



RIVEREAST

# News Bulletin

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**Making the Climb...**Rock wall climbing was one of many offerings at the Colchester 57 Fest last Saturday, Sept. 24. The annual event celebrates Colchester being named the 57th best town in America in a 2005 *Money* magazine poll. See related story on page 35.

## Union President, Council Critical of Reimondo

by Joshua Anusewicz

The East Hampton Police Department was back under the microscope at Tuesday's Town Council meeting, as the council and, unexpectedly, the police union president took the department and Police Chief Matthew Reimondo to task.

Residents spilled out into the hallway during the meeting at Town Hall, as the council discussed several different topics regarding the police, including several internal investigations into Sgt. Michael Green, who is currently on paid administrative leave. The topic was set to be discussed in executive session prior to the regular meeting, but Green requested the topic be held in public session.

Those expecting to find out information on the allegations levied against Green, however, remained in the dark. The allegations, which were sent to the Town Council in a 40-page draft document by Attorney Eric Daigle of Southington, were not discussed at the advice of Lisa Lazarek, who was acting as the town's labor attorney at the meeting.

Green, who said little at the meeting, has been on paid administrative leave because of the internal investigations since July 27. This has drawn the ire of members of the police department, nine of which signed a petition to get Green back to work.

"We are stripped down in manpower as it is," said Michael Salafia, the police union president. "Mike Green is a valuable member of our department and he's sitting at home." Salafia, who is an East Hampton police officer and an International Brotherhood of Police Officers (IBPO) representative, added that deficiencies in the department were being used as "ammunition"

against Green by Reimondo, who he believes has a "vendetta" against the sergeant.

But he had even stronger words for Reimondo following the meeting. "Matt Reimondo runs the department through fear and threats," Salafia exclaimed.

The draft document from Daigle is the result of an internal affairs investigation that Reimondo originally began against Green over three separate incidents that occurred last year. When Reimondo began the investigation in February, he received a letter from Green's attorney, Richard Hayber, who claimed that the investigation was "baseless" and that it should be handed over to outside counsel. Reimondo transferred the investigation to Daigle, who presented the draft document to Interim Town Manager John Weichsel and members of the Town Council in August.

The report from Daigle outlines, in painstaking detail, three incidents where it was determined that Green had not performed his duties as a supervisor at the department. The report also contains testimonies from Green, Reimondo and other members of the department. From gathering this information, Daigle presents his ruling on the incidents, which are included in the report.

Because the report had been provided to the town, the council members had assumed that this was Daigle's final decision; however, Reimondo and Lazarek told the council that the report was only a "draft document," and that an "amended report" would be presented to the town. Reimondo said that there had been "inaccuracies" in the draft document, and that he

See Reimondo Page 2

## Portland to Be Featured on National TV

by Joshua Anusewicz

The work of Portland's Clean Energy Task Force has earned the town a spot on *Eco Company TV*, a national television program that features various efforts of conserving energy and "going green."

The episode, which airs this weekend, will highlight the town's inclusion in the Neighbor 2 Neighbor Program, which helps residents save money and reduce energy within their homes.

According to Andy Bauer, chairman of the Clean Energy Task Force, the episode will feature the work Portland has done to become more energy efficient, and will even show a "light retrofit" at a Portland home.

Bauer said the town was featured on the show because of its longstanding partnership with Sterling Planet, a company that supplies clean energy products and has worked with Portland since 2005. Bob Maddox, a clean energy marketer for the company, made the arrangement for the town to be featured on the show, which is produced in California.

"We've been working on changing to clean energy for a lot longer than most [towns],"

Bauer said. But it's the Neighbor 2 Neighbor Program, which looks to improve energy consumption in Connecticut, which got the town recognized.

The Neighbor 2 Neighbor Program was formed from a grant from the U.S. Department of Energy to run an energy efficiency program in the state. Since its inception, 16 towns throughout the state have taken part in the program, which comes to homes and businesses to evaluate the building and inform you on how you can save money by being more efficient.

A visit from Neighbor 2 Neighbor – or a "home energy solution," as Bauer calls it – will be featured on the show; the visit took place in August at the home of Brian and Wendy Thatcher, who volunteered to participate on the show.

Wendy said Wednesday that she wanted "to learn more" about the program, and was interested in being featured. In the program, representatives from Neighbor 2 Neighbor visited the Thatcher's home and changed out normal light bulbs for more efficient ones.

"It was a good experience," Wendy said. She also said her children – a son, 16, and a daughter, 10 – were able to see the process and learned a lot. "It was eye-opening for them to participate. They learned more about how much energy we use and how we can reduce that by making small changes."

Thatcher said that since the change, she has seen roughly a \$10 reduction in her electric bill. She also said the program teaches people about other changes, like solar panels and newer insulation, that can reduce the electricity costs even more.

First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield, who has already participated in her own "home energy solution," is also featured on the program. She discusses the work the town has done to become more energy-efficient and the effect it's had on the town.

"[The program] speaks to Portland being on the forefront of the issue," Bransfield said Wednesday. "And it's great for the task force and all those who've been involved throughout the town to be recognized." She specifically

credited Bauer with being an "educator" for the town on how small changes can make a big difference.

Bauer said he hopes that the program will continue to "educate" and inform people in Portland that these programs are available. He said that most of the time, when he speaks to residents about the program, they have no idea it existed.

"Clean energy and energy efficiency...it's just not well-known yet," Bauer said. He said he hopes that residents will take advantage of having a "home energy solution" visit – which only costs \$75 – to improve their efficiency. "It pays for itself quickly," he added.

Bauer said the goal of the task force is for 10 percent of Portland to reduce its energy use by at least 20 percent, and he hopes that the town being recognized will go a long way toward that goal.

The episode of *Eco Company TV* will be featured this Saturday, Oct. 1, at 12:30 p.m., on WTIC-TV, Fox 61.

## Reimondo cont. from Front Page

received the final results of the investigation just a short while before the meeting.

Lazarek recommended that the report not be discussed “for Sgt. Green’s protection,” stating that, “If the whole thing ends up being a bunch of smoke, this document would not be out there marring [Green’s] reputation.”

Green, however, seemed to show no issue with discussing the report, at one point saying, “Bring it.”

But Lazarek stated that there is a pending settlement offer that the police union has proposed to the town, which she said would “affect [Green’s] employment.” During the executive session prior to the meeting, the council did discuss the proposed settlement, which would involve Green retiring, but the proposal was tabled.

Members of the council also expressed their desire to discuss the issue; Vice Chairman John Tuttle said plainly, “[Green’s] given the OK; let’s do it.” Tuttle later added that he felt Reimondo was purposely delaying the process in an attempt to get Green to retire.

“Are you trying to force the settlement on the man so we don’t have to talk about this?” Tuttle said tersely to Reimondo. “Because it sounds like it to me.”

Chairwoman Melissa Engel said she expected to hear “results” from the investigation. “I have to say, I’m disappointed we can’t discuss this,” she said.

Engel added that she was concerned that the town had paid Green over \$11,000 “not to be at work...wasting taxpayer money.”

This drew an interesting reaction from some in attendance – laughter. Whispers about a similar issue “last year,” a reference to Reimondo being paid not to be at work after he was laid off by then-Town Manager Jeffery O’Keefe, could be heard throughout the room.

The laughter prompted Engel to utilize her gavel, admonishing the crowd by saying, “If you want to talk, get elected.”

Reimondo interrupted the council regarding the investigation, stating that there “is a process that has to be followed,” and that like in a criminal investigation, some of the details “are privileged information.”

Finding that the discussion was not going to take place, the council scheduled a special meeting for Wednesday, Oct. 12, at 6 p.m. at the Town Hall to discuss the results of the investigations. Lazarek and Reimondo said they expect to have the results prepared for the meeting.

Engel said after the meeting that she “demands” that the results be presented, and that she expects some kind of motion to come from the Oct. 12 meeting. Although Green did not comment on why he wanted the discussion to be held in public session, Engel said, “Clearly, he feels strongly enough in his innocence.”

Reimondo and Green have had an eventful year; after Reimondo’s position was eliminated by the Town Council, Green was promoted to lieutenant and ran the department until Reimondo was reinstated after a town referendum in November 2010.

After he was reinstated, Reimondo filed a suit against Engel, Tuttle, O’Keefe, and Green, for what he believed was retaliation and collusion against him. The suit was ultimately settled and Reimondo was awarded \$275,000. The charges against Green were dismissed, per the settlement agreement.

\* \* \*

Although the discussion over Green produced the most fireworks, the report from Daigle also included training and policy recommendations for the East Hampton Police Department, which the council discussed with Reimondo.

Through the investigations of Green, Daigle highlighted several issues that he found with the department, which included such topics as case management, supervising officers, hous-

ing prisoners and setting bonds. The specifics of the recommendations were not presented to residents in attendance, but the council did questioned Reimondo about some of the concerns they had.

Regarding the case management system at the department, Reimondo said there had been “some setbacks” in the upgrading of the system. According to Reimondo, the department received a \$30,000 grant from the state last year to upgrade its technology; however, he said that in the past year, the department’s information technology manager “passed away unexpectedly,” and a “change in management” at the department – Reimondo being laid off – had pushed the upgrade back.

Reimondo said that currently, the system is expected to be completed by the end of October. He said that the system will allow officers to connect with dispatch while on the road, so they won’t have to spend as much time in the station. It will also allow for easier tracking of the cases that each officer is currently working on.

Most of the other concerns that Daigle had, Reimondo said, fell under policies and procedures that the department uses, some of which he admitted were “outdated.” Reimondo said that he had contacted Daigle to aid in updating the department to “modern police practices,” and that he hoped to begin the process after the internal affairs issues were settled. He said that the process, however, could take up to 20 months to complete a total overhaul.

Reimondo explained that most of the concerns relate to the fact that officers handle a case “from soup to nuts” – the duration of the case – and that the department can get “backlogged.” He said that although it’s not always “as efficient as it should be...it’s how we do things.”

For example, officers will often not arrest a suspect immediately, as the department finds it easier to arrest a suspect through a “warrant process.” This, Reimondo said, gives officers a better opportunity to handle several cases at once.

Councilor Barbara Moore questioned Reimondo regarding all of the recommendations, asking if he “helped out” or “intervened” while all of the issues were taking place, particularly an issue about supervising officers.

Reimondo said that “sergeants should be aware of” the policies that are listed in the department’s manual regarding supervision. Also, like the internal affairs investigation with Green, Reimondo said that the report was only a “draft document,” and that not all of the information was “accurate.”

It was not announced whether the recommendations would be on the agenda of a future council meeting.

\* \* \*

During the executive session, there was also a discussion regarding the recent discipline issued against Sgt. Garritt Kelly, who was recently given a suspension for sending inappropriate e-mails while at work.

Engel said there was “no further action taken,” but that the council simply “wanted a better understanding of the action imposed” against Kelly.

On Aug. 24, Kelly admitted to sending the sexually explicit e-mails and reached a settlement agreement for a 10-day suspension – five days of suspension and the loss of five vacation days. This came after an internal affairs investigation into the e-mails, which was performed by Reimondo.

Kelly was not present at the executive session.

\* \* \*

The next Town Council meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, Oct. 11, at 6:30 p.m. at the East Hampton Town Hall, 20 East High St.

## From the Editor’s Desk

# Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

Netflix has been in the news a good bit in the last few months, and rarely has it been good news.

Over the summer, you may recall, the popular DVD rental company announced it was splitting its offerings. Instead of letting people pay one price to get DVDs in the mail and to stream movies/TV shows at home on their computer, Netflix would, starting in September, split the services. Subscribers could choose to get DVDs mailed to them *or* they could choose to stream them at home. But they couldn’t do both. Well, they could do both, but it’d cost nearly twice as much as it did before.

Netflix said it needed to split the services to gain the extra revenue it needs to afford to purchase more streaming content from various studios. (The streaming library as it stands now is pretty lacking, at least when compared with Netflix’s DVD library.)

Analysts of the move, however, said this was Netflix’s way of gradually getting out of the DVD business, and putting its eggs in the streaming basket.

Last week came more evidence suggesting this in fact was the case. Netflix announced that, to go with the new pricing models, the DVD-only service and the streaming-only service will have different names (and will in fact be run by different people). The streaming service will retain the name Netflix. The DVD-only service will now carry the insipid name Qwickster. That the streaming service got to keep the Netflix name (and the Netflix CEO), and the DVD service got saddled with a moniker that sounds like something a stoner came up with in about 30 seconds, sort of gives you an idea of where Netflix unfortunately thinks the future lies.

Netflix is not alone. There are a lot of people out there who think DVDs will

eventually become extinct, replaced solely by streaming video. And that, in my opinion, would be a shame.

It’s not that I’m totally averse to new technology. I’d be fine with streaming video as a supplement to DVDs, not a means to supplant them. I recognize the convenience there. But DVD offers a lot that streaming doesn’t. Mainly, the DVD special features. That’s one of the things I’ve always liked best about the format. I mean, of course the fact that the picture’s so much better than that of a VHS tape is a big selling point. But a well-made DVD of a movie or a TV show can offer a lot more than that: deleted scenes, gag reels, alternate endings, making-of featurettes, and of course commentary tracks, which to students of movies can be absurdly informative.

Simply put: If you stream a movie, you get to watch the movie and that’s it. But if you rent or buy a DVD of that same movie, you can watch not just the film itself but so much more.

I realize there are an awful lot of people for which DVD special features don’t mean a thing. And that’s fine. But to take away the special features for the people that *do* enjoy them, that’s not right. And that’s what I fear will happen if DVDs go the way of the dodo bird.

The idea of sacrificing quality for convenience is nothing new. Do you expect a hamburger you get from McDonald’s to be as good as the burger from your favorite steakhouse? Of course not. But the option for you go to your favorite steakhouse is still there. If one day DVDs – and the special features therein – no longer exist, well, like I said earlier, that’d be a shame.

Just how much are we as a society willing to sacrifice in the name of laziness?

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See you next week.

## Abused Horses Seized From Andover Home

by Geeta Schrayter

Six abused horses were taken from a home in Andover on Sept. 23 after a search-and-seizure warrant was executed at 330 Hebron Rd.

The Connecticut Department of Agriculture (DOAG) and the state police executed the warrant after an investigation by DOAG’s Animal Control Division discovered the horses were not properly cared for. Officials said they were lacking proper feed, water, and shelter and were being kept in debris-filled paddocks and pastures.

“They were just kept in run-down corrals that were all busted up and standing in mud,” said Raymond Connors, supervisor of the Animal Control Division with DOAG. He stated they were not used for riding, showing or any other purpose.

“It was just a mess,” he said.

“In cases such as these,” stated state Agriculture Commissioner Steven K. Reviczky, “the priority is getting the animals the care they need.”

Reviczky added, “The Department of Agriculture has an obligation to take custody of these animals to ensure their protection and safety.”

All six horses – two Miniatures, two Percherons, one Thoroughbred and one Paint Stallion – are currently being treated by a vet-

erinarian at the Department of Agriculture’s Second Chance large animal facility.

“One of the miniatures was infected with lice,” Connors stated, noting that some of them had dental issues, and all six had hoof issues. He added that all of the horses were extremely emaciated.

“They’re on a special diet under the instruction of our veterinarian” Connors said. “They’re all eating a lot.”

Connors said that although his office is still conducting an investigation, the horses’ owner, James Hemond, could face serious animal cruelty charges.

The horses will remain at Second Chance, which is located on the grounds of the York Correctional Facility in Niantic, until they’ve been properly rehabilitated and are deemed healthy enough for new homes. Connors expects that to be next spring.

“We’re still working with them,” he said, but added that “they’re all very easy to handle, even the big ones.”

Individuals interested in supporting the ongoing rescue work of the Department of Agriculture can submit donations to the Animal Abuse Recovery Account, c/o Connecticut Department of Agriculture, 165 Capitol Ave., G8A, Hartford, CT 06106.

# Andover Website Soon to be Official

by Geeta Schrayter

At a special meeting with the Board of Selectmen on Sept. 26, members of the town's Website Committee received the results they'd been hoping for.

Although it was first unveiled at a Board of Selectmen's meeting in December 2010, Andover's town website, [andoverconnecticut.org](http://andoverconnecticut.org), has yet to be made "official." According to changes made in the Freedom of Information statutes in 2008, meeting minutes must be made available on a town's website within a week of the session. Selectman Jay Linddy said making the website compliant with state rules has been "a major stumbling block in terms of getting the site together."

Website Committee Chairwoman Debra Toupenca agreed. "As far as the committee, I think our main issue is the minutes and the agendas being updated," she said. She stated that while committee member Jay Kamins, who designed the majority of the site, does a good job keeping everything up to date, posting the minutes on the site are the delay.

And this isn't the first time Andover has had website dilemmas. In 2004, the town introduced an official website, but after the statute passed in 2008, the selectmen voted it unofficial, and it was later shut down due to the lack of meeting minutes as well as the fact that it was built

using old technology.

Now, in order to solve the issue, those in attendance stated they needed to designate an individual who would be responsible for updating the site with minutes in a timely manner – one that falls within the required timeframe. While the topic of who to designate was one of much discussion, it was eventually decided that it should be the responsibility of the town clerk and the assistant town clerk. In addition to already being in charge of stamping and filing the minutes, they would now be responsible for uploading that information onto the site.

"I don't have a problem doing that," stated Town Clerk Carol Lee. Selectwoman Elaine Buchardt agreed with the outcome. "The preference is to have it all come from one office," she said.

With the issue of who to update the minutes solved, Kamins stated an appropriate page would be built for them, and offered his services for training. "I'd be happy to train her," he said, "and come back in as many times as needed until she feels comfortable."

The next issues that needed discussing were who should have website access for updates, and what information to place on it. In an attempt to limit the number of people who had the ability to update the site, giving certain de-

partment heads access was mentioned as well as implementing a system that would allow others to have the ability in times of emergency.

"In emergency situations," Buchardt said, "we will try to set up ways for Bob [Burbank, the town's first selectman], Sylvia [Dake, the head of Andover's Community Emergency Response Team] and the fire department to have direct access."

"What the Board of Selectmen has to do," Burbank said, "they have to set up a procedure to accept information with some administrative review and some type of approval."

The point is to get information on the website "that is a value to the residents," Burbank said, without making a political statement or advertising.

General town information, such as office hours, events, information about the needs of the town, and information from organizations with no political motivation were all mentioned as acceptable types of data. "Pure information is what keeps the site useful," stated Kamins.

Appreciation was also expressed to Kamins for his efforts. "I can see how much work you put into it," Burbank said. "We appreciate what you're doing. This is something that we felt was necessary, and when it isn't working correctly it's one big headache."

Those in attendance admitted the importance of having a town website, despite the frustration that came with it. "We have to be into the year 2012," Linddy said, "and this brings us up to it, but along with it comes headaches."

Apart from the benefit of having the majority of the town's information in one place, the importance of the website in emergency situations was mentioned. "The best example was during the hurricane [Irene]," noted Kamins. "We were able to post some information up that came via the pipeline." Residents with Internet access were then able to quickly and easily view that information.

With the issues thoroughly discussed, Burbank stated the website was "pretty much there." But he added that it might take another 60-90 days before it became official. "Technically," he said, "it needs to be an agenda item on a regularly scheduled meeting, and then the Board of Selectmen would vote 'this is now the official website of the town.'"

Eager for a resolution, Toupenca was quick to add they'd be ready in time for the Nov. board meeting. "That's our date to come here and say 'Carol Lee is trained, and minutes from this past year are up there,'" she said. And, hopefully, get Andover's website the "official" stamp of approval.

# Andover Pavement Preservation Scheduled For Route 6

by Geeta Schrayter

Sections of Route 6 will be improved in the spring of 2012 to extend the lifespan of the existing road.

The sections, running through Manchester, Bolton, Coventry and Andover, will be treated with thin surface overlay, stated Kevin Nursick of the Department of Transportation. This procedure involves filling any cracks present in the road, and then putting a layer of special asphalt on top of the existing roadway that can be spread to a thin five-eighths of an inch, Nursick said. He noted that it involves minor prep work, is probably the easiest regarding maintenance and is the most cost-effective for taxpayers.

More extensive repair options would be to mill and pave the roads, which entails removing the old layer of asphalt and putting a new one on top, or a full-depth reconstruction, which requires pulling everything up, putting a new subsurface down and redoing it all, Nursick explained.

Infrastructure maintenance can be thought of from a three-tier perspective, he said, with the

thin surface overlay on top as the easiest, and a full-depth reconstruction on the bottom.

"You have to constantly be in a state of maintaining your roads," he said.

"At some point we'll have to go back and do a milling and paving project," Nursick said, but the thin surface overlay could extend the life of the road on Route 6 for another five to 10 years, depending on traffic and weather conditions.

State Representative Pamela Sawyer said it's the appropriate time to improve the area for a couple of reasons.

"One is, the money is there for it," she stated. Although the exact costs are yet to be determined, as the plans are still in the design stage, Sawyer affirmed that the cost will be significantly less than if the roads had to be entirely re-done. She provided a preliminary estimate of \$2.5 million, but stated that figure can change if bids come in lower than anticipated. The project will be paid for with 80 percent federal funding and 20 percent state funds.

As for the second reason, the extensive use of Route 6 means the roads in that area need to be kept in particularly good condition. As a major thoroughfare between Hartford and Providence, "it makes a lot of practical sense to keep the pavement in good shape," Sawyer stated. "These overlays are like keeping a good coat of paint" so that you preserve the wood, Sawyer said. But "in this case, we're trying to preserve the pavement."

Sawyer added that every effort would be made to prevent the construction from being as inconvenient as possible for residents along Route 6. While Sawyer admitted it will be noisy, nighttime work – "This will be the time to have your fans and your air conditioners on for the white noise," she quipped – she said road crews will be paving a quarter mile at a time on both sides, in order to "get it done and then move on down the road."

Sawyer said she wants motorists to know "it'll work down the road pretty quick."

Nursick said the DOT tries to perform road work during off-peak travel times to keep travel delays to a minimum and generally tries "to keep traffic flowing and avoid detours, unless there's no other option."

He stated that the patience and cooperation of the residents is greatly appreciated.

"We know these jobs are inconvenient," Nursick said, "and the last thing you want to do is be stuck in traffic or have to listen to the equipment, but we have to do this."

He said the DOT does everything possible to minimize the impact on motorists and residents, and "if I had a silver bullet to take care of [the inconveniences] we'd do it in a second, but there's always going to be some type of inconvenience for someone."

Nursick added that the DOT will finish as quickly as possible "and not have to come again for years."

The construction is expected to take about a month.

# RHAM School Board Reviews Goals for Upcoming Year

by Geeta Schrayter

The RHAM Board of Education talked about its goals for the 2011-12 year at its meeting last Monday, Sept. 21.

The list of five goals focused on student performance and preparation for life after high school in the 21st century. The first looked to "preserve the quality programming and maintain facilities" that currently exist in the regional school district, particularly during times of financial difficulty. RHAM Superintendent of Schools Robert Siminski said the success of this goal would require that the staff work to be "as creative as they can" in maintaining the current programs and facilities.

The second and third goals aim to improve performance in areas such as graduation rate, gender performance and reading skills, and to expand the elective opportunities that are available in Region 8. To achieve the first, the school district has an alternate education program in conjunction with EASTCONN, one of Connecticut's Regional Educational Service

Centers, that runs in the afternoon. Siminski said this gives students who learn better in an environment outside of the typical school day the opportunity to receive their diploma.

RHAM has also implemented a clinical day treatment program that serves special education students in grades seven to 12 who might otherwise be placed in tuition schools. "Here they ride regular buses and attend school so they have the opportunity to integrate with their peers," Siminski said. At the same time, they receive the attention they need and save the school district a significant amount of money that would otherwise be spent on an outside school and transportation. Siminski stated that they have "hopefully put things in place" for improved performance in the upcoming year.

For the latter goal, Siminski said it's important to "maintain a diversity of programming within the school." While they'd like to implement some new things, he admits scheduling, student capacity and the budget can prevent the

school from having much flexibility in that regard or the ability to do so. Still, he added, it's about having opportunities for the kids. If the above obstacles weren't in the way, Siminski noted some additional electives to add would be in the areas of social studies, language arts and science, depending on the interests of the students and discussions with guidance counselors. "It's a goal because when students leave here, they need to have a diverse education," he said.

And part of that diversity ties into the fourth goal, which looks to revise curriculum "to include 21st Century Skills," as well as "alternative methods of instruction, assessment and reporting." Siminski stated that "the notion of people working together, group problem solving, respect for the sciences" and other such abilities are what he considers "21st Century Skills." He noted that it's important for students to be able to look at information in the media

and be able to "acquire it, evaluate it and use it." While the schools already have what Siminski calls "a good deal" of technology, he said their goal is to expand upon it and be sure students are capable of using it "in an appropriate manner."

Ultimately, Siminski stated the school district wants students to be innovative. "We want them to have good technology skills," he said. "We want them to be able to work independently and collaboratively, communicate clearly, demonstrate innovation and flexibility, to analyze and to value personal responsibility."

The success of this goal, as well as the first three, would then aid in the achievement of the final RHAM board goal for the 2011-12 year, which is to improve student preparation for the transition to life after high school, to, as Siminski stated, "continued education and careers." All of the goals were accepted at the Sept. 19 meeting.

# Former Probate Judge Named Acting Interim East Hampton Town Manager

by Joshua Anusewicz

On Tuesday, the Town Council unanimously approved resident Anne McKinney to serve as “acting assistant interim town manager,” a decision made after Interim Town Manager John Weichsel announced last week he would be stepping aside, due to a medical issue.

According to the council, Weichsel had surgery on Tuesday, but the nature of the illness has not been announced.

Town Council Chairwoman Melissa Engel said that Weichsel had originally appointed the town’s finance director, Jeff Jylkka, to the position. Jylkka had served as the acting interim town manager after Tropical Storm Irene, as Weichsel was out of the office receiving treatment for his illness.

Engel, however, said that Weichsel would need “about three months” to recover from the surgery, and that Jylkka would be working on the town budget and an upcoming town audit during this time.

After several candidates were discussed, councilor Barbara Moore recommended McKinney, who council Vice Chairman John Tuttle said is “well-known and respected” in the town.

McKinney served as East Hampton’s probate judge beginning in 1995, but retired this January from the position. She has also been employed as an elementary school teacher in East Hampton and currently works in real estate.

McKinney said that before she was “ap-

proached” by the council for the position, she was “enjoying her retirement,” but is now prepared to serve the town.

“I think I can be impartial and look at all of the facts,” McKinney said about her decision-making. “That’s how I always do my job.” She said that her first actions in office will be to meet with the town’s department heads and individual town employees to “work together and help the situations the town is facing.”

McKinney will be the fourth person to serve in the town manager capacity in the past year. Former Town Manager Jeffery O’Keefe resigned last September amid pressure from residents, which stemmed from his controversial layoff of Police Chief Matthew Reimondo. After O’Keefe resigned, former Public Works Director Robert Drewry was named interim town manager.

Weichsel replaced Drewry in April, and was appointed as interim town manager. The town planned to have Weichsel serve for at least one year, as it is expected that a new town council that will be elected in November will choose a permanent town manager.

Engel said that McKinney will receive \$50 an hour for the position, but will receive no benefits or vacation time. She said that Weichsel has used his allotted sick time, and will not be paid while he recovers from the surgery.

McKinney is expected to begin on Tuesday, Oct. 4.



Volunteers were hard at work on Wednesday morning installing a “Born Learning Trail” at Seamster Park. The project was part of the Middlesex United Way’s Day of Caring.

## Volunteers Install Trail at Seamster Park in East Hampton

by Joshua Anusewicz

A group of roughly a dozen volunteers were at Seamster Park on Wednesday morning to install the “Born Learning Trail” for the Middlesex United Way’s Day of Caring, which matches volunteers from local businesses with projects for non-profit organizations.

This year’s Day of Caring project was installing the trails throughout Middlesex County. The trails are described as “an early learning tool featuring a series of signs on posts with fun, physical activities for parents and caregivers to do with their children.” The instructions on the signs promote positive interaction between the parents and children, like talking, smiling, and laughing.

There are also letters, numbers and shapes that have been painted on the path leading to

the Seamster Park playground that will be part of the trail.

Lauren Kasperowski, Early Links Coordinator for the town’s Early Childhood Council, said the United Way received a grant for the project and was installing similar trails in Haddam-Killingworth, Westbrook, Clinton and Old Saybrook. She said the park was chosen for its proximity to Memorial School, as the trail helps children prepare for going to school.

“They can interact and learn, all while seeing the school they will be attending soon,” Kasperowski said. Memorial School houses students from pre-K through third grade.

The park is located next to Memorial School at 20 Smith St.

## Burglaries High in Marlborough for September

by Bailey Seddon

In the past month, there have been five home break-ins, a pretty high number compared to the rest of the year, Resident State Trooper Jeff Dunshee said this week, and residents are urged to be vigilant.

On Sept. 5, 8, 10, 20 and 21, burglaries took place at various homes in town. The streets affected were Blish, Dickinson and Flood roads, Walnut Drive and Laurel Lane. The police are not positive, but said it appears that there are some similarities between the burglaries. For instance, there were forced entries through windows, rear doors, and even one unlocked front door, at several of the break-ins.

While there has not been any damage done, with the exception of a broken back patio door, people have taken such things as cash, loose change, small televisions, jewelry and other such valuables.

“Anything easily accessible,” Dunshee said. He mentioned that gold and silver are easy to steal and are at a high right now, making this kind of jewelry a prime target.

One of the hardest parts, Dunshee said, is that people often see suspicious behavior but do not always report it right away. This often leaves the potential suspect with the ability to walk away. One instance of this was when a person’s home was burglarized and soon after a neighbor came home this month and saw what she thought was a white or Hispanic male with tattoos on his hands and a baseball hat cutting through a backyard. Had the woman reported this right away, police dogs could have been used to try to track down the man’s scent.

“If there is a scent available” the dogs can usually pick it up, Dunshee said. Unfortunately in this particular case, the neighbor reported her sighting too late.

Dunshee said one of the most important things is to be vigilant, for residents to make

sure they are paying attention to what is going on in their neighborhood. An example of this would be when a woman came home this month and saw two young Hispanic males walking up her yard to the road. She saw them walking to a red SUV in the neighborhood which she had never seen before.

When she got in her house, her husband told her that they had been trying to sell coupons. Dunshee said this is common. Criminals ring the doorbell before breaking in and, if someone is home, they pretend to be selling something, if not they break in. Had the woman gotten the license plate number or reported the strange behavior right away, the police could potentially be further in their investigation.

This is why it is important to lock your doors, and be aware of not only what is going on around your own home, but your neighbors as well, said Dunshee.

“Be aware of what is going on in town,” he said.

While this is a high number of break-ins for such a small town, this is not the most the town has seen. Last year, before he started as the town’s resident trooper, Dunshee said there were 27 burglaries in the spring and summer of 2010. Fortunately, several people were caught in relation to the crimes. He is hoping that evidence will turn up in the current September robberies to help lead them to the perpetrator.

“These are all active cases,” he said. “Sometimes one small little lead will break the whole thing open.” Were anyone to be caught, he said, they would be charged with third-degree burglary, a felony. If something was stolen, the perpetrator would also be charged with larceny.

“It is something that is taken very seriously,” said Dunshee.

Anyone with information regarding the recent string of burglaries can call Dunshee at 860-537-7555 ext. 4019.

## Two Thefts in Three Days Net Four Arrests in Portland

by Joshua Anusewicz

Portland Police arrested four people in two separate incidents this week, both involving thefts.

According to Sgt. James Kelly, several larcenies had been reported in the area around the industrial park near the Arrigoni Bridge and lower Main Street in recent weeks. The larcenies included materials such as industrial wiring, copper and batteries at “outside business lots.”

On Monday, Sept. 26, at roughly 11:30 p.m., Officer Dan Knapp located two wooden spools of electrical wire that had been removed from a fenced area surrounding a business at 310 Airline Ave. Kelly said the fence had been cut, and that Knapp knew it had been removed recently because of recent patrols of the business.

Knapp notified Kelly of the fence being removed, and Kelly took a “hidden position” across the street from the property, assuming someone would return for the electrical wire. Kelly said that within 20 minutes, a white sedan drove to the location with no headlights and one occupant began to load the wire into the vehicle.

Kelly stopped the vehicle as it left the scene; in plain view, Kelly said, was the wire, copper tubing and other spools of wire.

Scott Weidt, 37, and Debra O’Shea, 44, both of 135 Broad St., Hartford, were arrested and charged with fourth-degree larceny and third-degree criminal trespassing. They will appear in Middletown Superior Court on Tuesday, Oct. 11. Weidt was also arrested in Glastonbury in August 2010 for fifth-degree larceny, and pled not guilty. Those charges

are still pending.

On Wednesday, Sept. 28, at around 3 a.m., Portland Police responded to a report of two suspicious persons walking on Fairview Street, near High Street. Officer Jim Capello and Kelly arrived on the scene and canvassed the area.

Within several minutes, Kelly said, he stopped a white Honda Accord on Sunset Terrace that was leaving the area at “a high rate of speed.” Kelly said that there were two male occupants and that the passenger was “sweating profusely.”

Both males gave different accounts of why they were in the area, Kelly said, and after further investigation, a backpack was located that contained numerous GPS units, cameras, iPods, money, flashlights and small hand tools. The items, Kelly said, had been stolen from several vehicles that were parked in the area.

Thomas Freeman, 21, of Silver Street, Middletown, and Nelson Garcia-Rawlins, 20, of Saybrook Road, Middletown, were both arrested and charged with seven counts of third-degree burglary and fourth-degree larceny. Kelly said more charges could be pending from the theft of the items, which were valued at over \$1,000.

Both are due in Middletown Superior Court Tuesday, Oct. 11.

Portland has experienced a large number of thefts from motor vehicles throughout the summer, with several prior arrests being made. Lt. Ron Milardo has asked residents to lock their vehicles at all times and keep from leaving valuable items in their vehicles within view.



Every week, students in the Bake Shop and Food Service classes at Bacon Academy prepare meals for school staff, as well as members of the public. At left, Bacon teachers are shown dining, while at right, recent Bacon graduate Rachel Harlow gets take-out from student Brooke Rafala.



## Academy Café a Success at Bacon in Colchester

by Bailey Seddon

Donna Kaik was a chef long before she was a teacher at Bacon Academy. Luckily, as the teacher of Academy Café, she gets the best of both worlds.

Six years ago, Kaik came to Bacon and a year after that she started two cooking classes; Bake Shop and Food Service. In these classes, students are not only cooking for a grade in a class, they are cooking in a licensed restaurant. Kaik applied and got all the necessary documentation that classifies her kitchen as a restaurant, called Academy Café. As long as she and her students keep up with all the health codes and other such rules then it will always be considered such.

"It's more of a business here we are running, not a class," Kaik said. "It's wonderful. I love it."

Kaik was proud to share that the restaurant inside Bacon was also recognized by the Culinary Institute of America. This means that any student who is in the class for six months will get the work experience that is required of them to go to a culinary school.

Kaik was originally a chef at the Milford Yacht Club and the Mercy Center at Madison, among other places. However, after years of being a chef, she decided it was time to do something different and went to the University of Branford to get her master's degree in education.

"I got too old to be in the kitchen," she joked. Now, her students are the chefs.

Every Wednesday the classroom's restaurant is in full swing. Residents and teachers pop in and out, either to sit at tables where they will

be waited on or to grab food to go. When the restaurant first opened there were only seven students in the class, said Kaik. That number has grown to 24 in the last two years.

"As the amount of students went up, so did the amount of customers," said Kaik.

To purchase a lunch from Academy Café, a resident signs up by sending an e-mail to Kaik, then once a week they will get a menu; they e-mail orders to Kaik by Monday of the following week, and then, come Wednesday, whoever signed up comes to Bacon around 10:45 a.m. to eat there or get take-out. The kitchen stays open to customers until about 12:15 p.m., giving people plenty of time to eat.

While Kaik is the head of the kitchen it is the students who choose the menu each week. The students' jobs are also rotated so that one day a student will be in the back preparing the food and another day they will be out front serving it.

"I just stand up here and take the money," said Kaik, laughing.

When the *Riverast* visited the kitchen on Wednesday the menu was classified an "Italian Party" with Italian wedding soup and anti-pasto salad as an appetizer, eggplant rollatini for the main course and a cannoli for dessert. Prices are very reasonable too, the soup was \$2.50 for a bowl or \$6 a quart, the salad and eggplant were \$3.50 each and the cannolis were \$2.50 apiece. There was also free bread with a red pepper, garlic, jalapeño pepper and olive oil mix, to dip it in.

"We are not out to make money, but we are not out to lose it either," said Kaik.

Wednesday also marked a special event for the restaurant and its students. There was a free lunch for town maintenance workers who helped during Tropical Storm Irene. Kaik said the students just wanted "to say thank you very much" for all their hard work.

Before the workers came in residents of the town and teachers were coming in to purchase the delicious-smelling food. An employee from Colchester Veterinary Hospital came in as well as an employee from S&S Worldwide to bring food back to their fellow employees.

"Huge numbers going out today," Kaik told her students, who were hurrying to get the to-go orders ready.

The students enjoyed making the menu and food as much as the people enjoyed eating it.

"It's really fun," said Brooke Rafala, who would like to go to culinary school some day.

Kassy Morency agreed with Rafala, saying that she gets nervous but overall the experience is "fun and entertaining."

"I love it," said Kaitlyn Palmer, who is in her first semester of the class. "It's really, really hectic, but fun," she said.

A graduate of Bacon Academy, Rachel Harlow, was also there, buying food from her old classmates and the program she used to be a part of. She is currently going to Manchester Community College for her culinary associate's degree. Harlow said she was glad for the time she got in the kitchen at Bacon.

"It gives you the whole culinary experience," she said.

Many of the teachers at Bacon also love to

come and eat the food. For many of them, it is a nice break in the day.

"I was curious at first but then the food was so good," said Elizabeth Rusconi, who is a ninth- and 10th-grade History and Geography teacher.

Angie Parkinson likes to come because of the vegetarian options. Parkinson, who teaches social studies, said if there is not an option for her on the menu Kaik will often make something special for her.

"Everything is always really good," she said.

"It's a great place to come," said Maurice Hebb. "The motivation you see here" is outstanding. Hebb has been a teacher at Bacon for 19 years and is currently the transition services specialist.

"The kids learn a whole lot," Hebb said, then laughed, saying, "Not only that, but I get to eat great food once a week!"

Hebb said the class was great because the students have to work on a deadline to make sure the menu is prepared and the food is ready to go on Wednesday.

"I love it," said co-senior advisor Marty Pagnozzi. He said the atmosphere is very professional and is a great work environment, especially for students that want to move on to the culinary arts.

"The kids really work very, very hard to do this," he said.

For more information, or to be on the e-mail list for weekly menus from Academy Café e-mail Donna Kaik at [dkaik814@colchesterct.org](mailto:dkaik814@colchesterct.org).

## Colchester Democrats, GOP Reach Sign Agreement

by Bailey Seddon

Each election season, the town green has typically been littered with signs urging residents to vote for particular candidates. However, this year the green is going to look a little different, as Republicans and Democrats have agreed to limit the signs to one per candidate.

Republican Town Committee Chairman Brendan Healy said the idea of reducing the number of signs came about from committee member Steve Schuster, father of First Selectman Gregg Schuster. Steve Schuster, Healy said, opined that the cost to print the signs is high and the value the candidates were getting from them might not be worth it. Another reason the elder Schuster offered, Healy said, is that there is a lot of work that goes into putting all the signs out at different locations on the green and then they have to be collected again after elections.

"Our whole philosophy was to just manage that a little better," said Healy. "We are going to try it out, see how it works."

Healy said that, if the idea is well-received by the townspeople and the political parties, the RTC would like to do it every year and maybe even expand to town roads to limit the signs even further. Healy said the parties cannot control national elections, but can do their best with local ones.

"What we can control, we are experimenting with," said Healy.

Former Democratic Town Committee Chairman Tim Gilman said the subject of lessening the signs on the town green was brought up to him by Healy shortly before Gilman stepped down as chair in August.

"We work pretty well together" and therefore could both agree that this was best for the town, Gilman said. They both determined that it was a good idea and brought it back to their committees to vote.

"He brought it up to me, and we both decided to bring it up to our respective committees," said Gilman.

Gilman said there is no town mandate against putting up signs on the green, but said each committee was "just to try to keep the green clean."

There are independent candidates who petitioned themselves onto the ballot this year — such as First Selectman candidate James McNair and Board of Finance candidate Linda Hodge — and Gilman said if these petitioning candidates "saturate" the green with signs, the Republicans and Democrats may have to reconsider their agreement.

Current Democratic Town Committee Chairwoman Dorothy Mrowka said that she wanted

to continue what Gilman had started in terms of the signs.

"Brendan and I decided it was a good thing," she said. Mrowka mentioned that if it works out well the committees will likely continue with lower sign usage in following elections.

The first selectman was also happy with the agreement between the two parties.

"I think it's a great thing," Schuster said. "It will certainly help keep the center of town looking good." Schuster was glad when he heard about the proposal. He said that, while there has never been a huge outcry, he has always heard complaints during election season, when there can be signs every two to three feet on the green.

"It just gets a little overwhelming at election time," he said.

While Schuster doesn't have a Democrat opposing him — First Selectman candidate John Bogush recently withdrew from the race due to work commitments — he is facing off against an independent candidate, James McNair, who petitioned himself onto the ballot. And, Schuster said, "I only hope my opponent will abide by this as well," said Schuster.

Even though he is an independent, McNair still feels he should have been involved in the

discussions revolving around the limiting of signs.

McNair said he was never approached by either party. He said Steve Schuster asked him if anyone had called him about the agreement. When McNair said no, Schuster asked if he would follow it. McNair said he replied, "I don't know what the agreement is and nobody has contacted me about it."

McNair also decided against contacting any party members, because he felt the agreement was evidently not something they wanted him involved in.

"I guess if they want me included in the conversation, they will give me a call," McNair said.

McNair said he had indeed heard that if he chose not to follow the agreement, then the other parties said they would have to go back on it. However, he said he does not plan on overloading the green with his signs.

McNair also said he found it interesting that with the country in a recession, and with the high taxes Colchester has seen in recent years, both the Republican and Democrats are more concerned with election signs.

"Tax relief is the biggest issue now in this town, and we have Republicans bragging about this agreement," he said.

# Another Day of Fun at 57 Fest in Colchester

by Bailey Seddon

The rain held off at the seventh annual 57 Fest last Saturday, which meant plenty of games, entertainment and food for residents to enjoy.

For the past seven years, the Parks and Recreation Department has been putting on the popular festival. The event was first held in 2005, to celebrate *Money* magazine naming Colchester the 57th best town in the country in which to live. Among this year's offerings were: dance demonstrations, rock wall climbing, moon bounces, a live band and fireworks. There was also plenty of fair food including: fried dough, hot dogs, sandwiches, ice cream and deep fried candy bars.

The Colchester Business Association (CBA) was at the event with a spinner that featured the names of different businesses in Colchester. Winners would receive pencils, cups, rulers, magnets and more such prizes with the names of local businesses on them. Some of the businesses on the spinner included: Reliable Oil, Copies Plus, Doreen's Dance Center, Over Head Door and Northeast Family Credit.

"[57 Fest] shows people what businesses are out and about," said CBA President Fred Brown.

However, the companies on the wheel were by no means the only businesses represented at the event. There was the Dance Academy of Colchester, Hilltop BBQ, Funtastic Inflatables, Scotties Frozen Custard and Tim's Bistro, to name a few.

Scotties Frozen Custard was there for the fourth year in a row, with several different unique flavors such as cherry cheesecake, pumpkin pie and "sticky bunz." Frozen custard is made with eggs, which makes it much denser and creamier than regular ice cream, said owner Kathy Steffens. Steffens said she enjoys coming out to the 57 Fest to give people the opportunity to enjoy her product, of which she has 30 different flavors in her store.

"It gives people in our community a chance to check it out," she said.

Tim's Bistro was another local business selling its wares at the fest. Tim's Bistro was brand new to Colchester two years ago and owner Kelly Damaj has been coming to the event since that time.

"It's great," said Damaj. "We wanted to get

our name out there" and 57 Fest was a good place to do that. Tim's Bistro was offering unique sandwiches, the most popular of which was "The Gobbler", which is made up of oven roasted turkey, stuffing, cranberry sauce, lettuce and mayo.

However, there were also many booths at the 57 Fest that were not business-related. Among these was the "57 Booth," where anyone who could do anything that incorporated the number 57 could put their name on a raffle and potentially win a prize. For example, someone could be born in the year 1957, or blink, clap or do jumping jacks 57 times.

"One girl just did 57 push-ups!" said Karen Wheeler, who was helping to run the booth.

The raffle was for a \$57 gift certificate good toward Parks and Rec. offerings, or a \$25 gift card to Wal-Mart, said Priscilla Clesowich, who was also helping run the booth and is the program assistant for the Colchester Senior Center.

The Bacon Academy Project Graduation committee also had a booth at the event. Members Don and Theresa Kennedy were selling drinks and trying to make people more aware of their cause – which is the annual drug- and alcohol-free post-graduation party. Also, Don Kennedy said, the committee tries to raise "basic alcohol awareness throughout the year."

The Democrats and Republicans also had booths for representation. Democrat selectman James Ford said he likes coming out and enjoying the day with his town. This includes being at his booth to represent his party.

"It's always good to get the community together," he said.

The Republicans also had a booth, with spin art for kids to make. First Selectman Gregg Schuster has been coming to 57 Fest for the past three years, he said.

"It's always a great time...a great event," Schuster said.

Republican selectman Stan Soby agreed. "You've got a lot of organizations in town that get out," he said. "It doesn't get much better than that."

Republican Board of Finance member Rob Esteve was helping kids with the spin art.

"You're a pro at this!" he told one girl, Bailey Gilbert.



Cub Scout Pack 72 was one of the many organizations that had a booth last weekend.

"Can I do another one?" Bailey asked as soon as she had finished.

While businesses were happy to get their names out there, residents were equally happy to be taking part in the activities.

"I like that it brings the town together," said resident Lauren Kasperowski who comes every year and whose three children were at various locations around the Rec Plex.

Kasperowski's son, Kevin, said his favorite part of the 57 Fest was "the bounce houses." Kevin said he remembered going in them last year, and was looking forward to experiencing them again.

This was Nicole and Ken Rauccio's first year coming to the event. They wanted to come this year to bring their daughter, Nicole Rauccio said.

"She likes it. ... She's walking around, dancing to the music," she said, laughing as her toddler, Gabriella, danced.

It was also Kris Patterson's first year com-

ing.

"I've heard great things about it," she said. This year she brought her stepchildren to the event to take part in all the activities there was to offer.

"I read in the paper there was a pumpkin carving, face painting, food vendors and candy," Patterson's stepson, Shane, said excitedly.

Steve Williams was also enjoying 57 Fest with his children. His 7-year-old daughter, Kyra, was rock climbing for the second year in a row.

"She surprised me," when she did it last year, he said.

"The kids really enjoy the rock wall!" said resident Deanna Bouchard. "It's the busiest activity here."

Overall, the 57 Fest is "a great family event," said Colchester Rotary member Bob Hodge.

Parks and Rec. employee Shannon Tamosaitis agreed. "It's just so nice to celebrate it each year," she said.

## Fire Department Responds to Propane Leak in Colchester

by Bailey Seddon

A propane leak led to the evacuation of two homes on Cirillo Drive last Wednesday, Sept. 21.

According to Colchester-Hayward Fire Department Deputy Chief Don Lee, a contractor accidentally backed over the top of the 1,000 gallon in-ground propane tank, causing damage to the valve assembly which caused the tank to leak. The contractor was doing work for one of the homes in the subdivision and realized what he had done as soon as it happened. He called in the leak and firefighters were dispatched at 8 a.m., Lee said.

The homeowner and a neighbor were evacuated until the area could be deemed safe, said First Selectman Gregg Schuster, who was with the department at the time, doing a ride-along.

During a leak like this, Lee said, "our big concern is to make sure the vapors coming off the tank don't reach any ignition sources." This means the tank is kept wet, to avoid any possible explosions.

However, the location of the leak was well outside the hydrant district. So, firefighters used water from a dry hydrant on Melanie Lane, as well as the hydrant from South Main Street, right next to St. Joseph's Polish Society.

At 11:41 a.m., the leak was declared under

control by Chief Walter Cox, and after assessing the scene, it was found the only damage caused by the leak was to the tank itself. The owner of the tank, the local company AmeriGas, came out and set up burners "to get rid of the residual product in the tank," said Lee.

Once the propane is safely burned off, the company can go in, excavate and either put in a new tank or new valve assembly. Lee said he is unsure which avenue Amerigas will take. Amerigas customer relations representative Emilia Vespa said this week the company is "kind of up in the air." She said the company was checking on a new valve, but nothing had been decided as of yet.

But, Vespa assured, "it will be taken care of."

Other towns were called in to assist in the leak along with the Colchester firefighters. There was a "full response," said Lee, from the Salem and Gardner Lake departments, Marlborough Fire Department sent two tankers to the scene, and Bozrah, Hebron and the Oakdale Department's sent one tanker. There were 28 members of the Colchester Department that responded to the leak, said Lee, who was not sure how many firefighters from the other departments were at the scene.

"It was a sticky situation to begin with, but the fire department handled it professionally," said Schuster.

## Two Arrested in East Hampton for Thefts at Cottages

by Joshua Anusewicz

East Hampton Police arrested two men Wednesday night for their connection with break-ins and thefts from nine seasonal cottages on Lake Pocotopaug.

Kevin Owens, 29, of 2 Bevin Ct., and Andrew Bonertz, 21, of 100 Colchester Ave., were both arrested on nine counts of first-degree burglary, nine counts of third-degree criminal mischief, four counts of fifth-degree larceny and theft of a firearm. Additionally, Bonertz was charged with criminal possession of a firearm by a felon.

According to Sgt. Garritt Kelly, the thefts

occurred Tuesday night and the police received a complaint from a resident of one of the cottages. After an investigation, Kelly said, the two suspects were seen nearby and arrested.

Kelly said the two men had stolen a handgun and a machete, as well as other "various household items." He said that all of the homes were unoccupied at the time of the thefts.

Owens is currently being held on \$50,000 bond, while Bonertz was being held on \$150,000 bond. Both men were scheduled to appear in Middletown Superior Court on Thursday, Sept. 29.



Kevin Owens



Andrew Bonertz

# Opinions Split on Hebron School Administrators Contract

by Geeta Schrayter

Elected officials' opinions are split on the recently-approved salary increases for school administrators.

The employment contract with the Hebron Administrators Association passed 3-2 at the Board of Selectmen's Sept. 15 meeting. The contract, which was approved by the Board of Education in August, will give Hebron school administrators salary raises over the next three years of 3.5 percent, 3.0 percent and 3.0 percent. The new contract takes effect with the 2012-13 fiscal year.

Along with the increases, the administrators will also receive a cell phone stipend of \$80 per month. This is the only new benefit included in the agreement.

Selectmen Mark Stuart and Brian O'Connell said they consider the contract to be a fair one. "The leadership of our schools is very important. It's helped our system have one of the top schools in the nation," Stuart stated. In 2010, Hebron Elementary was recognized nationally as a Blue Ribbon school by the Department of Education and Stuart feels such accomplishment deserves to be rewarded.

"We're doing something right in town, and I think you reward where you can," he said.

While acknowledging the current state of the economy, Stuart stated that Hebron is a place which can afford such reward. "Hebron, as a community, is in the top surge in regards to our ability to pay, but in the bottom in regards to what we do pay," he said.

The administrators' contract is not only fair in Stuart's opinion, but a positive venture. "Hebron's industry is education. That's one of the reasons people move to Hebron," he stated. If the nation wants to lead, Stuart feels investment is necessary. Similarly, if Hebron wants to lead as a town, they need to invest as well.

"Education is a good investment," he added. "That's the future."

Brian O'Connell shared similar feelings. "When we look at our community and the type of employees that we want to have on board, we want to attract the best that we can given our financial situation," he stated. "We've got a Blue Ribbon school, which speaks extremely highly for the administration and teachers in

the system, and that is something that's an asset within the community."

O'Connell feels the administration brings a lot of "quality and enthusiasm" to the town and as such, they deserve the imposed raises. "Given their track record, I think they earned whatever they got," he stated.

O'Connell admitted that while there will be a cost, it's worthwhile. "I know there's an expense," he stated, "but I look at it from the bigger picture." O'Connell said it would have cost more in the long run to say "no," because it would have meant another round of negotiations and a slew of attorneys' fees. In the end, he stands firm in his vote. "Approving it was the way to go," he stated. "That's my decision."

However, Board of Selectmen Chairman Jeff Watt and selectman Dan Larson had a different view. Watt expressed concern over the length of the contract and the cell phone stipend, as well as frustration with the entire arbitration process. As stated in article IV, section 3 of the contract, "the arbitrator shall have no power to add to, delete from, or modify in any way the provisions of [the] agreement." So "even if the contract was not approved, we don't get to go back and negotiate different terms," Watt said.

Watt was firm in announcing that "even though from a Board of Education standpoint Dan Larson and myself voted against [the contract], we collectively, as a board, are going to live with the decision that it's approved. We consider ourselves uniform as a team, but the part that we're most frustrated with is that it came to us to begin with."

Larson's disapproval focused on the economy.

"I feel the contract was completely and totally irresponsible," he said.

He noted the current financial situation in the state and said he considers the salary raises unfair to the residents of Hebron. "I'm not saying that [the administrators] may not deserve that type of money," he said, "but economically it's not good, I feel, for the town of Hebron."

Larson also expressed concern that in future negotiations, the administrators' contract could be used as a bargaining tool. He said he'd be

"very surprised" if other unions don't use the contract "as a basis for demanding their own increase" when they head into negotiations in the next couple of years. The passing of the administrators' contract will, he stated, "have a very far-reaching effect."

Proponents of the contract have stated that Hebron's administrators came from higher-paying positions and therefore deserved the raises, but Larson said Hebron is a great place to work, and added that the education system receives a lot of support from parents within the community.

"It was not for the money that [the administrators] came. It turned into a money issue," Larson mentioned a recent instance when, while out to breakfast, some of the town's seniors approached him to ask what was going on. "These people are on fixed incomes living on less and less every year," he said, "and we're taking more and more every year." Larson stated it was almost as though they were being pushed out of their homes and said that statewide, residents are "point blank" done.

"There's just nothing left to give," he stated, "And I just find that terrible."

Along with his opposition to the rate of the increase, Larson feels the length of the contract is also irresponsible. "We are not opposed to giving raises," he said, "but we are opposed to giving raises for literally years down the road when we have no idea what our economic state is going to be."

But Board of Education Chairman Mark Allaben stated that the majority of contracts in the education world tend to be three years, and making it such can help save money. By "projecting what we think the world will look like a couple years down the road," he said, money can be saved by avoiding yearly negotiations.

"If you have to negotiate every year, mediation and arbitration can be a very expensive process," he said, adding the contract's length was a kind of compromise.

As for the cell phone stipend, Allaben stated it was included because Hebron's administrators are essentially on call 24/7, and "most businesses in the private sector as well as some

positions on the town side" provide cell phones or offer some kind of cell phone stipend.

In addition, Allaben noted that the administrators took a voluntary zero-percent increase for an additional year on their previous contract, saved the town money by only holding two negotiation sessions, have a higher student per administrator ratio than many other towns and, even after the third year, will still have salaries that are below state average.

In Connecticut, "the average salary was somewhere around \$123,000 for a principal," he stated, mentioning that Hebron's principals earned around \$113,000.

"Our principals aren't overpaid relative to other parts of the state" Allaben said, adding that the "number of students per administrator in our schools were significantly higher than surrounding towns."

In a chart compiled by Allaben with information from the state Department of Education, it was shown that Hebron Elementary has 342 students per administrator and Gilead has 489, compared to towns such as Glastonbury, at 298 students per administrator and Colchester at 300. "So when we look at workload and the salaries relative to other principals," he stated, "said salaries were a little bit lower and the workloads were higher."

It was those factors along with the school's performance which the Board of Education used to determine the salary increases.

Allaben added that the school board "absolutely agrees" with the concerns the selectmen raised regarding the current economy, and feels the two boards are on the same page. He agreed that cost increases can't automatically be passed on to the taxpayers, and said the Board of Education tries to keep the cost of education as close to zero as possible.

"If we have increases in one area, we can have savings in another," he said, adding that the board utilizes the "creativity of the teachers, paraprofessionals and administrators" to help make this happen.

"While the issue is big," Allaben added, "the actual cost increase in the contract is small relative to the overall educational budget."

# Capital Improvement Plan Moving Forward in Hebron

by Geeta Schrayter

The Capital Improvement Plan was the topic of the night at a recent town meeting.

The Board of Selectmen, Board of Finance and Board of Education held a joint meeting on Sept. 22 to discuss an agenda that included the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) Policy, budget guidance for the upcoming year and use of the budget surplus for 2010-2011. However, it was CIP that took center stage.

The CIP committee is a group of people appointed by the selectmen, whose task it is to recommend projects or purchases of a capital nature to the selectmen for funding, said Vice Chairman Malcolm Leichter. Traditionally, these items – which are paid for with the CIP budget – have had to meet requirements such as costing more than \$5,000 and having a five-year lifespan, noted Leichter. But the proposed policy raises the minimum amount to \$25,000, meaning smaller projects would instead be funded "out of the operating budget or a separate fund," Leichter said.

There was much discussion over the approval of the policy, which was drafted by the CIP committee and is the first official set of guidelines that's been done since the committee's inception over 20 years ago, stated Kathy Shea, Board of Education and CIP committee member. Leichter stated that the committee went back and examined the guidelines that had been in place, looked at the program in surrounding

towns, and, after discovering Hebron's minimum was the lowest, made the decision to recommend the raise.

At the meeting, such a change was discussed as a way to take CIP out of the hole it's been in for a number of years due to underfunding and countless requests for smaller projects. Their removal would allow more significant tasks to be taken care of, as well as others that have been on hold for years. Mentioned examples were the new public works garage and various infrastructures such as school roofs.

The change also requires the creation of separate funds for each department to pay for the smaller items, as well as separate budgets. Although budget season is fast approaching, this is something both the Board of Education and Board of Selectmen said they'd commit to doing this year. Board of Education chairman Mark Allaben stated that while the school board wouldn't necessarily be comfortable with putting everything together in that time, it could be done.

"If we had to do it, we could to it," he said. "I think we ought to give it a shot."

Allaben admitted that it might take some time to get everything right in regards to budgeting with the smaller items, but now was the time to do it. "We have to start sometime," he stated. "It might take us more than one year to kind of get the whole thing right, but I think we can get

a lot of it right in the first year."

Board of Selectmen Chairman Jeff Watt was in agreement. "I hear the Board of Ed saying they'd be willing to give it a shot, [to] create a separate account and run through the process," he said. "If the Board of Ed can do it, I don't see why we can't."

As far as funding those smaller projects, it was stated that debt services would come into play. "As we reduce our debt, which we'll be doing next year," Watt said, "part of the debt reductions would be offset by the accounts" and used for CIP.

Board of Finance Chairman Michael Hazel was in agreement that things should "move forward" with the CIP policy, stating the finance board would hold a future meeting to settle the funding details.

"We're going to have a later discussion as to the best way to find it," he said. "Part of it is to do some debt management."

At one point, it seemed as though the issue might be tabled for another year, to allow for more budget preparations and education for the general public in regards to CIP's purpose and the changes. But various board members in attendance expressed frustration at the idea.

"We cannot spend another year jamming up the CIP process with these tiny little requests," Shea said. "There are major projects this town needs to have funded."

Board of Finance member Donna Ferree, also a member of the CIP committee, agreed. "We keep saying 'we can wait another year, we can wait another year,'" she said. If action isn't taken, Ferree expressed concern that what should be maintenance jobs could become much more.

"If you don't catch up," she said, "there's going to be no building to fix up."

But the conclusion appeared to meet with the satisfaction of many present. "I think the meeting ended up in a good spot," said Watt.

Shea agreed. "It ended how I wanted," she said. "A decision was made to raise the threshold." But, she added, "the process of getting to that decision being made has been very frustrating." She said the issue of the CIP process has been going on for a couple of years, on and off, and at one point she was worried it might continue. "I was a little fearful," she said, because the conversations were the same she'd already heard at countless meetings.

But this time, the ending was different. After the boards of selectmen and finance review the policy in order to determine if there are any last minute changes they'd like to see made, "the anticipation" said Watt, "is that it will be voted upon" at the selectmen's next meeting on Oct 6. Watt stated they were making a commitment, saying Hebron, as a town, would fund the projects in the \$5,000-25,000 range.

# After School Program Moves to Marlborough Congregational Church

by Bailey Seddon

Robin Green has been the owner of Discovery Zone Afterschool Program, or DZone, for 10 years and is very happy to be expanding her business to the Congregational Church of Marlborough in November.

DZone is an after-school program for kindergarten children and kids ages five through 12. In the morning kids can play while they wait for the bus and in the afternoon, they have a quiet place to do their homework and play when they are done.

When she was pregnant with her son and her daughter was two, Green found that she was not satisfied with the childcare that was available. She had previously subcontracted for the Department of Developmental Services when she worked for the Capital Regional Education Council. However, she decided this was a good opportunity to open her own business and provide the childcare that was never available to her. Since then her business has thrived and grown, and she has remained an active part of it.

"I'm a very involved owner," said Green.

Green already has two locations for her program – one in Colombia, where she is the executive director, and another one in Marlborough on 152 Hebron Avenue. These locations are called Discovery Zone Learning Center, because they house infants, toddlers and preschoolers, as well as kindergarten and school-aged children.

Green decided to add an extra building for the after-school program children, she said, because there were too many children in the Hebron Avenue building. The Hebron Avenue center is licensed for 65 children, including all age groups, and the new center will hold 76 kids. Once the Hebron Avenue center splits it will hold the younger children, while the church program will hold kindergarten through fifth grade. This will give both centers space and allow for more enrollments.

So when the Children's Workshop, another child-care program which was located in the basement of the Congregational Church of Marlborough closed this summer, Green saw this as an opportunity.

"When this became available we jumped on it," she said, because, "It's very hard to find space."

Green said the church was happy about them taking the rooms as they had a vacancy after the Children's Workshop closed, which had been there for 30 years, according to Green.

"The church was very supportive...and excited we are moving in," she said. Green even said that the Pastor, Bob Faulhaber, and other members of the church have gone so far as to help them paint the rooms.

"We were overjoyed" that DZone was coming in, said Faulhaber. Especially considering the large deficit the church was going to be looking at after Children's Workshop left, he said.

Faulhaber, who is the senior pastor of the 600-member church, said he heard that Green was looking for a space to rent from a member of his church. He e-mailed her and "within a half-hour of e-mailing her she e-mailed me right back," Faulhaber said. Soon Green came to visit and realized this was the place she could have her daycare.

"We came up with a good agreement that is really keeping everybody happy," said Faulhaber.

After the quiet summer Faulhaber said he is glad to have kids back in the church.

"It was getting a little too quiet down there," he laughed.

In the church, DZone will get three rooms all to themselves; one for the first- and second-graders, one for the third-, fourth- and fifth-graders and one for kindergarten children. The program will also have a playground, which is to the right side of the church, and a gathering hall where kids can play tag, dodgeball or just get some space to play and talk. Children get off the bus about 3:30 p.m., have a snack, which the center provides, then do their homework until 5 p.m. There will also be an open space area in each room for kids who have finished homework early.

Green said she was happy not only that her business was successful, but that she is providing parents daycare they need.

"There's such a need for it in the community," said Green. "It is challenging when you have two working parents."

While DZone offers much to parents during the school year, it has just as much to offer during the summer months. In the summer DZone is known as Camp Discovery, where children get to go on field trips almost every day. The program owns six vehicles, four vans and two busses, to ensure there is plenty of room to take all the children on the trips. The camp goes to such places as the Boston Science Museum, Brownstone Quarry, Lake Compounce, and many other fun visits.

"They want to get out and play, I'm a big believer in that," Green said, and "Parents love



Robin Green, owner of Discovery Zone Afterschool Program, is expanding her business to the Congregational Church of Marlborough in November.

it," knowing their kids are having fun and not just sitting inside.

Amanda Strong, director of the Marlborough center, said she is looking forward to offering more space for children and allowing more kids to come to the daycare. She said there are parents that have been on a waiting list for over a year.

"It has just been very difficult for parents to find anything," she said.

Strong has been with the daycare since it started and is looking forward to being the director of the second Marlborough site. Strong will bounce back and forth between both centers and a site supervisor, who is an employee for the Colombia site, will be coming over to the new location.

"I am very excited about it," Strong said.

Strong said they are hoping to have the program at the church go from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., but it all depends on how many kids need to get on the morning bus with them. However, said Strong, DZone will definitely be open from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. for the after school program.

Green said the center is just waiting for the licensing to go through, once that is done the center will be able to open. Hopefully within the first week of November, she said.

The employees are not the only ones looking forward to the move. The children and parents are also looking forward to the change.

"[The children] are very excited to be moving over," said Green.

Strong agreed, laughing while she said one child told her that her mom was excited about the move because it was closer to Dunkin' Doughnuts.

"We look forward to all the phone calls coming," for more enrollment, said Strong.

The program costs \$9 an hour or \$90 a week for the before- and after-school program. This includes early dismissals and delays. Vacation days, also known as "fun days" at DZone, are \$35 a day, plus the cost of the field trip.

For more information call the Marlborough center at 860-295-8003 or visit the website at [discoveryzone.info](http://discoveryzone.info).

# Marlborough School Officials Pleased with CMT Scores

by Bailey Seddon

Connecticut Mastery Test scores are in and were the big talk of last Thursday's Board of Education meeting.

The scores showed how children did from grades three through six at Elmer Thienes-Mary Hall Elementary School.

In grade three, 78.3 percent of students scored at or above goal for math, 82.4 percent in reading and 74.5 percent in writing. In grade four, 80.2 percent scored at or above goal in math, 84.3 percent in reading and 88.5 percent in writing. In grade five, 88.7 percent scored at or above goal in math, 82 percent in reading, 86.6 percent in writing and 84.5 percent in science. Lastly, in grade six, 96.5 percent scored at or above goal in math, 95.3 percent in reading and 87.5 percent in writing.

Fifth grade science was a source of pride to the school as it has seen a three-year growth in percentage of students scoring at or above goal. In 2009, 72 percent of students scored at or above goal in this category. The percentage jumped to 81 percent in 2010 and 84.5 percent this year.

Elmer Thienes-Mary Hall Elementary School Principal Scott Nierendorf said the school was very happy with how much better the fifth-graders were doing in science.

"It's a trend in the right direction for us," Nierendorf said. He said that the school wants "to see results continue to improve" because of the new "STEAM room" that is now available to help students improve in science. It is open to all grades and so far, kids from third, fifth and sixth grades have used it. In the next couple of months the whole school likely will be using the new science lab, said Nierendorf.

The presentation also showed that writing in grade three was a concern for teachers and staff last year, as only 78 percent of the students were at or above goal. This year, though, the kids, now in fourth grade, got 88.5 percent.

The presentation next talked about the district goal for the CMTs, which is at least 85 percent at or above goal in all subjects. Children met this goal in fifth and sixth grade math, sixth grade reading, and fourth, fifth and sixth grade writing.

The power point next moved on to benchmark comparisons. This is how a school compares its scores with that of other towns. Administrators found that Marlborough did better than Farmington, Hebron and Simsbury in math, reading and writing overall.

Elmer Thienes-Mary Hall also did studies of cohorts and found that there was improvement with students in many areas. A cohort is when the same group of children is tested over several years to see if the same students are making improvements as they go through the school system. This is a way for schools to see if they are improving.

In 2008, 85 percent of students in grade three scored at or above goal in math, 82.7 in reading and 79.5 in writing. In 2011, these same students now in grade six had scores at or above goal of 96.3 in math, 95.1 in reading and 86.7 in writing.

"We are happy about the CMT scores," said Board of Education Chairwoman Betty O'Brien. O'Brien said Marlborough's sixth grade students' scored at or near the top in the state in math, along with the town of Bolton,

said O'Brien.

"Overall, we were very pleased," Nierendorf said. He said that the strong results of the sixth graders reflect that the school is doing very well overall because these are the students that have gone through the system.

When it comes to improvements, said Nierendorf, there are a few areas the school needs to work on. One of these was the writing results between the boys and girls on the CMT's.

"When we dug a little deeper we found there was a discrepancy between our girl writers and our boy writers," said Nierendorf. The school will try to focus on special development for areas such as this, he said. This includes having teachers look at data and seeing what they can do to fix any of the areas that need working on.

"We want to make sure that they are strong across the board," Nierendorf said.

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Another subject of interest discussed at the meeting was the expansion of the enrichment program for math students.

Elmer Thienes-Mary Hall has had a math enrichment program for the past few years. It is designed to give students in fourth, fifth and sixth grade who excel in math more of a challenge. As of now, these students work with math specialist Patti Hahn, half an hour three times a week, in a pull-out program to give them more of a challenge. However, since some of the sixth graders at the elementary school had such advanced scores on the CMTs, administrators felt they had to expand the program to five days a

week and a regular-length class, for the sixth graders, called "Math Explorers."

The pull-out program currently has about 10 students; the new program will have around 22, said Nierendorf.

"I think it's a great idea," said Hahn. "We are excited about it." Hahn said the school started looking at the possibility last spring and she was very happy that it became a reality.

Hahn said she and Karen Craig, a sixth-grade math teacher, are doing the math explorer program together. They plan all the lessons and activities. Craig, said Hahn, will be with the sixth graders every day and she will stop in about twice a week, while also still doing her pull-out program for the fourth- and fifth-graders.

"They are going to go a little bit further, a little bit faster and a little bit deeper" in their math program, said Nierendorf. Administrators decided who was going to be in the program not just because of CMT results but also because of teacher recommendations for which students were not being challenged enough. In the new program, students will be in their new math classes five days a week.

"We thought we could make the program even better," said O'Brien. "With the other program we saw these needs were not being met," but with the new program these students will get the challenge they need, she said.

O'Brien was very pleased that not only were these students excelling so much but that the school is accommodating them.

"They are creating a really rich program" for acceleration at the school, she said.

# New Pastor in Marlborough Making Progress

by Bailey Seddon

“God brought me here,” Fellowship Community Church’s new pastor, Dan Earhart, said in an interview last week.

Earhart has been with the church since May, after serving as senior pastor at Bethany Evangelical Free Church in Canby, IN, for 15 years. He said he felt Bethany Evangelical had gotten what it needed from him, and that he was required elsewhere. When he learned of the opening at Fellowship Community Church in Marlborough, he decided this was the right place to go.

Before Earhart, there was an interim pastor at the church, who was retired and helping out the church while they were seeing a new leader.

The move from Indiana to Connecticut seems like a trek – but Earhart is no stranger to travel. Born and bred in Long Beach, Santiago, CA, Earhart said he always knew he would want to work for the church.

“I love the organism” of the church, he said.

After high school, he joined the Army and was stationed on the Czechoslovakia border (which is now split into two countries, the Czech Republic and Slovakia), with the Third Armored Division. The climate was tense, to say the least, Earhart said.

On Nov 9, 1989, Earhart was traveling on the Autobahn 66 in Germany, between the cities of Frankfurt and Wiesbaden, when the traffic came to a stop. When he got out of the car, he was overcome with shouts of joy and embraces from German citizens, who had just learned of the falling that day of the Berlin Wall.

“It was phenomenal,” he said. There was an “absolute party and mayhem on the street.” Earhart even managed to get a piece of the wall to bring home with him.

In addition to seeing the fall of the Berlin Wall, Earhart was happy to be part of the Army for four years because the G.I. Bill allowed him to finish college debt-free. Earhart attended Multnomah University in Portland, OR, for four years, where he specialized in Biblical theology. Earhart said Multnomah was the “best

Bible college in the country.” He also said he liked the difference between Biblical theology versus systematic theology.

“Biblical theology brings the Bible to life; systematic theology brings life to the Bible,” he said. He added that, in studying Biblical theology, he read scriptures and had to try to figure out what the author was trying to say.

While at school, Earhart became a youth pastor and then after school became a co-pastor of an inner-city Evangelical Free church in Oregon for four years. After this, he moved to Indiana where he became the pastor of Bethany Evangelical Free Church. He enjoyed his time there, and the people he met.

They were “some of the greatest people ever,” he said.

When he came to the Indiana church, Earhart said, it was a “hurting place,” as membership had declined greatly over the years. Earhart felt it was important for him to focus on the basics as a pastor – “loving God and loving people” – because he felt it was important for people to know they were cared about.

One of Earhart’s favorite parts of the job, he said, is being a youth pastor; trying to get kids to join and then teaching them about God and religion. This shows in some of the new programs he has installed into the Fellowship Community Church. Before coming to Fellowship, Earhart said, there were no Bible youth programs. Now there are two: the Dead Prophets Society and the Approved Workmen Are Not Ashamed (AWANA) program.

The Dead Prophets Society is a service for middle and high school students. Every Sunday night, church youth gathers at Earhart’s house and are taught how to make a difference in society.

AWANA, meanwhile, started Sept. 14 and is a mid-week program for kids in kindergarten through eighth grade. Earhart is the games director of the program. The program has three components, said Earhart: teaching the kids good sportsmanship, helping them understand the Bible and teaching them how to apply what



**Dan Earhart has been pastor of Fellowship Community Church since May, and he very much enjoys being a part of the Marlborough community. “The folks here have just been amazing,” he said recently.**

they learned in the Bible in their lives.

Another goal of Earhart’s is getting out into the community, to let people know the church is there. For so long, Earhart said, churches have always taken the stance of “here we are; come to us,” but Earhart wants to change this. One of the ways the church is getting out in the town is with a 5K race on Saturday, Oct. 22. The race is to help rebuild Joplin, MO, which was damaged earlier in the summer due to a massive tornado.

Earhart and his wife Jayne, an accountant, have been married for more than 25 years. The two have three children, ages 22, 15 and 8.

In addition to his work for the church, Earhart

is also involved in the community in other capacities. He is a member of the Commission on Aging – “Those guys are a hoot,” Earhart quipped – and he also assists in Bible study at the Marlborough Care Center, where his wife also volunteers, playing the piano.

Earhart does not regret his move, as he said he loves living in Connecticut and particularly in Marlborough. The landscape reminds him of where he grew up, and the people in town have been nothing but friendly and welcoming, he said.

“I have met the most gracious, amazing people in this town,” he said. “The folks here have just been amazing.”

## Colchester Police News

9/20: Police are investigating an attempted burglary and criminal mischief on River Road. At 4:45 p.m., the victim reported that a suspect(s) tried to force into the residence through a rear window, Colchester Police said.

9/20: Nicole Dzikiewicz, 35, of 210 Route 66, Marlborough, was charged with second-degree failure to appear, State Police said.

9/23: Christopher L. Knighton, 20, of 60 Park Ave., was charged with carrying a dangerous weapon and breach of peace, Colchester Police said.

9/23: Eric Schaus, 21, of 78 Jerry Daniels Rd., Marlborough, was charged with improper passing, DUI and traveling unreasonably fast,

State Police said.

9/24: Wayne Mohrlein, 31, of 136 Elm St., was charged with interfering with an officer, Colchester Police said.

9/24: John Joseph Vonutter, 67, of 48 Harbor Rd., was charged with third-degree assault, disorderly conduct and interfering with emergency calls, State Police said.

9/24: Sharon Moroch, 48, of 127 McDonald Rd., was charged with disorderly conduct and interfering with emergency calls, State Police said.

9/26: James V. Adamo, 43, of 423 Kemp Rd., Scotland, was charged with three counts of second-degree failure to appear, State Police said.

## Hebron Police News

9/25: Colleen Leary, 22, of 264 Millstream Rd., Amston, was charged with first- and second-degree failure to appear, State Police said.

## Marlborough Police News

9/25: Usama B. Mirza, 26, of 446 West Middle Tpk., Manchester, was charged with failure to drive in the proper lane and DUI, State Police said.

9/26: David Vashalifski, 50, of 47 First St., Lebanon, was charged with breach of peace, risk of injury to a minor, impersonation and reckless endangerment, State Police said.

## Portland Police News

9/25: Dean Clark, 25, of 76 Conestoga Way, Glastonbury, was charged with operating under suspension, evading responsibility and failure to drive right, Portland Police said.

## East Hampton Police News

9/15: Thomas H. Fournier, 53, of 87 Falls Bashan Rd., Moodus, was arrested for failure to drive right and DUI, East Hampton Police said.

9/22: Jesse V. Bracken, 38, of 21 Brook Tr., was arrested for DUI, police said.

# Obituaries

## Portland

### Marilyn H. Kauczka

Marilyn H. Kauczka, 73, of Portland, formerly of East Hampton, died Thursday, Sept. 22, at Portland Care and Rehab. She was the daughter of the late Anthony M. and Martha E. (Becker) Herrmann.

Born on Sept. 8, 1938, in Erie, PA, she grew up in Washington, PA, and moved to Connecticut in 1969. She was a graduate of Duquesne University and worked as an airline reservationist for American Airlines for 18 years.

She is survived by her former husband and longtime friend, Daniel G. Kauczka of East Hampton; two sisters, Mary Weston and Jean Herrmann, both of Groton; and many other relatives and friends.

Relatives and friends called Monday, Sept. 26, at Portland Memorial Funeral Home, 231 Main St., Portland.

Memorial donations may be made to the American Parkinson's Association, 27 Allendale Dr., North Haven, CT 06473.

## Hebron

### Brian M. Wetherbee

Brian M. Wetherbee, 66, of Hebron lost his long battle with diabetes on Thursday, Sept. 22, at Manchester Memorial Hospital.

Born Feb. 18, 1945, in East Hartford to Amelia M and Melvin H Wetherbee, he is survived by his wife of 40 years, Janice Wetherbee, along with his four children, Kevin and Scott Wetherbee both of Hebron, Lisa and Daniel Warren of Hebron, and David and Shelley Wetherbee, stationed at Hill Air Force Base in Utah. He also leaves behind his two wonderful granddaughters, Shelby Lynn and Tiffany Marie Warren, both of Hebron, and his brother Robert Wetherbee of Seatac, WA.

Brian served in the Army during the Vietnam era, after which he entered into employment at Pratt and Whitney Aircraft in East Hartford; he retired after 35 years. Shortly after retiring, Brian began working for Foxwoods Resort and Casino which he would retire from five years later.

Services are scheduled for today, Sept. 30, at 9 a.m., with Mass at the Church of the Holy Family in Hebron, followed by burial services at 11 a.m. at Rose Hill Cemetery in Rocky Hill.

In lieu of flowers, please make a donation in Brian's name to the American Diabetes Association at 1-800-DIABETES, or The Diabetes Research & Wellness Foundation at 1-866-293-3155.

## East Hampton

### Helen Sladyk

Helen Sladyk, 93, of East Hampton, beloved wife of the late William Sladyk Sr. for 69 years, died Friday, Sept. 23, at Cobalt Lodge Health Care and Rehabilitation Center. Born Aug. 29, 1918, in Middletown, the daughter of the late Celestyn and Eva (Kuchta) Kalman, she had lived in East Hampton for most of her life.

She worked at Pratt & Whitney as an administrative professional and after decades of faithful service, she enjoyed her retirement traveling the world with her husband William. She was very creative, enjoying painting and quilting. An avid golfer and bridge player, she loved spending time with family and friends.

She is survived by a daughter, Diane of California, a daughter-in-law, Mary of Vermont, nephew Tom and his family, seven grandchildren and six great grandchildren. We love you Gram!

A funeral liturgy will be celebrated Saturday, Oct. 1, at 10 a.m., in St. Patrick Church in East Hampton. Burial will follow in the family plot in Calvary Cemetery in Middletown. Friends may call at the Spencer Funeral Home Saturday morning from 8:45-9:45 a.m.

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

## Portland

### William R. Hall

William R. Hall, 72, of Portland, died at home Saturday, Sept. 24. Born Aug. 7, 1939, in Middletown, he was a longtime Portland resident and was the son of the late William and Rose (Nolan) Hill.

He was employed by IKON Office Solutions for more than 35 years. A graduate of Dean College, he also attended Quinnipiac College, the University of Hartford and served in the Connecticut National Guard. Bill was an avid sports lover and was passionate about his teams, especially the UConn women's basketball team.

He is survived by his son, Michael W. Hall, his special friend, Kathleen Robinson and grandson, Kristopher Robinson of Wethersfield, his daughter, Christina M. Fazzino, husband, Edward Fazzino and grandson, Aaron of Portland, cousins, Jean Roscher and Anna Becker of New York and several other relatives and countless friends.

Funeral services will be held today, Sept. 30, at 6 p.m., at Portland Memorial Funeral Home, 231 Main St., Portland. Burial will be private. Relatives and friends may call today from 4 p.m. until the time of the service at the funeral home.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the American Heart Association 5 Brookside Dr., Wallingford, CT 06492 or to the Connecticut Humane Society, 701 Russell Rd., Newington, CT 06111.

To send an online expression of sympathy, visit [portlandmemorialfh.net](http://portlandmemorialfh.net).

## East Hampton

### Mary Geysen

Mary (Kochuk) Geysen, 97, widow of the late Harold Geysen, died Tuesday, Sept. 27, at Middlesex Hospice. Born June 15, 1914, in Bristol, she was the daughter of the late Ignace and Sophie (Rudick) Kochuk.

She was a graduate of Middletown High School and had lived in East Hampton for most of her life. Mary was a lifelong member of Christ Episcopal Church in Middle Haddam and was a past member of the Alter Guild.

She leaves her two sons, Harold Geysen of East Hampton and John Geysen of East Hampton; her daughter, May Breece of Middle Haddam; five grandchildren, Deborah Breece, Susan Denny, Kevin Geysen, Laurice Geysen and Janna Danco; six great-grandchildren; and a great-great-granddaughter.

She was predeceased by a daughter, Dorothy Shearer.

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

The Spencer Funeral Home has care of arrangements. To leave online condolences, visit [spencerfuneralhomeinc.com](http://spencerfuneralhomeinc.com).

## Colchester

### Steve A. Achenbach Sr.

Steve A. Achenbach Sr., 56, of Colchester, succumbed to a courageous battle with multiple sclerosis. Born in New Britain, the son of A.J. Achenbach and the late Phyllis (Davey) Achenbach, he lived many years in East Haddam and the last three years in Colchester. He was a well-known avid fisherman and woodworker.

Steve is survived by his loving partner of 19 years, Phyllis Usher; two sons, Steven and his wife, Michele Achenbach of Rockland MA; Micheal Achenbach of Greenville, NH; two sisters, Sherry and her husband, Richard Lorch of New Britain, Donna and her husband James Bell of Plainville; a brother, Wayne Davey of East Hartford; two grandchildren, Alexandra and Zachary; a sister-in-law, Lynn Klatt of Needham, MA; and several nieces and nephews.

Funeral services were held Sunday, Sept. 25, at the Farrell Funeral Home, 110 Franklin Sq., New Britain. Burial will be private.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Colchester Hayward Volunteer Fire Department, 52 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester, CT 06415.

Steve's family would like to thank the Bacchus Home Health Care and the Quality Care Home Care for their kind care of Steve. They would also like to thank the wonderful staff at Middlesex Hospital for all their help.

To light a candle or send a condolence, visit [FarrellFuneralHome.com](http://FarrellFuneralHome.com).

## Colchester

### Traci Beth Hart

Traci Beth Hart, 39, of Jurach Road, wife of Darryl A. Hart, died Thursday, Sept. 15, at her home. On Nov. 27, 1971, she was born in Norwich, the daughter of Michael and Gloria (Maplesden) Stergio of Salem.

Traci was a graduate of Montville High School Class of 1989. She received her bachelor's degree from Central Connecticut State University and a master's degree in education from Sacred Heart University. After college she became a first grade teacher at the Charles E. Murphy School in Oakdale; she loved being a teacher and treasured all of her students. Traci touched countless young lives during her tenure at Murphy School.

In her spare time she enjoyed shopping and spending time with her dearest friends, but her greatest joy was being a devoted mother to her two children and being involved in all the family activities. Traci married her high school sweetheart, Darryl Hart, on June 29, 1996 in Montville. They enjoyed 15 years of unconditional love with each other. She has been a resident of Colchester since 2001 and was a parishioner of St. Andrew's Church.

In addition to her loving husband Darryl and parents Mike and Gloria Stergio, she is survived by her children, Seth Michael Hart and Riley Madison Hart; sister, Kristin Taylor of Montville; and grandparents, Michael and Terry Stergio and Jeanette Maplesden of Montville.

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated Saturday, Sept. 17, at St. Andrew's Church, 128 Norwich Ave., Colchester. Burial followed in Maplewood Cemetery. There were no calling hours.

Her family asks that donations in her memory be directed to Darryl Hart, c/o Dime Bank, 290 Salem Tpke., Norwich, CT 06360, to be used to establish a trust fund for her children's education.

The Woyasz and Son Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements.

