be celebrated by all members of the public who knew Nancy today, Friday, June 4, from 4-8 p.m., at Chapman, Cole, and Gleason Funeral Home, 74 Algonquin Ave. at Route 151, Mashpee, MA, and at a wake for family and close friends Saturday, June 5, from 4-8 p.m., at 218 Wading Place Rd., Mashpee, MA. She will be buried at the Great Neck Woods Cemetery, Great Neck Road South, Mashpee, MA at a public ceremony on Sunday, June 6, at 12:30 p.m.

Flowers may be sent to the funeral home or a donation may be made to the "Nancy Caffyn Remembrance Fund" (to be distributed to support her projects and organizations), P.O. Box 329, Mashpee MA 02649.

For an online guest book and directions, visit www.ccgfuneralhome.com.

Colchester

Jeannette A. Perham

Jeannette A. Perham, 40, of Brooklyn and Colchester, passed away Wednesday evening, May 26, at Regency Heights in Norwich, after a long battle with Huntington's Disease. Born May 29, 1969, in Willimantic, she was the daughter of the late David J. Perham and Jolee (Harrington) Perham.

She is survived by her stepmother, Peggy Perham of Colchester; three stepsiblings, David Perham, Mary Collins and Heather Perham, all of Colchester; her longtime companion, Charles Levanti of Brooklyn; and three nieces and two nephews; and numerous extended family members and friends.

Friends called Saturday, May 29, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester, before a chapel service. Committal followed in the New Lebanon Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, donations in her memory may be made to the Huntington's Disease Society of America, 505 Eighth Ave., Ste. 902, New York, NY 10018.

For online condolences, visit www.auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.