

RIVEREAST

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**When You're Here, You're Family...** Getting her pasta dinner, complete with meatballs, right from the source, state Rep. Pam Sawyer gets her plate from Marlborough Women's Club members Mary Hartman (center) and Tiffany Krupp (right) at their annual Pasta Dinner held at the East Glastonbury Fish and Game Club in Marlborough. Sawyer's district covers Andover, Hebron, Marlborough and Bolton.

## Council to Offer Settlement to Reimondo

by Joshua Anusewicz

An attorney for the East Hampton Town Council will make an "offer of compromise" to Police Chief Matthew Reimondo in regards to all pending legal claims surrounding his termination over the summer.

The East Hampton Town Council unanimously gave the go-ahead after an executive session prior to its regular meeting on Tuesday.

The decision came after a closed-door meeting with town labor attorney Sheldon Myers and insurance expert Peter Roxo. According to Chairwoman Melissa Engel, the council will now work with the town's insurance company on the terms of the settlement. Engel said she could not comment on the pending terms, but said she believes the terms will be "very reasonable."

The pending legal claims stem from last June, when Reimondo was unexpectedly removed from his position by then Town Manager Jeffery O'Keefe, who cited budget cuts as the reason for the removal. East Hampton Police Sergeant Michael Green was promoted to lieutenant and O'Keefe was appointed acting police chief.

Reimondo responded by suing Engel, O'Keefe, Green, and Town Council Vice Chairman John Tuttle, all of whom Reimondo believed had retaliated against him for investigating sexual harassment claims brought against O'Keefe by three town employees. O'Keefe

resigned in September amid mounting pressure from town residents, and Reimondo was reinstated after a town referendum in November.

Although Engel said she could not comment on the details of the settlement, she did say that all legal claims would be resolved. She also added that Reimondo and his attorney, Leon Rosenblatt, had come forward before with a settlement offer, but that the council's attorney "didn't look at it." Rosenblatt also said that he would not comment on the details of the settlement until an agreement was reached.

The pending legal claims include the lawsuits against Engel, Tuttle, O'Keefe, and Green and complaints brought to the state's Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities (CHRO), which is currently investigating the sexual harassment and retaliation claims.

In the past month, two organizations, the Connecticut State's Attorney Office and the International City/County Management Association (ICMA), have determined that there was not enough evidence to pursue charges against O'Keefe for the alleged harassment and retaliation. O'Keefe has vehemently denied any wrongdoing since the claims were filed, and said he believes that State's Attorney Timothy Liston's finding was the most important for the residents of East Hampton. He called it the "one definitive report or statement... that East Hamp-

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## Family, Colleagues Remember Howard Dean

by Katy Nally

Howard Dean Jr. was a gentleman, in every sense of the word.

"Everybody who is talking with me, talks about what a gentleman he was – and they use this in two words – 'gentle man,'" Dean's wife, Terry Concannon, said this week.

And as a true gentleman, Dean both commanded and doled out respect in all of his dealings, even when it came to something that can bring out the worst in people – small-town politics. Most Marlborough residents probably remember Dean as the town's esteemed first selectman, who served three consecutive terms from 1991 to 2003.

Dean, 72, passed away last Thursday, April 7, due to leukemia.

He lived out his last years with Concannon at their home in East Hampton, but his heart was devoted to Marlborough for many years prior.

Dean grew up in Marlborough and graduated from East Hampton High School in 1956. After that, as he made his home in Marlborough, Dean made sure to become involved in boards and groups that shaped the town, including the RHAM Board of Education, the Board of Finance and the Youth Athletic League. He and his first wife, Irene (Cavanaugh) Dean, raised their three boys in town, and then, in 1980, Dean

moved to Ontario, Canada.

The year Dean returned to Connecticut was also the year he decided to run for First Selectman on the Democratic ticket. His opponent in 1991 was Republican incumbent Alan Shusterman.

Marlborough Democratic Town Committee Co-Chairman Richard Banbury remembered he wasn't surprised Dean won that year.

"He was so confident," Banbury remembered. "And he knew the town so well. He was just totally in-meshed in it."

That year, Banbury served on a candidate selection committee with two other Democrats and was responsible for picking a first selectman hopeful.

After meeting Dean for the first time, Banbury remembered, "I said, 'Oh, this guy's got it.'"

"He was quiet, but he was so confident," Banbury said this week. "He really looked good. He spoke well; he was very intelligent."

Once elected, Dean set to work on his "vision" for the town.

"He was so dedicated to Marlborough," Concannon said. "He had a vision and he wanted to see that vision happen. Bit by bit and piece by piece, it was falling into place."

Constructing the sewer system was the last component of Dean's vision, Concannon said.

But, she noted, her husband was somewhat disappointed that the project hadn't come farther along during his tenure.

Other projects that took shape during his time as first selectman included the renovation of Elmer Thienes-Mary Hall Elementary School and RHAM High School and developing commercial properties off Route 66. Three referendums passed during his tenure, two for renovating the schools and one for the sewers. Another, which approved the business park, passed the November Dean decided not to run for re-election in 2003.

Those who worked with Dean during his time in Marlborough recalled his dedication to the town, and gentle touch when it came to political differences.

Town Planner Peter Hughes remembered Dean interviewing him for the position in 1998, and thinking Dean either had "some real foresight" or "was a Napoleon."

"Thankfully for me he wasn't a Napoleon," Hughes said with a laugh.

Dean used his "get things done" philosophy during his 1995 campaign for re-election.

"No issue is black and white," his campaign flyer read. "You need to be able to work with people even if you disagree with them. You need to have respect for other's opinions."

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**Former first selectman of Marlborough, Howard Dean, passed away last week. Those who knew him, remembered Dean for his drive to carry out his "vision" for the town.**

## Council cont. from Front Page

ton has been waiting for.”

Regarding the State’s Attorney’s finding, Reimondo released a written statement saying that “while I do not agree with S.A. Liston’s ruling, as an enforcement professional I accept it.” He continued on to say that he understands “the burden of proof lies with the State and that it is ‘proof beyond a reasonable doubt,’” and the burden is “far superior than that which a civil or administrative process requires.”

Rosenblatt agreed with his client’s statement, adding that although there were “strong civil claims, there was not enough proof to bring about charges.”

On Tuesday, the regular Town Council meeting filled the town hall meeting room, with most in attendance anticipating the proposed settlement. Resident Kyle Dostaler, who has spoken out against the Town Council’s actions in past months, conveyed his hopes that the end of this

## Howard Dean cont. from Front Page

Republican officials remembered just that. “I had a lot of respect for Howard, because he always did what was right for the town,” former first selectman Dennis Hawrylko said. “As first selectman he did things like pass the sewer ordinance, which led to the sewers we have these days.”

“Even though we could be found on opposing sides of the political fence, more often than not our objectives were common,” Republican Town Committee Chairman Ken Hjulstrom said. “Putting politics aside, we both wanted what was best for our town.”

Hjulstrom recalled speaking with Dean after he left office.

“In those conversations I sensed Howard’s pride in what he had accomplished and his optimism for his town’s future,” Hjulstrom said. “He will be missed, but he will always be remembered for his many years of service and for his accomplishments.”

Dean had managed to accomplish what so many in the political arena hope for – respect from representatives on both sides of the aisle.

“What really set him apart, besides being a good and decent human being, was he knew how to get things done and do it the right way,” former Democratic Town Committee Chairman Shawn Fisher said. “That’s rare to find.”

“He had a common sense, good decent approach that really served the town well,” Fisher added. “He’s the kind of person I wish we could have in office all year round.”

Former selectwoman Vi Schwarzmans served on the Board of Selectmen with Dean, beginning in 1991, along with Republican selectman Thomas Hayes.

“It was almost like there was no difference between Republican and Democrat,” she remembered. “The three of us worked very well together.”

Schwarzmans said Dean served as a “strong selectman,” but, at the same time, he always remained a gentleman.

“If he thought that something was right, he would stick by his guns,” she said. “That’s what you really need.”

In showing his softer side, Schwarzmans recalled a time when Dean was particularly compassionate.

“There were times we went on site walks and he would have to pick me up out of the mud,” Schwarzmans remembered with a laugh. “He was a gentleman through and through.”

According to his wife, Concannon, Dean’s gentlemanly ways spilled over into his personal life as well.

“He was a wonderful husband,” she said.

In addition to being remembered as a first selectman, Concannon said Dean should also be acknowledged as a family man.

Although the two both served as political leaders, the relationship between Concannon and Dean began over something unrelated – tax returns. Concannon was working as a tax preparer and was asked to file Dean’s return, which was different because he was living in Canada at the time.

For two years, the two maintained their relationship over the phone.

Then, the year he returned to the states, “at tax time, things sort of clicked,” Concannon remembered.

The next year, Concannon, a Haddam resident, ran for State Representative for a district that included East Hampton, Haddam and part of Middletown – but not Marlborough.

So it seemed Dean and Concannon were separated by a river and, “it was seven years

ordeal is near.

“I just hope that the lawsuits come to an end for the good of the town,” Dostaler said. “I think the council owes an apology to the town for their actions, which has affected the town monetarily and affected our reputation.”

Although Dostaler hopes the end is in sight, he said he worries the Town Council may not be “done politicizing the police department,” saying it is “proposing cuts to the police budget, but asking them to do more.”

His wife, Mary Ann Dostaler, added that she was “not surprised” by the proposed settlement, saying that it was “very clear that their actions were illegal.”

No announcement has been made on when the agreement will be reached.

The Town Council will have its next regular meeting on Tuesday, April 26 at 6:30 p.m. at the Town Hall.



**VOTE '91**  
*Democratic*

**Above is Howard Dean’s campaign headshot from his first run for first selectman of Marlborough in 1991.**

before we got married,” she said.

When she didn’t run for re-election in 1998, Concannon said the *Hartford Courant* ran an article about her, saying she gave up her seat for love.

Asked this week if it that was the case, Concannon replied softly, “yes, it was true.”

With their marriage, Dean and Concannon had their very own *Brady Bunch*, as she brought her four daughters and he his three sons.

For six years the couple lived in Marlborough, but during that time, Dean was diagnosed with leukemia – a “whammy” that shook their lives.

After the diagnosis came in 2001, Concannon remembered Dean told her, if he had known he was sick “he wouldn’t have wanted to marry.”

“But I wasn’t going to let him off the hook that easily,” Concannon said. “He would never have been a burden.”

Several years ago, the couple moved to East Hampton and joined the Democratic Town Committee there. Meanwhile, Dean’s disease progressed and doctors diagnosed him with a more acute form of leukemia.

“The doctors said he would get worse before he got better, but he never seemed to get better,” Concannon remembered.

Dean’s body “just didn’t respond to treatment,” and he passed away at Middlesex Hospice.

But even though he’s gone, Concannon said there are still plenty of memories about Dean that made lasting impressions; like how the two of them would read the newspaper each day and discuss the politics, or when they traveled to Ireland to visit Concannon’s family.

“Every memory is a happy memory,” she said.

And even more memories were shared at Dean’s funeral service held Tuesday, in which more than 500 people attended, including Lieutenant Governor Nancy Wyman and Secretary of State Denise Merrill.

“It was a great tribute,” Concannon said.

Dean’s full obituary appears on page 14.

## From the Editor’s Desk

# Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

I was saddened this week to hear about the passing of former Marlborough First Selectman Howard Dean. Howard was serving in that position back when I was a reporter for the *Rivereast*. While my beat didn’t include Marlborough, it did include the RHAM schools, so I had occasion to talk with Howard. Multiple occasions, actually, as those were the years the RHAM budget had such a difficult time getting passed by the voters.

I remember speaking with Howard several times, both before (“Do you think the budget will pass?”) and after (“Were you surprised it failed?”) each referendum. He always offered good quotes, provided nice observations about what the townspeople may be thinking – and he often made me laugh.

That’s one of the things I’ll remember about Howard: his good sense of humor. I always looked forward to calling him, because I knew at some point in the conversation he’d make me laugh. Some town officials you feel more at ease talking with than others; Howard was definitely in the former category. It just so happened that, during the period I was covering RHAM and making those frequent phone calls to Howard for my budget stories, the *other* Howard Dean, the “YEAAAHHHHH!!!!” Howard Dean, announced he was seeking the Presidency. I remember joking around with Howard about that, about his name all of a sudden becoming nationally known.

I’m sure many of you by this point have read Katy Nally’s nice cover story about Howard’s life, and the kind thoughts and pleasant memories offered by his wife and former Marlborough colleagues. Katy notes in her story that more than 500 people attended his funeral on Tuesday, and I’m not all shocked by the strong turnout.

Howard was a good man, and he’ll be missed.

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Many Andover residents likely have heard about *The Legend of Captain Smith*, a comedic musical co-written by selectman and Board of Education Chairman Jay Linddy. The play will be performed Friday, May 6,

and Saturday, May 7, at Andover Elementary School. Well, Jay called the office last Thursday afternoon and let us know a little blurb about the play had appeared that week in, of all places, *USA Today*.

In the Monday, April 4, edition of the paper, in a section called “Across the USA: News from Every State,” Connecticut’s entry is all about *The Legend of Captain Smith*, and how Linddy and Windham resident James Baran are leading an effort to revive community theater in town.

Granted, the blurb is only three lines, but, still, it was in *USA Today*. I mean, how many people outside the state have ever even *heard* of Andover, CT? It’s a pretty small town. To get a national mention like that – however brief – is pretty cool.

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In closing, I feel the need to remind everybody that the fifth and final season of *Friday Night Lights* debuts tonight at 8 p.m. on NBC. I first discovered *Friday Night Lights* early last year, and quickly became a big fan. I’ve seen a lot of television in my time, but I’ve never come across a drama so consistently realistic, well-written and well-acted. While most episodes of the show feature a climactic football game, the show isn’t really about football; it’s about the everyday lives of adults and teens living in the small town of Dillon, TX.

And those everyday lives have proven quite compelling. But not compelling in a sensationalistic way. The show is dramatic but never melodramatic. Instead, these well-drawn, three-dimensional characters cope with the same types of situations, the joys and the heartache, the successes and the failures, that many of us deal with in our own lives.

It’s a shame the show is ending after five short years, but I’m not going to dwell on that. Instead, I’m going to spend the next 13 weeks savoring the final episodes of one of the greatest shows that has ever been – or will ever be – on television.

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See you next week.

# Facebook Feed Fuels Feline Rescue in Andover

by Courtney Parent

While many use social media outlets such as Facebook to socialize with friends, share photos and videos, one woman used Facebook in a similar respect to Batman's "bat symbol," sending out a call for help for her missing feline friend.

Dee Lenkiewicz first noticed her 1-year-old cat Marley was missing last Friday when attempting to bring him in the house for the evening.

"We always bring him in at night," Lenkiewicz said. "We called and called, but he didn't come."

According to Lenkiewicz, all day Saturday was spent searching for Marley, fearing the worst. While the search didn't lead to any bad news, there was also no good news and no trace of Marley. Little did Lenkiewicz know she was simply not looking high enough.

Initially after Marley went missing, Lenkiewicz's 3-year-old daughter Olivia told her mother that the cat was just outside, saying "Mommy I know he's out there." However, Lenkiewicz said after Saturday's search Olivia expressed a different sentiment saying, "Mommy I know he's lost."

Feeling rather disappointed that the search efforts turned up no results, on Sunday Lenkiewicz posted a status on Facebook that read "Missing Marley <3." Those two simple words, followed by a heart, commenced a neighborhood rescue.

Upon reading her neighbor's sad post, Marie Brennan contacted her 17-year-old daughter Evelyn about it. (According to Brennan, Evelyn is like a "little sister" to Lenkiewicz.) Brennan and her daughter, along with several other neighbors had noticed a cat in a tree earlier in the weekend, but were not aware it was Lenkiewicz's Marley.

From there the rescue efforts got underway. Evelyn immediately contacted Lenkiewicz and told her that Marley might be in a tree near her house. Upon arrival, Lenkiewicz confirmed it was Marley, who was sitting approximately 45 feet up in the tree on Lakeside Drive.

The initial instinct was to call the Andover Volunteer Fire Department, but according to Brennan, this proved to be a dead-end as they said they do not rescue cats from trees. After that first attempt produced no results, several neighbors proposed contacting their friend, Mark Byam of American Arborists.

According to Byam, he got the call around 4:30 p.m. on Sunday and headed right out. On average, Byam said he gets anywhere from 15 to 20 calls a year for a cat rescue.

"Every once in a while I get a call for a cat," Byam said, "and I go and get it."

Byam explained that when rescuing a cat, he



**Mark Byam, far right, hands over 1-year-old Marley to his owner Dee Lenkiewicz, after rescuing the cat that was stuck in a tree over the weekend, stranded about 60 feet above the ground.**



**Above is Marley the cat who went missing last Friday, but was later found stuck in this tree.**

uses a harness and a rope to climb the tree. Once he retrieves the cat, he then repels down, holding the cat against his chest.

"Sometimes they want to try to get away," Byam said, "but most of the time they are happy to see me."

As for Marley, Byam said the cat was happy to see him, but he actually did try to get away, running an additional 15 feet up the tree, which put him approximately 60 feet above the ground.

After scaling the additional 15 feet up the tree, Marley finally decided it was time to go home and repelled down with Byam just before 6 p.m. on Sunday. While Byam said cat

rescues are not something that he advertises, they are a feat he performs rather often.

According to Lenkiewicz, after being stuck in a tree for two days Marley was very excited to be home with a dish full of food.

"He ate like a horse," said Lenkiewicz, "ate and slept. Then he wanted to go back out. No way!"

Her daughter Olivia was equally enthused and would not let Marley out of her sight or even her grasp, smothering him with love.

"Oh my god, she was so ecstatic," said Lenkiewicz. "She was so happy. She wouldn't stop holding him...except to let him eat."

# Andover Rail Trail to Receive Bridge this Summer

by Courtney Parent

During the week of May 16, don't be surprised if you're taking a stroll down Center Street and you see a bridge rolling by you.

No, you won't be dreaming and no, you won't be in some alternate universe where stationary structures move and people are motionless. It's just Andover's brand new pedestrian bridge being transported from its current location in Elmira, NY to its future home on the Hop River Rail Trail at the crossing of Route 316.

The Hop River Rail Trail is a 15.6-mile route extending from Bolton to Windham. The trail is utilized for activities including walking, cross country skiing, mountain biking and horseback riding.

According to First Selectman Bob Burbank, the town has waited its fair share of time for the bridge to finally make its appearance in Andover. Burbank said the bridge was actually ordered back in 2004, but due to increased requirements from the state's Department of Transportation the bridge project has been held up.

"The project has actually been years and years and years in the making," Burbank said. "There has been a lot of give and take with DOT."

The bridge currently sits in Elmira, NY under the care of Echo Bridge, Inc., the company handling the project. Echo Bridge, Inc. constructs both pedestrian/nature trail bridges and vehicular bridges in states from New Hampshire to Virginia to Illinois.

According to Burbank, during the week of May 16 the bridge will be transported to Andover in three separate sections. The bridge will then be assembled on the rail trail, with the decking and trusses being put into place.

Burbank noted that the roof could not be put on until after the bridge was moved as it would be too tall to clear some overpasses. The process is estimated to take approximately two weeks.

After the bridge is fully assembled, it will be put on wheels, moved down Center Street and lifted into position at the crossing of Route 316, which Burbank referred to as the "missing piece of the rail trail."

However, before the bridge is moved and placed, the DOT has to approve the entire erection process and any road closures. Burbank said that the plan of execution revolves around causing the least inconvenience to the public. Having said this, the setting of the bridge is currently scheduled for the night of Friday, June 3 after rush hour. This way, Burbank said, if plans get delayed until June 4 or 5, the setting would fall on a weekend.

According to Burbank, the total cost of the bridge, including the purchase price, construction and transportation costs, is approximately \$411,336. Burbank went on to note that the beauty of the project is that it hasn't cost taxpayers a penny. The project was funded primarily through a STEAP grant in the amount of \$375,000 with the DOT and the Department of Environmental Protection making additional contributions.

Burbank pointed to support from the state senate, as those who aided the town in attaining the STEAP grant, specifically naming State Representative Pam Sawyer and State Senator Edith Prague.

Burbank noted that while the town of Andover has organized the purchase and construction of the bridge, once the project is com-



**A bridge for Hop River Rail Trail will make its way from New York to Andover next month. Above is the bridge under construction at Echo Bridge, Inc. It will be set up in town over the summer.**

plete and the bridge is in place the state will be responsible for maintaining it, as it will be part of DEP's Hop River Rail Trail.

As the long-awaited implantation approaches, the anticipation only rises.

While sifting through multiple folders, filled with numbers, photographs and other documentation from years past, Burbank expressed his

enthusiasm by noting what a "really big" event this is.

He went on to convey his dedication to the project, noting that he has been working night and day with Echo Bridge, Inc. to ensure progress continues, and that after years of planning, the bridge will finally arrive and take its place on the rail trail.

# RHAM Education Board Approves \$24.65 Million Budget

by Courtney Parent

RHAM Board of Education approved its 2011-12 budget of \$24.65 million at a special meeting held after its public budget hearing on Monday, April 11.

The proposal shows an increase of \$432,845, or 1.79 percent, over current year spending.

At Monday's hearing, Board of Education members left their seats on stage in the RHAM auditorium, moving to audience seating to receive Superintendent of Schools Bob Siminski's presentation detailing factors impacting the budget and giving an overall budget analysis.

During the presentation, the voice of Siminski seemed to echo in the nearly empty auditorium, with just a handful of audience members including administrators from RHAM, board members from Marlborough and Hebron and just a few members of the general public.

Siminski began his presentation by emphasizing the main goals of the budget: to provide the same level of programming, to address the legal requirements of providing special education cost effectively, and to preserve teaching positions.

Siminski went on to explain that a few of the factors impacting the budget included an increase in high school enrollment and special education enrollment, an increased cost of heating oil at \$2.55 per gallon and bus fuel at \$2.59 per gallon, negotiated salary increases and an estimated 1.52 percent increase to health insurance.

When looking at enrollment numbers, increases are on the horizon. Combined high school and middle school special education enrollment is projected to increase from 211 to 223. On a similar note, general high school enrollment is predicted to increase by approxi-

mately 70 students with middle school staying about the same, with total enrollment for the next school year anticipated at 1,765.

However, the number of those special education students being out-placed is projected to decrease from 36 to 29 students. Siminski said this is a "way of reducing costs" as he explained it costs approximately \$50,000 per out-placed student, with the average transportation cost representing approximately \$12,000. Special education costs in the 2011-12 budget are estimated at \$3,631,605.

Diving further into the budget, Siminski pointed to the financial impact of students having their choice between public and magnet schools. He noted that in the 2011-12 budget, a combined \$269,825 can be attributed to vo-ag, at \$159,840, and magnet school tuition, at \$109,985. These costs include the anticipated 109 students that will take advantage of school choice in 2011-12.

During the "budget analysis" section of Siminski's presentation, he divided the budget into four categories including regular education, special education, support services and debt. Support services claimed the largest piece of the pie representing \$10.19 million, or 43 percent of the budget, regular education was the second largest at \$8.30 million, or 33 percent, followed by special education at \$3.58 million or 14 percent and finally debt was shown as \$2.67 million, or 10 percent.

Siminski went on to identify four main items within the budget that attributed to the overall 1.79 percent increase, the most notable being a \$514,506 increase in salaries, due primarily to a collective bargaining agreement that was settled in 2009. The agreement represented a 1.5 percent general wage increase plus a step

increase, equaling a 4 percent total salary increase.

The remaining three items include a \$369,501 increase in special education, a \$43,175 increase in transportation and a \$54,291 increase in professional services, which includes four laptop carts for the middle school, four for the high school and a half-time computer technician.

Before completing his presentation, Siminski outlined the projected levy to the towns: Hebron at 54.22 percent, or \$13.36 million, Marlborough at 29.18 percent, or \$7.19 million and Andover at 16.6 percent, or \$4.09 million. The levies are calculated based on projected enrollment numbers, which is 957 for Hebron, 515 for Marlborough and 293 for Andover.

After Siminski finished his presentation, board members returned to their seats on stage. As was the format at previous RHAM Board of Education meetings, Chair Michael Turner's request for any public comment was answered by silence. After which, Marlborough Board of Finance member Dick Shea stood and approached the microphone.

"I wasn't going to make a comment, but I hate to see you guys get shut out," said Shea.

Shea continued by commending board members for a job well done at providing a "reasonable budget" during difficult economic times, adding that he hoped that voters would support it.

After the public hearing adjourned, the board retreated to the chorus room for a short, private session and later called a special meeting to order.

Before making a motion to approve the \$24.65 million budget, Turner mentioned a

\$9,327 line item for IT services. He said Hebron Town Manager Bonnie Therrien had requested that the IT item, which covers data processing services, be phased into Hebron's budget, rather than the proposed lump sum. Turner said Therrien asked for the phase-in because the IT expense had been sent to the town so late in the budget process.

While there was no comment during the public hearing, two members of the Hebron Board of Selectmen did speak briefly in response to the IT fund phase-in, during public comment of the special meeting.

"I for one will vote against paying it," said Hebron Selectmen Daniel Larson.

Larson noted that the number was not sent to the town of Hebron until after the town's budget was completed.

"I am almost to the point of being insulted by this," Larson added.

Fellow Hebron Selectmen Mark Stuart followed, adding "our budget's already been put to bed" and that the additional IT funds "are not there." However, Stuart went on to say that the board would be willing to discuss a long-term plan of action.

Turner responded by saying that needed items in the budget could always be adjusted and they could discuss the IT cost share over the next couple of months.

"I think we can still work this out," said Turner. "You pull the little strings on items that we share and everything can unravel. And I don't want to see that happen."

The approved \$24.65 million 2011-12 budget will be sent to a district meeting on Monday, May 2 and then referendum on Tuesday, May 3.

# Hebron Finance Board Sends \$34.09 Million Budget to Referendum

by Courtney Parent

At a special meeting immediately following a public hearing Tuesday, April 12 the Board of Finance voted to send a \$34.09 million budget to referendum.

The spending plan represents a \$429,024, or 1.27 percent, increase over the current year's budget. The budget also calls for a 4.56 percent tax increase.

Prior to the board's decision, it held a public hearing, exemplifying key components contributing to the budget and allowing the public to speak in response to the budget.

While the RHAM High School auditorium saw a few more audience members than it did the previous evening for the RHAM public budget hearing, attendance was still rather light, with the bulk of the crowd consisting of members of various other boards in town and town administrators.

Board of Finance Chair Michael Hazel began his budget presentation by explaining that his board's role in the budget process is to provide a figure for the bottom line only, as the Board of Selectmen spent time examining individual line items in detail.

Hazel noted that 70 percent of the \$34.09 million budget is consumed by education, with local and RHAM school board spending each accounting for 35 percent. The town side of the budget accounts for 20 percent, with debt representing the remaining 10 percent.

When turning to the proposed revenue side of his presentation, Hazel said that revenue is "where the real issues are." Hazel noted that the general government is down \$100,000 and that there is "just not a lot happening in this town."

On the opposite side of the spectrum, Hazel said the spending side of the budget has been

"very frugal" and commended the other boards for an "admirable job." Noting that a goal would be to reserve funds for capital improvements in the future.

"We as a town have gotten behind, our roads have gotten behind, our buildings have gotten behind, our capital funding has gotten behind," Hazel said.

Hazel said any money that will be spent in the next fiscal year will not be on "nice-to-haves" but rather "need-to-haves," using the \$22,921 renovations to the Horton House as an example of old projects the town had been putting off for years.

Hazel went on to address the town's debt. Beginning by noting that there is currently \$400,000 in the debt management account, which Hazel said the town hasn't been able to add to in over two years.

"There is some light at the end of the tunnel," Hazel said in regards to the town's debt. "We're just hoping it's not a freight train."

Hazel also pointed to a \$329,000 debt from the sewer assessment fund. He said the revenue stream from this fund was initially "fairly stable."

But, Finance Director Lisa Hancock said, as people sold and refinanced their homes, those assessments were collected in full rather than over 20 years.

Board of Finance member Donna Ferree added that initially the sewer assessment fund was beneficial to residents.

"Ideally, we would run somewhere in the neighborhood of \$300,000 a year from the sewer assessments to offset debt service," Ferree said. "People were refinancing and paying off those assessments, we were taking \$480,000 to offset debt service, that extra \$180,000 to

offset debt service kept the mill rate down during those years."

Ferree said that at the time it sounded like a good idea, but now the town is coming up short because of money used in advance.

During the public comment section of the hearing, several members of the public spoke their minds on the issues of open space funding and technology additions in the local Board of Education budget.

Resident Ned Ellis used his moment at the mic to commend the Board of Selectmen for holding Open Space Land Acquisition funding at its current amount of \$100,000, rather than the originally-proposed \$25,000. Nelson also added that while he is happy to see the number stay steady at \$100,000, in actuality he would like to see that fund added to.

"The fund has steadily gone down," Ellis said, "but I think we really are being short-sighted to not fund that at a greater level."

Ellis went on to note that while trucks and books and other items can always be purchased, "we aren't making land anymore."

Resident Dave Morrison also spoke in favor of Open Space funding, saying that the fund should be closer to \$400,000, but he's thankful it has stayed at \$100,000. Morrison added that he wants to ensure that a percentage of Hebron's land is protected.

"My bottom line is open space," said Morrison. "If this is reduced, I couldn't favor the budget and if it were increased, I would certainly favor the budget."

Turning to the education side of the budget, Morrison said that while he understands the need for technology, he would like to see the Hebron Board of Education with a zero percent budget increase, as was the case last year.

Resident Dominic Marino dove deeper into the technology side of the school board budget, addressing the need for additional SMART tables. While Marino noted that technology is good, he questioned whether it was a need for children in kindergarten. He also asked about whether or not the tables had been properly researched.

"They are not evil things," Marino said, "they are good things, but not in times when money is not flowing."

Hebron Board of Education Chairman Mark Allaben responded by saying the school board had held "a number" of public forums and presentations on the need for technology. Allaben also pointed to technology as one of the key items that the public has expressed a desire for when surveyed.

In opposition to Marino, resident Maura Baker spoke in support of a "very modest" 0.67 percent increase to the Hebron Board of Education budget. Baker said despite difficult economic times the additional technology is essential and she is "very much in support of the addition of technology."

Following the public hearing, the finance board voted 5-1 to send the budget to referendum on Tuesday, May 3. Thomas Sousa was the only opposition, expressing concern over the "4-plus percent tax increase."

The board also unanimously voted to send a \$752,533 CIP budget to referendum on Tuesday, May 3.

"We have only heard from maybe half a dozen residents on this budget," said Hazel. "It should get a chance to be seen by voters in its current form and if there's an outcry against it or for it we'll see that."

# Portland Town Meeting Coming on \$29.82 Million Budget

by Joshua Anusewicz

Town officials are busy gearing up for a town meeting in early May on the 2011-12 budget, a \$29.82 million spending package adopted by the Board of Selectmen last week.

The board approved the budget by a 5-2 vote – with selectmen John Anderson and Carl Chudzik opposed – at its April 6 meeting. The spending plan is a \$196,370 increase, or 0.66 percent, over the current year's \$29.62 million budget.

The adopted budget includes \$11.72 million for general government spending and \$18.10 million for the Board of Education. The budget will now be presented at a town meeting on Monday, May 2, at Portland High School. After the town meeting, the town will vote on the budget on Monday, May 9, at the Portland Senior Center.

"I believe it's a fair budget that meets the needs of our town," First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield said. "I think that people see we've tried hard to keep taxes low." Bransfield added that she has heard mostly positive feedback from residents. She also commended the Board of Education and Superintendent Sally Doyen

for presenting a zero percent increase from last year's budget.

Bransfield originally presented a \$29.91 million budget at a public hearing on March 8. During budget deliberations two weeks ago, the board cut \$89,120 from that original budget, which included a \$20,000 cut in health care benefits and a restructuring of payments for a proposed lease agreement.

The proposed lease agreement would be for \$895,500 and will cover the costs of new equipment for police, fire, and highway departments, as well as a new roof for the Portland Public Library. The original repayment plan was for four years, but the board agreed to a five-year plan, which will cost the town \$195,408 per year for five years. According to Finance Director Tom Robinson, the five-year plan will cost \$31,000 from this year's budget.

The lease was the main topic of discussion during the budget deliberations, with several members of the Portland fire, police and highway departments on hand to stress the importance of new equipment. The new equipment will include two new dump trucks, four new

police vehicles and a new boat for the fire department.

"We have waited a long time to do this," Bransfield said, citing the support of the public safety groups and the Long Range Capital Commission for this proposal. "We have reached a critical juncture and I think this is the right year. We saw last winter what can happen if we don't have adequate equipment."

The Portland Public Library roof will also be replaced and the cost is estimated at \$300,000. According to Bransfield, including the roof in the lease allows the town to secure the funds now and pay it back with a lower interest rate. The roof has not been replaced since the library was built in 1981.

At the meeting, the board moved to authorize the lease purchase agreement, with Anderson and Chudzik opposed again. In accordance with the town charter, the resolution requires approval at a special town meeting, which will be held Wednesday, May 18.

Chudzik said this week his main concern is the uncertainty of Gov. Dannel Malloy's state

budget, which will affect the amount of funds the town receives from the state. He believes that approving a sizeable lease at this point could have negative effects on the residents.

"I didn't want to raise taxes, I wanted to cut spending," Chudzik said. "I think it would be more prudent to put [these improvements] off for a year."

He also explained that he understands the need for the new roof and that he wants residents to have "the best protection from public safety," but also adds that the town will "probably need other capital improvements" over the next few years and worries about how those will be paid for.

During the budget deliberations, Bransfield made a point to ask all of the board members for alternative solutions to the proposed lease, but "nobody presented any other ideas," she said, to come up with the funds for the improvements.

The next Board of Selectmen meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 20, at the First Selectwoman's office located at Town Hall.

## Marlborough Water Association Moves Ahead with Takeover

by Katy Nally

At this point, even board members on the Birchwood Water Association acknowledge that the system just isn't working.

With a packed room Wednesday night, the board took an informal survey from water users and agreed to continue plans for a "takeover" of the association. The water association currently supplies the water for residents on Roberts Road and Sherwood Lane.

Birchwood Water Association President Alan Laliberte explained a takeover forces the one water company with a franchise in the area, Connecticut Water, to acquire the association and its customers. Connecticut Water, he said, offered to purchase Birchwood Water Association in 2009 for \$93,000, but backed out of the deal in the fall of last year. With the takeover, Connecticut Water would acquire Birchwood Water Association for no cost.

Connecticut Water could not be reached for comment for this story.

At the meeting Wednesday, 25 people – each one supposedly representing a household served by the association – raised their hand in favor of going through a takeover. In addition, all nine

board members favored a takeover.

The other avenue to turn over Birchwood Water Association is through a receivership, in which five people were in favor of Wednesday night.

Through a receivership, board member Joe Bennici said Connecticut Water gets to "entertain the possibility" of acquiring Birchwood Water Association, adding he wouldn't know how long that might take. Also, according to Bennici and Laliberte, state Department of Public Health officials said customers should "plan on at least a few days without water," if the association goes through a receivership.

"It's fast, but it's not clean and it's totally out of our control," Laliberte said.

However, resident Kurt Reidenbach said he also spoke with state officials and said he felt the threat of losing water was just a "scare tactic" to deter the association from going through a receivership.

With backing from users through the informal survey, board members were reassured their plans for a takeover was the way to go.

"This reaffirms the way we're working on

it," Bennici said.

"The board felt the only responsible way was through the takeover process," Laliberte said.

Through the takeover, Laliberte said officials from the state Department of Utility Control and the Department of Public Health would work with Birchwood Water Association and Connecticut Water through a series of "mini court cases" to acquire the association. The state would also take into consideration the association's assets and the previous \$93,000 offer from Connecticut Water.

The process of a takeover could take anywhere from one to six months, Bennici said, and would eventually involve an upgrade of the water systems.

Currently, the association's best water-producing well is down since its pump head seized, Birchwood Water Association Secretary Matt Vahlsing said. According to the Birchwood Water Association website, the current status of the wells is "insufficient water."

To accommodate users water has been trucked in, but fees have subsequently jumped. In the April 1 minutes, Reidenbach is quoted

as saying bills are up to \$200 per month, with no end in sight.

And, to make matters worse, the board told users Wednesday they expect the month of May to draw the heaviest usage, as people begin watering lawns and kids return from college.

For Laliberte and Bennici, however, their water bills are waived, as a compensation for being the two executive members on the board.

But the majority of residents in attendance were upset at recent upswings in fees. Bennici, a 30-plus-year resident, told them the situation was much worse before the Birchwood Water Association was initially set up and the system was still under private ownership.

"We tried to do it to the best of our capabilities," Bennici said. "I do want to see us all come out on the right side of the equation."

Following Wednesday's meeting, board members said they would initiate the takeover process in the coming weeks.

Once it's under Connecticut Water's ownership, "my expectation is, it's going to be less than what we're paying now," Bennici said.

## Portland Woman Charged with Setting Fire to Ex-Boyfriend's Shed

by Joshua Anusewicz

A Portland woman was arrested on Monday after setting fire to a shed at her ex-boyfriend's house, according to the Portland Police Department.

Danielle Piatti, 36, of 35 Strickland St., was arrested and charged with third-degree arson, reckless burning, second-degree reckless endangerment and first-degree criminal mischief for starting a fire at a home on Ferry Lane. According to a police report, the two admitted that they've had a "turbulent relationship," which has been on and off over the past several years. According to Piatti, the relationship had recently ended and she was angry over "the lack of communication between them."

The fire took place at 1:30 a.m. on March 29, according to police. Sgt. James Kelly arrived at the fire several minutes later and observed a wooden shed and carport on fire, but the house was not involved. According to the police report, the ex-boyfriend was using a garden hose to prevent an oil tank located next to his home from catching on fire.

Firefighters from both Portland and Middletown were on scene and were able to extinguish the fire within 20 minutes. The

eight-foot by eight-foot shed was completely destroyed, while the carport, the ex-boyfriend's vehicle and the grass in the backyard sustained significant damage.

According to the police report, the Portland fire marshal's office could not find a definitive ignition source and requested the help of a canine office from the state police fire marshal's office. The canine alerted officers to several areas of possible accelerants. Kelly said the accelerants are not known at this time, but are "out for testing."

Kelly said there was "no initial reason to suspect the tenant...of having any involvement in starting the fire," and questioned the Ferry Lane resident's relationship with Piatti. According to Kelly, Officer James Capello informed him that he had driven past Piatti, whom he is familiar with, just 20 minutes earlier on Main Street about 0.1 miles south of Ferry Lane.

Piatti was interviewed by Kelly and admitted her involvement in starting the fire, the police report said. She is scheduled to appear in Middletown Superior Court on Monday, April 25 at 10 a.m. to submit her plea.

## East Hampton Man Seriously Injured in One-Car Crash

A 19-year-old East Hampton resident was seriously injured Wednesday when his car struck two trees on Route 66, Portland Police said.

The accident occurred at around 3:30 p.m., police said. The resident was traveling west on Route 66 near the intersection with Grandview Terrace when he lost control of his Subaru Impreza, went airborne and collided with two trees, police said. Upon impact, the man was ejected from the car and seriously injured, police said.

He was transported to Hartford Hospital via ambulance, as Life Star was unavailable due to inclement weather, police said.

Police were not releasing the man's identity as of press time, as not all family members had been notified. Police did say, though, the man was still in critical condition at Hartford Hospital.

The area of Route 66 where the accident occurred was closed for two hours due to the crash, police said. The investigation is ongoing, and is being handled by the Portland Police Department's accident reconstruction unit.

Anyone who has witnessed or has information about the accident is asked to call Officer David Bond or Officer Peter Paranzino at 860-342-6780.

# FOIC Says East Hampton Town Council Violated State Law

by Joshua Anusewicz

The state Freedom of Information Commission (FOIC) has ruled the majority of the Town Council violated the state's open meeting law last June when the council met to discuss the removal of Police Chief Matt Reimondo.

In its ruling, dated March 14 and sent to Town Council April 1, the commission also recommended several council members should be fined \$50 each for the violation.

According to the ruling, at a hearing last November, FOIC hearing officer Kathleen Ross found in favor of Reimondo in four complaints, but cleared the council of eight others.

The complaints were brought after Reimondo alleged that on June 22, 2010, Town Council members Melissa Engel, John Tuttle, Thom Cordeiro, Christopher Goff, Barbara Moore and then-member William Devine "held an illegal and secret meeting, in violation of the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act." The meeting was held to discuss a proposed severance package for Reimondo and appoint a temporary replacement.

According to the minutes of the June 22 meeting, council member Susan Weintraub, who was not named in the FOI complaint, expressed concern that Reimondo had not been notified of an executive session, which is required by state law. But Town Attorney Jean D'Aquila told the FOIC the purpose of the meeting was "not employee performance review," but a discussion of "attorney-client privilege."

Although the people in attendance were not

named in the minutes of the June 22 meeting, Ross determined that then-Town Manager Jeffery O'Keefe was "present during the executive session, and that he informed the members of the Town Council in attendance that he had ... terminated [Reimondo] from his position as chief of police" earlier in the day.

A "discussion of [Reimondo's] termination ensued" and focused on whether the termination was "retaliatory in nature or was done for the stated purpose of reducing town's expenses," Weintraub testified at the Nov. 4 FOIC hearing.

However, Engel testified that no such discussion took place during the June 22 executive session, but Ross decided that her testimony was "not credible," the report said.

Ross ruled that a violation was committed by discussing "a matter that had never been disclosed as an agenda item, either to [Reimondo] or the public."

Ross also ruled that the council members "denied [Reimondo] the right to attend and participate in the meeting regarding his termination," "denied [Reimondo] the right to request that the meeting on his termination be held in public session" and "failed to list the attendees in the executive session."

Ross has recommended to the FOIC that \$50 fines should be levied on all of the respondents except Devine, who was not present at the meeting, and advised them to strictly comply to the open meeting laws in the future.

However, not all of Ross' findings were against the council. Reimondo had also requested that the actions taken by the council at the June 22 be declared "null and void," but because the executive session was to discuss a severance package that would benefit Reimondo and Reimondo had already been reinstated as police chief, Ross ruled in favor of the council members.

Reimondo had also complained the council had failed to give him and the public "notice of a meeting on [Reimondo's] proposed termination." However, Ross determined that Reimondo had been terminated prior to the special meeting, and that the council had "no authority or intention" to terminate him.

The council members have not decided whether they plan to appeal the fine, but Engel did say she plans to address it with the other members of the council. A meeting will be held Wednesday, May 11, at 2 p.m. at the FOIC Hearing Room, 18-20 Trinity St. in Hartford, where the members will be able to argue their case to the commission.

Engel also voiced her frustration at Weintraub for testifying against the other council members, saying that she has turned "fiction into fact" and questioned how the hearing officer came to her decision.

"I want to know why [Ross] found Sue to be credible," Engel said, adding that she was disappointed that Weintraub "attempted to make it look like we were wrong." She said she felt

the fine was fairly insignificant, and added it was "only significant in the fact that [the hearing] shouldn't have happened."

Engel also said she was informed by D'Aquila that "credible" and "not credible" was used as "sort of like" legal terms by the FOIC to indicate which testimony it believes. She said she was "annoyed" there was no explanation as to why her testimony was deemed not credible.

Weintraub maintained that everything that she said during the testimony was "truth and fact," and that the hearing officer delivered "a fair and equitable ruling based on those facts." She also hopes that the other council members don't appeal, saying that the cost for attorneys "would cost more than the fines."

Ross said Thursday she needs to look at two different versions of testimony and make a "judgment call." She said she felt Engel's testimony was "self-interested," based on that she was named in Reimondo's complaint, and there were "a few contradictory statements." She said Weintraub's story was "more consistent."

Ross also added the FOIC rarely levies fines for civil penalties, but said this particular case was an "egregious violation."

Reimondo could not be reached for comment, but his attorney, Leon Rosenblatt, says the findings are "what he expected." He also reminded that "this is not a final decision, but only a recommendation" and that a lot won't be known until after the May 11 meeting.

# Noise Ordinance Shot Down by East Hampton Council

by Joshua Anusewicz

The latest attempt at a noise control ordinance for East Hampton began as a well-planned draft but ended as little more than a stack of papers.

The Town Council did not support member Susan Weintraub's proposed ordinance at a Town Council meeting Tuesday.

After receiving no support from other members, Weintraub declined to make a motion to adopt the ordinance, leaving residents who have fought for the ordinance for several years disappointed. The council commended Weintraub for her hard work and the drafted ordinance, but believed that more legislation would be difficult for the residents to understand and harder for the police department to enforce.

The proposed ordinance is modeled after a noise ordinance from the State Department of Environmental Protection that other towns have adopted. Weintraub said she believed an adopted ordinance would give police the ability to issue "noise tickets" to violators. The proposed tickets would be a written warning for the first offense, \$100 for the second, and \$250 for the third. Violators would also be able to appeal the citations through a hearing process, presided over by a hearing officer appointed by the town manager.

The ordinance would exclude certain noise, such as barking dogs, house alarms, recreational events, and lawnmowers during certain hours.

It would also give businesses the ability to apply for variances if they are "negatively affected" by the ordinance, depending on the location, time, and intensity of the noise.

Weintraub said she has spoken with multiple police departments whose officers are able to enforce a noise ordinance, and, overall, the departments gave the process favorable reviews. She stated that "warnings are usually sufficient" and tickets are very rarely handed out.

Council member Thom Cordeiro, who has supported a noise ordinance in recent months, spoke out against the proposal, citing discussions he's had with residents, which have been "overwhelmingly against the ordinance." Cordeiro also believes that it would put the police force in an "undue situation that will force them to race all over town to provide support when they're already taxed more than they have to be."

Cordeiro also expressed the same concern that most council members have shared throughout the noise ordinance debate: "spot legislation." The majority of the council believes that the noise ordinance is directed solely at Angelico's Lake House Restaurant, which plays live music during the summer.

Most of the residents who have pushed for a noise ordinance reside near Angelico's and have submitted multiple complaints about the mu-

sic. Restaurant owner Paul Angelico and his attorney, Michael Dowley, have warned the Town Council that adopting a noise ordinance tailored to enforce noise around the restaurant could result in a civil suit against the town.

Council member Barbara Moore stated that Angelico has "agreed to comply" and said that residents in the area have "admitted to changes" in the noise levels. She believes that forcing the whole town to comply with an ordinance would be too much.

"It sounds like we live in a wild and crazy community," Moore said. "We're painting the town to be something it's not. I don't think the ordinance is right for everyone."

Angelico was also on hand and stated that attempts to decrease noise levels have "been met with resistance" by residents, who he believes "have an agenda" against his restaurant.

Council member Christopher Goff also did not support the ordinance. Goff, at previous meetings, asked if the police department has the ability to issue citations for public disturbance or breach of peace and asked if that is a reasonable solution. Weintraub has maintained that those citations would be too severe for the offense, stating that they are "criminal offenses," and would have to be brought to superior court.

Several residents spoke in support of the or-

dinance, including Fran Klein, who lives near Angelico's and has been pushing for the ordinance for several years. Klein also questioned the authority the police department has to enforce noise complaints currently.

"I want to know, upon my call, what the police can do," Klein said. "I want to be able to see it in print."

Resident Angela Sarahina expressed her disappointment with the Town Council, which she believes has been "jerking residents around with a proposed ordinance." She said she was also concerned with the police being able to enforce noise complaints.

"You want the police department to enforce but you also want to cut from their budget," Sarahina said. "Is there something wrong with this picture?"

Weintraub said on Wednesday that she was "not surprised" that she didn't have the council's support, but holds hope that after the elections in November, the issue can be revisited. She stated the addition of more mixed-use land areas and the revitalization of the downtown area as future areas that may draw noise complaints.

"An ordinance would be our best tool for the community for excess noise," Weintraub said. "If we all lived by the 'Golden Rule,' we wouldn't need laws. But this is something we need."

# Puppetry Celebrated at Cragin Library in Colchester

by Katy Nally

"Puppetry is magic."

And veteran puppeteer Chris Rose made believers out of an audience gathered at the Cragin Memorial Library Saturday, April 9, in celebration of the National Day of Puppetry.

"This is the magic," Rose said as he made one puppet dance atop his tattered black trunk. "This is what happens with puppets."

A puppet, he continued, "can be as simple as a ball...that does things that you want it to do." As Rose spoke, a red ball seemed to levitate beneath his hand and bounce from one edge of his trunk to the other.

Rose, a former Colchester teacher, was the title presenter for the day. He told those in attendance about his puppet lineage – the Rose Puppet Family – which includes his mother and father who were puppeteers for *The Howdy Doody Show*.

His parents, Margo and Rufus Rose, began professionally puppeteering in 1929, he said. And kids got to experience these antique puppets first-hand Saturday, as the puppets Rose brought out, were the same ones his mother used to entertain children when she visited schools.

A giant yellow jaguar puppet kicked off Saturday's celebration by taking a stroll around Cragin Memorial Library. Organizer of the event, Sharon Murphy Boski explained middle school students crafted the large puppet several years ago when they were at Jack Jackter

Intermediate School. The project, Boski said, coincided with the art curriculum that included learning how to make papier mâché – "only we were doing it on a much bigger scale," Boski added.

Kids acted as the giant cat's feet as they held up the nylon body of the jaguar and two others held rods affixed to the spotted circular face made from papier mâché. Two more puppets – a large blue hand and red heart – took the lead at the head of the march. And of course, two more children brought up the rear and made sure the jaguar's tail wagged enough.

Saturday's parade was not the first one for the yellow jaguar, which has also made an appearance in a previous Memorial Day parade, Boski said. It was not featured last year, however, "because we tend to slow the parade down," Boski said with a laugh.

After the opening parade, Mike Langlois from Flock Theatre addressed the audience and stressed the importance of "integrating arts into the [school] curriculum."

Flock Theatre is a non-profit theatre company that works with communities to create performances for people of all ages.

Langlois said Flock Theatre has been working with Colchester schools for about 20 years and has embarked on shows that use puppets in the past several years.

"We love to get the chance to do that when



Puppeteer Chris Rose dazzled the audience as he made his puppets come to life.

we can," he said.

One show the audience watched Saturday relived moments in Connecticut history like George Washington's trip through the state on horseback. The video depicted former puppet students acting out Washington's trip through shadows and cut-out figures. Langlois explained students acted out scenes behind two curtains that were lit with an overhead projector. Parts of the scenery, like a campfire for instance, were displayed on the curtains via the overhead projector.

Another shadow play, *The Sunken House of Gardner Lake* featured a blue lake monster that swallowed up an unfortunate house, which had been sinking into the lake. Two very animated

fish made the play come alive as they dashed inside the sunken house to claim it as their own.

After the viewing, Rose asked kids in the audience if they had noticed a fish hook inside one of the fishes' mouths. A few children nodded excitedly in response. Then Rose posed a real puzzler – asking the children if that fish hook was there, or had they simply imagined it. But, such is the power of puppets, he told the audience.

Their mystique provides "magic and imagination."

"Kids will take them into their hearts and make them become alive," Rose said. "He is what you make of him."



As part of the celebration of the National Day of Puppetry, kids participated in a giant puppet parade around the Cragin Memorial Library on Saturday.

# Solar Panels, Land Exchange Topics for Colchester Selectmen

by Katy Nally

After receiving authorization from the Board of Selectmen last Thursday, Director of Facilities and Operations Greg Plunkett will pursue a contract for free solar panels for town buildings.

Also at their Thursday, April 7, meeting, selectmen once again looked at a land exchange with Hebron, heard a request from the zoning enforcement officer to seek an attorney referral for one property owner and gave the go ahead for a new flag to fly at Town Hall.

Plunkett explained DCS Energy's program to lease solar panels to Colchester at no cost is supported through federal funds. He said the company originally presented the offer to town officials last summer, but excluded flat roofs. But, with additional federal funding for this go-around, and the inclusion of flat roofs, Plunkett said he recently contacted DCS and sent a list of buildings for consideration.

With the approval from the Board of Selectmen, Plunkett said DCS would now come to Colchester and perform an energy audit, look at existing electrical panels and check for southerly exposures for panels.

After that, a contract would be drawn up, which would ultimately be approved by selectmen, Plunkett said.

"I think it's a great idea," selectwoman Rosemary Coyle said. "I think we should move forward with it."

The audit would determine if town build-

ings could support the photovoltaic panels, Plunkett said, adding, the only "questionable" roof is the Parks and Recreation garage. Other buildings that could potentially receive panels include the four schools, Cragin Memorial Library, Town Hall and the youth center.

Plunkett said town officials from both North Stonington and Salem, which agreed to lease panels from DCS Energy last year, reported they were satisfied with the program thus far.

More information about DCS Energy is available at [dcsenergy.com](http://dcsenergy.com).

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Tax Assessor John Chaponis spoke with selectmen last Thursday about a land swap with Hebron that's been nearly 20 years in the making.

Since 1993, Chaponis and the assessor in Hebron have been working to swap a nine-acre strip of the Airline Trail in Hebron that Colchester owns with a nine-and-a-half acre chunk near the Colchester transfer station that Hebron owns.

Possessing these additional nine-and-a-half acres would increase Colchester's buffer around the transfer station. Chaponis explained, in 1998 Colchester took about 10 acres through eminent domain after the land was contaminated.

"It behooves the town of Colchester to increase that buffer," he told selectmen.

Chaponis said the nine-acre strip of the Air-

line Trail, although technically owned by Colchester, is maintained and policed by Hebron.

Because the parcels are fairly equal in size, Chaponis said there would be no purchase price for the "one-to-one" swap, just the cost of legal expenses for drafting and filing an agreement.

First Selectman Gregg Schuster said he has been in talks with Hebron officials, and Hebron Town Manager Bonnie Therrien told him she would talk with her Board of Selectmen in the coming weeks.

Although no action was taken last Thursday, Colchester selectmen agreed Schuster should continue to hash out details with Hebron.

A town meeting would be held to officially acquire the parcel.

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On a more serious note, Zoning Enforcement Officer Craig Grimord asked selectmen if he could forward a case to the state Housing Court.

Grimord said a home on Amston Road poses some public safety and health issues, as discarded vehicles and "miscellaneous junk and debris" litter the property, and hazardous materials have been improperly stored in an aquifer protection zone.

"The place is in appalling condition," Grimord said.

The property came to Grimord's attention after a complaint regarding vermin was made in 2009. Since then, the homeowner was asked to clean up the property and remove the unregistered vehicles; however, little progress was made, Grimord said.

After that, a cease-and-desist order was issued, but the homeowner said he was too ill to comply with the order, so an extension was granted. But, when the property still wasn't cleaned up, Grimord sent a letter to the homeowner in March saying he planned on seeking legal action.

The Planning and Zoning Commission unanimously approved Grimord's request to refer the case to the Housing Court at its March 16 meeting, and the Board of Selectmen followed suit last Thursday.

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Lastly, selectmen approved a request to fly a Donor Life flag at Town Hall to promote organ donating.

Peter Kupczak first requested that Colchester fly his Donor Life flag last year to recognize organ donating month. Since his request, the town initiated a flag policy.

His flag will fly at Town Hall from Monday, April 18, through Friday, April 29, with a ceremony scheduled for April 18 at 10 a.m.

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The Thursday, April 21 selectmen meeting was canceled.



# Colchester Middle School Deemed ‘Best Option’ for Senior Center

by Katy Nally

After nearly a year and a half since its inception, the Senior Center Study Group presented its findings to selectmen last Thursday.

The group concluded using an existing portion of William J. Johnston Middle School was the best option for the town’s new senior center – as long as traffic and parking is addressed, and a separate entrance is created.

Using the middle school provided “a real opportunity for the seniors,” Senior Center Study Group Chairwoman Theresa Hendrickson said.

Selectmen were on board with the decision, and unanimously accepted the committee’s recommendation at their meeting last Thursday.

The proposal looks to create a new, dedicated space for seniors – in the former Bacon Academy portion of the middle school – as part of a re-design and renovation of the entire school.

First Selectman Gregg Schuster said the findings would now be forwarded the Ad-Hoc Facilities Committee, which he expects will make a decision regarding the proposed senior center and middle school renovation very soon. After that, he said, a building committee would probably be established to “turn a concept into a plan.”

The Senior Center Study Group requested that Hendrickson, or her designee, be appointed to any future committees that are charged with planning or implementing its recommendation.

When it was formed back in November 2009, the Senior Center Study Group was charged with determining three things: whether the senior center should be a standalone facility or a joint/multi-purpose center, what type of populations the center would serve, and what services would be provided.

The current center, located at 95 Norwich Ave., is four-room 3,600 square-foot structure that was once a schoolhouse. The Bacon Academy Board of Trustees leases the 120-year-old building to the town.

To carry out its charges, members of the Senior Center Study Group went on six site visits, issued a community-wide survey and met with several “content experts.”

The group visited three standalone senior centers, two joint facilities and one community center that offered senior activities, in neighboring towns Coventry, East Lyme, Glastonbury, Groton, Lebanon and Tolland. From the visits, the group determined the future Colchester senior center should have ad-

equated storage and parking, an accessible entryway, enough room for exercise classes and a working kitchen.

In visiting the surrounding senior centers, Hendrickson said the group realized “our citizens really want a warm, welcoming place where they can go and talk.”

Next, the group – with the help of a consultant – created a survey to receive input from residents.

While the group was shooting for 200 responses, it received 411, Hendrickson said.

“This was amazing – to have 411 people respond,” she told selectmen.

Through the survey, it was clear the majority of residents – at 86 percent – thought the current senior center was “inadequate,” and 68 percent of respondents said moving the center to new location was “the best option.”

Also, the majority of survey participants said they preferred a dedicated space for seniors within a multi-use community center. And, 89 percent of respondents said the services offered should focus on health, nutrition, recreation, leisure, educational programs and social services.

Of those surveyed, 90 percent were 40 or

older, which, Hendrickson said, was telling of which residents have a vested interest in the future of the senior center.

“The 40-year-olds are already thinking of what’s going on for them in the future,” she noted.

The majority of survey participants said the new senior center should be available for residents 55 or older.

Finally, content experts schooled the Senior Center Study Group on items ranging from grants available for renovating senior centers, to buildings in town that could serve the senior population. Experts included Chief Financial Officer Maggie Cosgrove, Town Planner Adam Turner and Superintendent of Schools Karen Loiselle, among others.

After nearly a year and half of gathering and analyzing information, the Senior Center Study Group settled on WJMS for its new center.

Selectmen thanked Senior Center Study Group members for their hard work.

“It’s been a tough road,” Schuster acknowledged. “You’ve taken a hard look and I’m extremely impressed with the report you’ve issued.”

# Colchester Boards Send \$50.50 Million Budget to Town Meeting

by Katy Nally

Following two rounds of public hearings this week, the boards of selectmen and finance unanimously voted to send a \$50.50 million budget to a town meeting.

The 2011-12 spending package represents a 3.11 percent tax increase, bringing the mill rate from 25.07 to 25.85. The \$50.50 million shows a 1.94 percent increase over the current year’s budget of \$49.54 million (which doesn’t include \$1.93 million that was funded through the federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, bringing this year’s total down to \$47.62 million).

Overall, the budget is heavy on funding for capital projects.

“We heard from taxpayers – building and equipment,” Board of Finance Chairman Bruce Hayn said at Tuesday’s public hearing. “One thing is clear this year, we have never put enough money into all the capital needs of the town.”

Another public hearing was held Monday.

On the town side, the line item for road improvements, at \$400,000, is more than what was included in this year’s budget.

“The roads still need a lot of attention,” Hayn added.

Other changes include funding an 11th police officer for the Colchester force, who would start on Jan. 1 next year, hiring a part-time social services coordinator, restructuring the Parks

and Recreation Department to bring in a recreation manager instead of a director and bringing the materials budget for the library up about \$10,000, restoring it to its 2008-09 level.

Also, First Selectman Gregg Shuster said, the town signed a five-year lease for equipment like pickup trucks and tractors.

The total town budget sits at \$13.68 million, which is a 0.88 percent increase over the current year.

The Board of Education budget came in at \$36.82 million, after \$550,000, provided by the federal Education Jobs Fund Program, was subtracted. This represents a 2.33 percent increase over this year’s education budget of \$35.98 million, which doesn’t include about \$1.9 million from federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds.

Board of Education Chairman Ron Goldstein explained \$35.98 million is what voters approved at the 2010 referendum, and \$36.82 million is what voters will see at this referendum.

The 2011-12 education budget cuts 9.5 FTE of staff, including 1 FTE from kindergarten, as well as 1 FTE from both grade five and science at Bacon Academy, 2 FTE from grade four, 0.5 FTE from music at WJMS and Bacon, and 0.5 FTE from WJMS computer class. Also, 2 FTE of paraprofessionals at the middle school and 1 FTE of a paraprofessional from Bacon, and 0.5

FTE of an office professional at Bacon, were proposed to be eliminated.

At a March budget forum, education officials defended the 2011-12 salary schedule for Colchester teachers. Since the 2009-10 school year, salaries for teachers from steps one to 11 have remained the same and not seen a general wage increase, Goldstein said. So, the gap between steps 11 and 12 has widened, making that step increase somewhere between a 13 and 15 percent raise for the 2011-12 pay schedule.

The education budget also covers certain repairs for William J. Johnston Middle School, with more funds coming from saving accrued from projects that were energy efficient.

At Tuesday’s budget hearing, opinions from both sides of the spending spectrum were voiced, although only three residents spoke. Most of the citizens in attendance were board or commission members.

Resident Bob Thurston said the proposed spending package is just too high, and funding for facilities like the library and senior center should be cut completely from the budget.

“I want to do away with Parks and Rec.,” Thurston added. “Taxpayers shouldn’t subsidize ball fields.”

Thurston said the same for Youth Services.

“We do a lot for the youths in this town, and it’s great, but we can’t afford it,” he said.

Schuster acknowledged that the town is not legally obligated to fund these programs and departments, but, “I just feel, as a community, we’ve made the choice year after year to keep these services.”

On the other hand, resident Vincent Rose urged school officials to rethink proposed cuts to staff, saying it’s “hard to get that talent back” once it’s gone.

“The most elusive thing is talented teachers that make kids want to learn,” Rose said. “I’m tremendously concerned with what I hear coming out of the education budget.”

In particular, Rose asked about the reduction of 1 FTE of staff from the science program at Bacon Academy.

However, Superintendent of Schools Karen Loiselle assured that the teacher would not be lost and would fill a spot at the middle school where another teacher recently retired.

Loiselle explained the 1 FTE reduction at Bacon would not mean fewer science classes for students, but that one less teacher was needed after the school switched to block scheduling.

The next step in the budget process is a town meeting where residents will vote to send the \$50.50 million proposal to a referendum. The meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 27, at 7 p.m. at Town Hall.

## Colchester Police News

4/5: Clyde Tripp, 36, of 35 Rita Dr., Lebanon, was charged with disorderly conduct and risk of injury to a minor, Colchester Police said.

4/8: Rachel Bandtlow, 18, of 163 Elliot Dr., was charged with possession of less than four ounces of marijuana and possession of drug paraphernalia, Colchester Police said.

4/8: Brian Baker, 18, of 8 White Oak Dr., was charged with possession of less than four ounces of marijuana, possession of drug paraphernalia and traveling unreasonably fast, Colchester Police said.

4/8: Steven Johnson, 24, of 6 Spindle Hill Rd., Wolcott, turned himself in on charges of sixth-degree larceny and criminal impersonation, State Police said.

4/8: Kevin Murray, 31, of 1105 Briarwood Court, Rocky Hill, was charged with speeding and DUI, State Police said.

4/10: Susan Brubaker, 41, of 60 Emily Ln., East Hampton, was charged with third-degree assault and breach of peace, State Police said.

4/10: Shaun Parmelee, 19, of 71 Van Cedarfield Rd., was charged with traveling unreasonably fast, DUI and failure to have tail lamps lit, Sta

## Hebron Police News

4/9: Daniel Walz, 25, of 190 Hillcrest Dr., Amston, was charged with failure to drive right and DUI, State Police said.

## East Hampton Police News

3/30: Christopher Scaplen, 26, of 18.5 Wells Ave., was arrested for DUI, operating a motor vehicle without insurance, failure to drive right and failure to illuminate lights, East Hampton Police said.

3/31: Amanda Stuart, 19, of 371 Long Swamp Rd., Plainville, was arrested for driving while under suspension, police said.

4/2: Lydia Perry, 26, of 8 Heatherwood Dr., Colchester, was arrested for DUI, failure to drive right and traveling too fast for conditions, police said.

4/2: David Overson Jr., 30, of East Hampton and Gerardo Sanchez, 45, of East Hampton, were involved in a two-vehicle accident on East High Street, just west of Princess Pocotopaug Trail, police said. Overson was issued a written warning for failure to grant right of way.

4/3: Robert K. Eldridge Jr., 37, of 175 Ridgefield Dr., Middletown, was arrested for DUI and failure to drive right, police said.

4/4: Jason Merritt, 52, of 41 East High St., was arrested for third-degree assault and disorderly conduct, police said.

## Obituaries

### East Hampton

#### Bernard James Coughlin

The angels guided his gentle soul to his God. Bernard James "Bunny" Coughlin, beloved husband of Patricia Sweeney Coughlin and son of the late Bernard T. and Mary (Reilly) Coughlin, passed away at Middlesex Hospital April 6. He was born in Cobalt May 31, 1923, and was a lifelong resident of Middle Haddam where he built his home and resided with his wife and family for 60 years.



Bunny graduated from trade school and worked for D. Arrigoni Construction Co. as the garage mechanic for 29 years. Thereafter he worked for 18 years as a mechanic for the East Hampton Public Works retiring in 1994.

He served his community as a constable, on the Board of Finance and as a fire commissioner for many years. He was a communicant of St. Patrick Church and a member of the Holy Name Society. He was proud of his Irish ancestry and was a member of the Irish American Home. He enjoyed his trips to the Irish Village on Cape Cod with his wife and Joe and Norma. Bunny loved the outdoors. He loved his vegetable garden and his dahlias and roses. His children, grandchildren and his extended family were his greatest joy. He was a quiet observer and had a wry sense of humor. Poppy's sayings were a source of wisdom and sometimes great laughter. Bunny enriched the lives of all who knew him.

Besides his wife, he is survived by his four daughters and their spouses: Bernice C. Bartlett and husband James of Middle Haddam, Alicia C. Penney and husband Daniel of Middletown, Eileen C. Gotta and husband Charles of Middle Haddam, Sheila C. Daniels and husband Robert of Middletown. He also leaves his only son and namesake, Bernard J. Coughlin Jr. (B.J.) and his wife Lori of Middle Haddam. Bunny was "Poppy" to 11 grandchildren and a great-grandchild, who loved him to pieces: Katherine Bartlett Blaszczyk, James R. Bartlett, Brian D. Penney, Meaghan Penney Scaia, Robert H. Gotta, Nicholas J. Gotta, Molly E. Daniels, Jessie M. Daniels, Kyle J. Coughlin, Leah N. Coughlin and Liam J. Blaszczyk. He leaves his other four girls, "the kids down the hill," Rita C. Gibbons, Denise C. Painter, Anne C. McKinney and Catherine C. Holmes, and many more nieces and nephews, cousins and his wife's sisters-in-law, Norma Sweeney and Mary Sweeney.

Besides his parents, Bunny was predeceased by his brothers, Dennis J. Coughlin and Francis R. Coughlin and sister, Elizabeth C. McLean, and his dear, cherished granddaughter, Kelly J. Coughlin.

A Mass of Christian Burial celebrating Bunny's life was held Monday, April 11, in St. Patrick Church, 47 West High St., East Hampton. Burial will follow immediately in the St. Patrick cemetery. Relatives and friends gathered with his family Sunday, April 10, at the Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton.

Special thanks from Bunny's family to the staff at Chestelm Adult Day Services and Middlesex Hospital for the care given to him during his brief stay.

In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to the Kelly Coughlin Memorial Scholarship Fund, c/o Pam Weir, P. O. Box 350, Cobalt, CT., 06414 or Middlesex Hospital Hospice, 28 Crescent St., Middletown, CT 06457.

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

### Portland

#### Brenda A. Dinsmore

Brenda A. Dinsmore, 57, died unexpectedly Monday, April 11, at her home. She was born on May 28, 1953 in Portland, ME. Brenda was a longtime resident of Portland, CT. She was a member of Free at Last. Brenda enjoyed Wii bowling, Facebook, Happy Pets and playing Wizard 101 with her grandchildren.

She is survived by her daughters, Melissa A. DeRubbo and her husband John of Gray, GA and Theresa A. Vare of Cromwell; her sister, Donna of Maine; and four grandchildren, Abigail DeRubbo of Gray, GA, Kristian Vare of Cromwell, Sarah DeRubbo of Gray, GA, and Joshua Vare of Cromwell.

Family and friends are invited to pay their respects today, April 15, from 5-7 p.m., at the Portland Memorial Funeral Home, 231 Main St., Portland. Burial will be private and at the convenience of the family.

For directions or to send an online expression of sympathy, visit [portlandmemorialfh.net](http://portlandmemorialfh.net).

### East Hampton

#### Howard T. Dean Jr.

Howard T. Dean Jr., 72, of East Hampton beloved and treasured husband of Terry Con-cannon passed away peacefully at Middlesex Hospice Thursday, April 7, with his family by his side. He was born in Norwich, son of the late Howard T. Dean, Sr. and Catherine (Pettengill) Dean.



Howard spent most of his growing years in Marlborough where he was well-known as the *Hartford Times* paper boy, with a route that stretched from one end of town to the other. He graduated from East Hampton High School in 1956 and at Electric Boat while pursuing his bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering from the University of Hartford. He then worked at Raymond Engineering and Safeway Products before moving to Ontario, Canada, in 1980, where he became vice president and general manager of Ohmtek Products Ltd.

Upon his return to Marlborough 11 years later, he was elected first selectman of Marlborough and served the town with diligence, dedication and vision for three terms totaling 12 years. While first selectman, Howard served as president of the Connecticut Council of Small Towns (COST), as vice chair of the Capital Region Council of Governments and vice chair of the State Blue Ribbon Commission on Property Tax Burdens and Smart Growth Incentives. In 2004-05, he lobbied in Hartford on government issues with Rome Smith and Associates. He was also on the Advisory Board for the Institute for Municipal and Regional Policy. At the time of his death he was on the board of the Chatham Health District, a body that he helped create.

Howard was predeceased by his first wife, Irene (Cavanaugh) Dean, the mother of their three sons: Andrew and his wife Debbie, who live in Richmond Hill, Ontario, Canada, Bill and his wife, Kristen, who live in Kingston, Ontario, Canada, and David, who lives with his wife, Angela, in Marlborough. Four step-daughters, Ciara, Aisling, Deirdre and Orla, who live on the west coast, complete "The Brady Bunch." Howard was a proud, loving grandpa to; Michael, Kamryn, Lillie, Ailis, Ava and Finn. Howard was the eldest of four children and is survived by his sister, Marge Bartlett, of Colchester, his brother, Jim, and wife, Apryl, in Nantucket and his sister, Alice and her husband Marty Chemerynski in New Hampshire, also his stepmother, Rita Dean of New Hampshire and many nieces and nephews.

While his sons were growing up, Howard served on the RHAM Board of Education for four years, the Marlborough Board of Finance for six years, two as vice chair, and as an enthusiastic supporter of youth sports activities he was a two-term president of the Marlborough Youth Athletic League. And Howard was a loyal, kind and generous friend to many.

Family camping trips to Maine, neighborhood football games and golfing with his sons until dark were recognized as Dean trademarks. Indeed, golf constituted a major lifelong interest for Howard. In recent years he enjoyed many traveling adventures with his wife, Terry, and spending time with his family was of the utmost importance. He was a true role model for his family and will be deeply missed.

Friends called at the Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton, on Monday, April 11. A funeral liturgy was celebrated Tuesday, April 12, in St. Patrick Church, West High Street, East Hampton. Interment followed in Marlborough Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Dana Farber-Jimmy Fund, P.O. Box 849168, Boston, MA 02284-9168.

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

### Hebron

#### John James Hooker

John James Hooker, 91, of Hebron, passed away at his home Saturday, April 9. Born June 13, 1919, in Willimantic, he was a son of the late Dwight and Victoria (Englott) Hooker.

John moved to Hebron with his family in 1925. He attended the one-room schoolhouse which at one time was located near the property where his home now stands. He attended Windham Technical School, graduating as a specialist in automotive mechanics. He worked for Packard Motor Cars and later for Hamilton Standard before enlisting with the military.

John was a proud veteran, having served in the U.S. Army during WWII. While in active duty, he earned the rank of Tech Sgt. as a Motor Transportation NCO. During his tour of duty, his troop landed in France and advanced through Belgium and Germany. On June 27, 1942, he wed his beloved Martha S. Whitney at the South Congregational Church in Hartford. She survives him.

Upon returning from the war, John returned to work as a machinist for Hamilton Standard Division of United Aircraft until his retirement in January of 1982.

After retirement, John served his community in several capacities. He was a Justice of the Peace for many years; he was caretaker of the Gilead Cemetery; he was a life member of the Hebron Volunteer Fire Department, the American Legion, Jones, Keef, Batson Post 95 Hebron and the Gilead Congregational Church. He was also a Third Degree Mason of 59 years, Wooster Lodge 10 Colchester, and the former Marlborough Grange 205. He will be remembered most by his family as a hard-working man, devoted to his family and dedicated to his community.

Survivors include Martha, his beloved wife of 68 years; a daughter, Mary Lou and her husband, John O'Dea of Laurel, MD; a son, Jack and his wife, Sandy of Hebron; grandson, Jeff Hooker and his wife, Anne, and great grandchildren, Teresa and Trevor, all of Marlborough; granddaughter, Karen Hooker of New York City; sister, Mary Porter of Hebron; and numerous extended family and friends.

He was predeceased by a son, Thomas, and a brother, Andrew.

A memorial service will be held Saturday, April 16, at 1 p.m., at Gilead Congregational Church, 672 Gilead St., Hebron. Burial will follow in the Gilead Cemetery with military honors.

Donations in his memory may be made to the Hebron Volunteer Fire Department or the Gilead Congregational Church Building Fund.

The Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home of Colchester has been entrusted with care of arrangements. For online condolences, visit [auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com](http://auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com).

### Colchester

#### Margaret Patricia Martin

Margaret Patricia "Peggy" Martin, 80 of Rotonda West, FL, formerly of Waterbury and Colchester, died Saturday, April 9. She was born Jan. 17, 1931, in Waterbury, to the late Stuart and Bernice (Peterson) Foster.

Peggy moved to Florida in 1977. She retired from the Englewood Wal-Mart in 1998 as a cashier for six years. She attended St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church in Rotonda West and was a member of the VFW Ladies Auxiliary.

Survivors include her two sons, David E. Martin of Colchester and Raymond J. Martin of Rotonda West, FL; two sisters; Bernice Purcell of Port Charlotte, FL, and Betty Picarelli of Terryville; one brother, Herbert Foster of Waterbury; two grandsons, Craig Martin of Rotonda West, FL, and Corey Martin of Naples, FL; two great grandchildren, Mia and Cesar Martin of CA; and numerous extended family members and friends.

She was preceded in death by her husband, John R. Martin and a son, John Martin.

Graveside services will be observed at 11 a.m. Monday, April 25, at the Calvary Cemetery, 2324 East Main St., Waterbury.

In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to the Colchester Hayward Vol. Fire Co., 18-54 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester, CT 06415.

Care of local arrangements has been entrusted to the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home of Colchester. For online condolences, visit [auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com](http://auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com).

### Hebron

#### William F. Dombrowski

William F. Dombrowski, a lifelong resident of Glastonbury, most recently of Hebron, passed away peacefully Sunday, April 10, at his home, surrounded by his family. He was born in Hartford on Sept. 14, 1920, the son of the late Tadeusz and Anna (Kulakowska) Dombrowski of Hartford.

Bill served in the US Army Air Force during World War II as a Private First Class. He was an iron worker with the Local Union 15-424 and a member of the Elks Organization. He was a devout Catholic, loved to read, watch westerns, travel, ride his motorcycle, being outside, having a beer with the guys and spending time with his family and friends.

Bill leaves behind his loving wife Alexis (Taylor) Dombroski and his children, Margie (Dombrowski) Elkins and her husband Karl of Niantic, John Dombrowski of unknown whereabouts, Douglas Taylor and wife Kimberly (Roche) of Hebron, Jane Taylor of Glastonbury, Laura Taylor of Arlington, MA, and his son-in-law, Bruce Buckley of Glastonbury; his grandchildren, Dennis Kessler and wife Liz (Slade), Adam McLaughlin, Alexandra Taylor, Jason Paschke and wife Kimberly (Federico), Sara and Kate Buckley, Sam and Aaron Banker; his great-grandchildren, Kelly Ann and Kyle William Kessler and Camden and Zachary Paschke, in addition to other very special family members and friends.

Bill was predeceased by his son, William Dombrowski and daughter Nancy (Taylor) Buckley.

Family and friends may call at the Glastonbury Funeral Home, 450 New London Tpke., Glastonbury, today, April 15, from 5-8 p.m. Funeral service will begin Saturday, April 16, at 10 a.m., at the Church of the Holy Family, Route 85, Hebron. Burial will follow in Green Cemetery, Glastonbury.

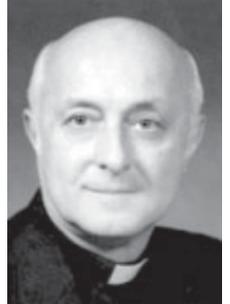
At the request of the family, in lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to Church of the Holy Family.

To visit Bill's tribute and leave an online condolence, visit [Glastonburyfuneral.com](http://Glastonburyfuneral.com).

### Colchester

#### Rev. Anthony Kuzdal

Reverend Anthony P. Kuzdal, 87, formerly of Colchester, passed away peacefully Tuesday, April 12, at St. Mary Home in West Hartford. Born July 5, 1923 in Willimantic, Tony was the son of Anthony and Mary Kuzdal.



A 1944 graduate of the University of Connecticut (B.S.), he later served at UConn as a graduate assistant in the chemistry department before beginning his studies for the priesthood. He graduated from St. Thomas Seminary in Bloomfield, St. Mary Seminary in Baltimore and the Catholic University in Washington, D.C., and was ordained into the priesthood on May 10, 1956, at the Cathedral of St. Patrick in Norwich by the Most Reverend Bernard J. Flanagan, D.D., Bishop of Norwich.

Father Tony began and concluded his 37 years as a parish priest at St. Andrew Parish in Colchester. He spent five weeks as a summer assistant at St. Andrew in May-June of 1956 before moving to St. Thomas Aquinas Parish in Storrs, on the campus of his alma mater, as assistant pastor from 1956-64. He served as assistant pastor at St. Mary in Portland (1964-66) and St. Bernard in Rockville (1966-68).

In July of 1968, Father was named to his first pastorate at St. Stephen Church in Quinebaug and in June of 1977 he was appointed pastor of St. Edward the Confessor Church in Stafford Springs. In November of 1984, Father Kuzdal returned to St. Andrew Parish in Colchester and he retired from his final pastoral assignment in July of 1993.

Father Kuzdal is survived by a niece, Patricia Tolokan of North Windham; nephew, Timothy Tolokan and wife Diane of Storrs; nephew Anthony Tolokan and wife Mary; and great-nephews, John and Alek of North Salt Lake, UT.

In addition to his parents, Father Tony was predeceased by sisters, Rose Tolokan and Josephine Beaudry, and brothers, Theodore and Thomas.

The family wishes to express its sincere thanks for the exceptional care provided Father Tony by the nurses and staff at St. Joseph Living Center in Willimantic and St. Mary Home in West Hartford.

The transfer of the body to St. Andrew Church, 128 Norwich Ave., Colchester, took place Wednesday, April 13. Following that ceremony, Father Kuzdal's body lay in state at St. Andrew Church that evening. A parish Mass was celebrated for his repose that night at St. Andrew Church. A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated Thursday, April 14, at St. Andrew Church. Burial followed at New St. Andrew Cemetery in Colchester.

Belmont/Sabrowski Funeral Home of Colchester is in care of arrangements.