

RIVEREAST

News Bulletin

Serving Amston, Andover, Cobalt, Colchester, East Hampton, Hebron, Marlborough, Middle Haddam and Portland

Volume 36, Number 41

Published by The Glastonbury Citizen

January 20, 2012



Knights Make Donation... The Knights of Columbus Belltown Council recently donated \$700 for the building of a "Happy House" for a family to be selected in Jeremie, Haiti. The "Happy House" will be build through the efforts of the Haitian Health Foundation located in Norwich. The family that is picked will assist in the construction of their new home. The \$700 gift is used to buy the building materials (such as lumber and roofing), which are then shipped to Haiti. Pictured Jan. 11, is, center, Al Vela (Knights of Columbus), with, at right, Dr. Jerry Lowney, founder of the Haitian Health Foundation, and, at left, his wife Virginia Lowney. Two days later, on Jan. 13, Grand Knight John Hines and Knight Gary Corliss were on hand at the Haitian Health Foundation to assist in loading materials into a container for shipment to Haiti.

Finance Board Member Charged with Arson

by Bailey Seddon

Colchester Board of Finance Vice Chairman Bruce Hayn was arrested Monday on charges that he set fire to his business last year and fraudulently filed insurance claims.

Hayn, 54, of 31 Sashel Ln., was charged with first-degree arson, first-degree criminal attempt to commit arson, second-degree issuing a false statement and insurance fraud, Norwich Police said. He was released on a \$100,000 surety bond and is due to be arraigned Thursday, Jan. 26, at Norwich Superior Court.

Hayn was the owner of Shur Fire, a wood stove and pellet fuel company in Norwich. On Oct. 27, 2011, fire broke out at the business, and five fire departments were needed to put it out. The building sustained heavy damage in the blaze. Hayn filed a claim with his insurance company, Travelers, and the company "made initial good faith payments" in return, according to a press release by Norwich Police Sgt. Peter B. Camp.

However, an investigation into the fire by Norwich Police Officer Robert Smith and by Detective Joseph Lombardi, of the Connecticut Fire Marshal's Office, determined the fire was set.

This was not the first attempt to burn his business down, according to police. Hayn is also charged with criminal attempt to commit arson, said Camp because "he attempted to burn the business the day prior" to the Oct. 27 fire. In addition, Hayn is charged with entering a false statement because "he deliberately misled [Norwich Police] in a sworn statement" by trying to pretend the fire was an accident,

Camp said.

Hayn, who has been on the Board of Finance for almost 27 years, is also well-known in the area for his role as the builder of a home featured in a 2008 edition of ABC's *Extreme Makeover: Home Edition*. Hayn was among 3,500 volunteers that helped the Girard family of Voluntown rebuild their home after it was destroyed by a fire in 2007.



Hayn

Colchester First Selectman Gregg Schuster said he was "shocked and saddened" by Hayn's arrest.

"Bruce has made numerous contributions to this community over the last 20 years and is entitled to the presumption of innocence until proven guilty," Schuster said.

Asked whether Hayn would remain on the Board of Finance, Schuster said there is no removal process for such elected positions. In addition, Schuster said he is not going to ask Hayn to resign and, given that the arrest is new, is going to "wait and see what happens."

"I'm sure Mr. Hayn will be considering if he should continue serving on the Board of Finance," Schuster said. "I hope he will make a decision that is in the best interest of the community."

Hayn did not return a call for comment.

East Hampton Development Plagued by Sewage Issues

by Joshua Anusewicz

Turning right onto Barton Hill Road from Route 66, you will see a grouping of beautiful modern homes with neatly manicured grasses, gardens and trees, set beside expansive wetland that gives the area a quiet, secluded feel. It's small-town New England meeting quiet suburbs, seemingly the perfect place to raise a family.

The first homes you see on your right - five in all - have done just that. Eight children, all school-aged or younger, live in these five homes. So do their hard-working parents, who have invested all they have into their tract of land where they plan to grow their roots. It would be safe to say that these people aren't much different than anyone else in East Hampton.

Ed Sawyer and Joe Jarzabek are two of the residents in this area who have these hopes, but for at least six years, things haven't quite been going according to plan. Sawyer said that since he moved to Barton Hill Road in 2006, the five-house development has been plagued with sewage issues. These issues have caused raw sewage to back up into the residents' yards, gardens and basements, all of which the residents

have had to pay for out of pocket.

The reason they have a sewage system in the first place is where the issues begin. The houses were built in 2004 and, because all of the houses are within a certain distance of wetlands, they are unable to have septic systems. According to Sawyer, the town had plans to install a pump station at the bottom of the road that would pump sewage roughly 1,000 feet up the hill, similar to what is used on nearby Spice Hill Road.

But Sawyer said when town officials found out the price tag for the pump station - about \$85,000 - they balked and looked for a cheaper alternative. That alternative was a system of 12 grinder pumps that would connect the five new homes and seven on the other side of the road to a new sewage system. The system was approved by the town, but only one other home connected to the system.

It didn't take long for the problems to start, Sawyer said, as his neighbor saw their grinder pump burn out three times in a span of months. Sawyer said that in the past six years, 10 pumps have burnt out between the five houses, which totaled almost \$20,000 in repair costs, on top

of the \$9,000 in sewer bills they've paid in that time period. Last year, one of Sawyer's neighbors, Rob English, had sewage back up into his recently-finished basement. That alone cost English over \$5,000.

"And it's going to continue," Sawyer said. "These repairs are not going to work." Sawyer said the most likely reason for failures is that the system is designed to draw power from 12 pumps, not the six it currently has. Jarzabek said that the pumps are expected to last 10 years.

With it being a town sewage system, the residents first approached the town in 2006, when they met with then-Town Manager Alan Bergren. Sawyer said they were "basically told 'not our problem, you bought the property, you deal with it.'"

"They don't want to admit they were wrong," said Sawyer, who just had another grinder pump burn out over the holidays.

Recently, Sawyer and Jarzabek met with Interim Town Manager John Weichsel and were then asked to come to a Town Council meeting by Chairwoman Sue Weintraub. It was at that meeting that Weichsel read what Jarzabek called "a caveat" that the builder had signed regarding

the sewage system.

"It basically says that we are responsible for all of the maintenance on the pumps," Jarzabek said. But Sawyer added the "caveat" also says the residents are responsible for "the installation" of the pumps, something none of the residents did. Sawyer also said that none of the residents received that information before buying their homes.

Sawyer said that because of this, the town has told the residents each grinder pump burning out has been a different issue caused by the residents not maintaining the devices. But the residents aren't buying it.

"It's the same problem; it hasn't worked since day one," Sawyer said.

Jarzabek said he wonders why the town seems to maintain the grinder pumps in the area of Lake Pocotopaug and not the wetlands near Barton Hill Road, even though the residents have to adhere to the same strict guidelines.

"Whether it's a huge lake or a small wetland, it falls into the same category," Jarzabek said. "Why isn't the town maintaining this if they approved it? Why wouldn't they make it

See Sewage Issues Page 2

Sewage Issues cont. from Front Page

part of the maintenance program if they knew it worked?"

Vincent Susco, the town's public utilities administrator, said that the town has about 400 properties that are served by grinder pumps, 94 of which are owned and maintained by the town. (Susco added that those residents served by town-owned pumps pay a higher sewer rate.) Susco said that over the years, both town-owned and privately-owned grinder pumps have failed for any number of reasons, but most failures have been caused by human error.

"These pumps are meant to work with materials that can be dissolved in water," said Susco, who added that he's seen any number of items pulled out of a failed pump. "But anything, really, can cause a pump to fail. We get 10 to 20 calls about grinder pumps a year; some are town-owned and, unfortunately, some are the responsibility of the property owners."

Susco said he has received about four calls from residents on Barton Hill Road, but now knows the problem goes deeper than that. "It's not a unique problem to Barton Hill, or even this town," Susco said. "Essex, Deep River, Marlborough all use grinder pumps. Almost all of Marlborough is run on grinder pumps. And they have issues sometimes."

According to Weintraub, the town is cur-

rently employing the help of an engineering firm to review the approved plan for the system to see if it was properly installed to fit the development. She said the results will be discussed at the next Town Council meeting but, until then, the town needs to obtain all the information they can about what exactly happened.

"We're assembling all of the facts from when the homes were built to now," Weintraub said, adding that Sawyer will be providing a timeline of the issues to Weichsel. "Right now, we don't know what caused the pump failures, so everything needs to be reviewed and examined."

For now, the residents are left in the lurch and aren't sure where the issue will progress from here. Whether it is the town maintaining the pumps, redesigning the system, or the residents continuing to maintain the pumps, the people who have invested their lives into those homes plan to stay.

"We plan on staying here, putting our kids through the school system and paying our taxes," Jarzabek said.

"We're just looking for resolution," Sawyer said. "We're waiting for the town to step up to the plate. All they keep saying is, 'it's your responsibility.' But they're overlooking the fact they keep breaking down."

Fugitive Arrested for 2002 Death of East Hampton Teen

by Joshua Anusewicz

After almost 10 years on the lam, East Hampton Police have arrested one of the men allegedly responsible for the death of a local teen in 2002.

According to the EHPD, Jason Nedobity, 32, who police listed no known address for, surrendered himself at the Enfield Police Department at around 4:30 a.m. Wednesday, and East Hampton Police charged him with first-degree manslaughter, first-degree reckless endangerment, sale of a hallucinogenic substance, sale of a hallucinogenic substance to a person under 18, possession of a hallucinogenic substance, and violation of probation. Nedobity was arraigned at Middletown Superior Court and is being held on \$200,000 bond.

The arrest stems from a May 18, 2002, incident, when 16-year-old Makayla Korpinen of East Hampton died of complications related to a drug overdose sustained from drugs that were allegedly supplied to her by Nedobity and his brother, Joseph, East Hampton Police said.

According to the TV program *America's Most Wanted*, which featured Nedobity in November 2005, Korpinen was given a white, powdery substance at a party by Jason and Joseph, who was her boyfriend at the time. The substance was reportedly a lethal form of ecstasy called "Molly" that caused Korpinen to begin vomiting and become unconscious.

During this time, nobody at the party called police for help and it took roughly eight hours for Korpinen to receive treatment. Korpinen died three days later, reportedly the first person ever to die from ecstasy in Connecticut.

Joseph Nedobity and another individual

were arrested shortly after the incident, but Jason Nedobity went on the run. *America's Most Wanted* reported that Nedobity was spotted along the East Coast and as far away as Colorado, and most likely lived as a drifter selling drugs to make money.

Sgt. Garritt Kelly of the EHPD said Wednesday that Nedobity had been "tracked extensively" and had been most recently living in a commune "on the fringes" in Vermont. Kelly said that Nedobity had been using the alias "Jim Peters" and police had little information to use because he had never been arrested. After appearing on *America's Most Wanted*, Kelly said the EHPD received several inaccurate leads.

As for why he surrendered himself to police, Kelly said Nedobity admitted that he was "tired of being on the run and decided to end it." According to Kelly, Nedobity crossed the border of Connecticut into Enfield and went to the police station to turn himself in.

"It was really just as simple as that," Kelly said.

Jason Nedobity is scheduled to appear in Middletown Superior Court Tuesday, Jan. 24, at 10 a.m. Joseph Nedobity pled guilty to manslaughter in 2005 for a reduced sentence, spending two and a half years in prison. Since then, he has been arrested multiple times on various drug charges, according to the state's judicial website.



Nedobity

Portland Police News

1/10: Miguel Quiles, 26, of 163 Airline Ave., was charged with possession of less than half an ounce of marijuana, Portland Police said.

1/11: Derek Mandeville, 23, of 678 Randolph Rd., Middletown, was charged with first-degree failure to appear, police said.

1/15: George Kallmeyer, 52, of 5 Wellwyn Dr., was charged with evading responsibility, misuse of plate, unsafe backing and operating an unregistered motor vehicle, police said.

East Hampton Police News

1/5: John R. Forbes IV, 24, of 72 Skinner St., was issued a summons for unsafe backing, operating a motor vehicle with a suspended license and without insurance and misuse of registration plate, East Hampton Police said.

1/5: Mark Picot Todd, 28, of 12 Stonewood Dr., Old Lyme, was arrested for possession of heroin, narcotics and drug paraphernalia and failure to keep prescriptions in original container, police said.

1/10: Jamie Cyr, 36, of 27 Matthieu Ln., was arrested for disorderly conduct and interfering with a police officer, police said

From the Editor's Desk

Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

In case you haven't heard, Gov. Dannel Malloy last weekend came out in favor of allowing Sunday alcohol sales in package stores and supermarkets.

To which I say: hooray!

Not that I'm an alcoholic or anything, mind you. I've just long felt alcohol should be allowed to be sold on Sundays. The closest Malloy's ever come to supporting it is when he took the rather weak stance last year of "well, if a bill is passed by the legislature, I'll sign it." He's never openly advocated for it, though.

The difference now is the tax revenue. Frankly, Malloy seems tired of people crossing the border to Massachusetts or Rhode Island to buy liquor. Malloy said some estimates show state liquor stores lose \$570 million a year to neighboring states. He estimated Sunday sales would increase the state's annual revenue from alcohol sales by at least \$8 million.

The potential aid to the state coffers is just one reason I'm in favor of Sunday sales. (Granted, it's a pretty big reason. With the fiscal hole the state is in, every little bit of money helps – and this is certainly a lot more palatable than increasing the gasoline tax or the sales tax.) Another one is, frankly, for stores to be forbidden to sell alcohol on Sundays but bars and restaurants be able to doesn't make a lot of sense. They should either all be able to sell it, or none should be able to sell it.

A common refrain from the other side whenever the Sunday alcohol sales controversy comes up is "Look, if people can't plan ahead and buy ahead for Sunday, that's their problem." But, the reality of the situation is, not everybody does plan ahead – and the grimmer reality is, it's not just "their problem."

There unfortunately are plenty of people in this state whose craving for alcohol will not permit them to simply wait until Monday for the stores to open again. Instead, they'll just get in their car, drive to the bar, have a few drinks, and then drive home – quite possibly intoxicated, and quite possibly endangering their lives and the lives of others. Wouldn't it be better to let people go to the package store, pick up a six-pack, and then drink in the comfort – and safety – of their own home?

Simply put: People are going to drink. Preventing stores from selling alcohol on Sundays isn't going to stop people from drinking. All it does is make the roadways a little less safe.

* * *

I saw an interesting quote over the weekend from George Clooney that I wholeheartedly agree with. It's a fairly lengthy one, so bear with me.

"I'm disillusioned by the people who are disillusioned by Obama; quite honestly, I am," Clooney said. "Democrats eat their own. Democrats find singular issues and go, 'Well, I didn't get everything I wanted.' I'm a firm believer in sticking by and sticking up for the people whom you've elected.

* * *

See you next week.

Colchester Police News

1/10: Joyce Zgorski, 71, of 192 Rosewood Ln., was charged with reckless driving and DUI, State Police said.

1/10: Christian R. Mock, 30, of 19 Ridgewood Rd., Moodus, was charged with second-degree failure to appear, State Police said.

1/11: Colchester Police are investigating items reportedly stolen from an unlocked car parked in the victim's driveway. The victim reported the alleged theft at 8:39 a.m.

1/13: Brandon Sistare, 22, of 253 Maple Ave., Uncasville, was charged with failure to respond to a violation, State Police said.

Marlborough Police News

1/13: Visham Rampersad, 48, of 7677 Rue Bernard LaSalle, QC, Canada, was charged with DUI and failure to maintain the proper lane, State Police said.

1/15: Jennifer N. Laforest, 24, of 75 Cemetery Rd., was charged with reckless driving and DUI, State Police said.

Colchester Historic Comstock Bridge to Re-Open

by Bailey Seddon

Colchester and East Hampton residents, take heart: The two-year Comstock Bridge reconstruction project is nearing its completion.

The historic bridge – portions of which are estimated to date back to the 1700s – is currently partially open to pedestrians, with the structure expected to be completely opened in about the next month.

The \$1.1 million project began at the end of the winter in 2009 and is “basically a one-of-a-kind project” for the Department of Transportation (DOT), said spokesman Kevin Nursick. Nursick said reconstructing a wooden bridge is not the type of project the DOT is typically involved in but the agency was happy to do so as the bridge had so much “historical significance.”

The 90-foot covered wooden Howe truss bridge spans the Salmon River, with half in Colchester and the other half in East Hampton. It was first shut down in 2005 when it was inspected and thought to be unstable. At that time, the bridge was repaired with the addition of two steel high beams, which bore the weight of the bridge, making it safe for foot traffic again. From then until 2009 the bridge remained open while the state looked into funding for a broader reconstruction of it.

In 2009 funding finally came through, with the help of state Rep. Gail K. Hamm (D-East Hampton and Middletown). Of the \$1.1 million cost of the project, 80 percent came from the National Historic Covered Bridge program and the other 20 percent from the state, Nursick said.

Joe Gresko, a spokesman for Hamm, said she made sure the state went forward with assigning the DOT to be the caretakers of the bridge. She also went through the process of applying for the federal funds that paid for most of the project, he said.

Work began on the project in March 2009. Once it started, workers had to completely dis-

assemble the bridge, piece by piece. This was done by pulling it apart, 10 feet at a time, and storing the pieces of the wooden structure in the bigger of the two parking lots at the site. Once that was done, workers replaced the “old deteriorating material with new components as needed,” said Nursick. Half of the restored bridge is now composed of new materials, with the other half of original pieces. The reconstruction incorporated “some modifications to better strengthen the structure,” but half of the original bridge was retained “maintaining the historic context of the structure,” Nursick said. A carpenter was also brought in to work on the bridge to make sure the job was done right.

This project was also unique to the DOT because it was “all basically done by hand,” which made it take longer, Nursick said. The project would likely have been completed earlier, but the severity of last winter’s snowstorms delayed some of the work, he said.

Nonetheless, state and local officials are relieved the project is coming to a close and the bridge can be used again.

“I’m thrilled that it is going to be reopened,” said Colchester First Selectman Gregg Schuster. Schuster said the bridge is an iconic landmark in the area, one he used to visit as a kid to go fishing with his family.

This is not the first time the historic bridge was shut down. In the 1930s it was closed for renovations, and then again in the 1970s.

The bridge is now partially open to pedestrians and in the next month or so will be completely opened, Nursick said. The landscaping portion of the project will be completed in the spring, he added. The landscaping will improve the aesthetics of the property, including the planting of flowers and grass at either end of the span, and will not limit pedestrian use of the bridge.

It was important to town and state officials to keep as much of the original bridge as possible because it has significant historic value.



The Comstock Bridge, which spans the Salmon River from East Hampton to Colchester, is expected to completely reopen next month after a two-year renovation project. The bridge was built in 1873 and is one of only three remaining covered bridges in Connecticut.

“It has a real historic context,” Nursick said.

Nursick said the bridge was built in 1873 for \$3,958, a cost that was shared by East Hampton and Colchester. The towns shared the bridge for 61 years, before it became state property in 1934. Nursick said there are portions of the bridge that possibly even date back to the 1700s.

“Maintaining the character of the bridge and allowing families across the state and New England to enjoy safe travel over this historic landmark was the driving force behind this effort,” Hamm said. “A trip across the bridge constitutes a journey through the history of this

region, when our citizens traveled on horseback and stagecoach.”

Another unique aspect of the Comstock Bridge is that it is one of only three remaining covered bridges in Connecticut and the only one that still supports its own weight.

The bridge is “one of those charms that Connecticut has,” Nursick said. “It really is a local gem that not a lot of outsiders know about.”

Gresko said Hamm “is ecstatic” that the bridge is almost complete and looking forward to taking part in the ribbon-cutting ceremony, which he said would likely take place in the spring.

East Hampton Soldiers Return to Proud Hometown

by Joshua Anusewicz

Freezing temperatures didn’t subdue the warm hearts of East Hampton last Saturday, as over 200 locals gathered in the Village Center to welcome home two members of the community who recently returned from military duty in Afghanistan.

The two servicemen that were honored were Marine Lance Corporal Anthony Strong and U.S. Army Specialist Roger H. Boulanger, at what was called “the best ceremony we’ve had yet” by Ann McLaughlin, the brains behind the Yellow Ribbon program that started early last year.

“I was delighted [by the turnout],” said McLaughlin, who started the program because of her grandson, Sgt. Arron McLaughlin, a Purple Heart recipient who returned from Afghanistan in 2010. Since the original idea was proposed, the program has grown to welcome home five soldiers from East Hampton, all in ceremonies befitting of their service, with hundreds gathering to wave flags and sing patriotic songs.

Last Saturday was no different, as locals of every ilk joined together on the lawn of the East Hampton Congregational Church and stretched to the tree on the traffic island in the Village Center to remove the yellow ribbons bearing the names of Strong and Boulanger. Members of Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 5095, the Ladies Auxiliary, Patriot Guard Riders, boy, girl and cub scouts and members of the current and former Town Council were all on hand, as well, to honor the two servicemen. Lt. Governor Nancy Wyman was expected to attend, but was not present.

Strong is the son of Bruce Strong Jr. and Stacey Petrow, and a 2008 graduate of Vinal

Technical High School in Middletown. Strong grew up playing baseball and football, but always knew he wanted to serve his country. He joined the Marines in September 2008, graduating as a private first class from Marine Recruit Training 1st Battalion Alpha Company in Paris Island, SC. Since graduating from infantry training in North Carolina, Strong has served with the First Battalion 9th Marine Regiment, also known as the “Walking Dead” out of Camp Lejeune in North Carolina.

“It’s great being home,” Strong said as he stood next to his wife, Torianne.

Interestingly enough, Boulanger followed a similar path. Also a 2008 graduate of Vinal, Boulanger enlisted in June 2008 and left for boot camp in Kentucky the next month. After training, Boulanger was stationed at Fort Hood in Texas. Last June, the Army was looking for volunteers to go to Afghanistan; having always wanted serve his country overseas, Boulanger jumped at the opportunity.

Now, he’s just happy to be home. “It’s wonderful to be home,” he said. “The ceremony was really nice, and I was surprised by the turnout considering it was so cold.”

Boulanger’s parents, Jackie and Ray, were equally excited to have their son home and to see the community support. “We’re really pleased,” Jackie said.

Not lost on the ceremony was the tree itself; during the snowstorm that crippled the area last October, the original tree was completely destroyed. Fortunately, McLaughlin said, the ribbons were salvaged but there was no place to put them.

But true to the community spirit of East Hampton, locals stepped up to the plate to help. A new tree, an Aristocrat Pear, was donated by



Flanked by members of VFW Post 5095 and the Ladies Auxiliary, Marine Lance Corporal Anthony Strong, center left, and U.S. Army Specialist Roger H. Boulanger, center right, took in the patriotic welcoming ceremony with their families last Saturday in the Village Center. The servicemen removed their yellow ribbons from the newly-planted Aristocrat Pear tree that looms behind them. (Photo by Kathy Barber)

the Peszynski family of Paul’s & Sandy’s Too. Residents Kevin Kiely, Dan Peszynski and Bruce Strong - Anthony’s father - helped plant the tree in time for the ceremony. And to top it off, McLaughlin said that three local landscaping companies have offered to help restore the island for a formal dedication ceremony in the spring.

With the two ribbons off the tree, only one soldier’s ribbon remains - U.S. Army Captain Jeffery Pugatch. However, McLaughlin said he won’t be alone for long; two more servicemen

will be leaving at the end of January - U.S. Navy 3rd Class Petty Officer Cody Flannery and U.S. Navy Seabee Christopher Abbott. A small ceremony with the two soldiers’ families is scheduled for February to tie their ribbons on the tree.

Like those East Hampton servicemen that came before, they know they will have the support and respect of their community while they are gone. And like Saturday, upon their return, they will see just how strong that support and respect really is.

Marlborough Boy Scouts Pitch Community Projects to Selectmen

by Bailey Seddon

Two Boy Scouts from Troop 39 came before the Board of Selectmen Tuesday to discuss their local Eagle Scout projects with the board.

The scouts need the selectmen's approval to complete their citizenship in the community project. Once the projects are complete, the scouts will go before a review board for their Eagle ranking, the highest scouting rank possible and the most difficult. Only about 2 percent of Boy Scouts achieve the rank.

The first presenter was Robert Bates, who proposed a bicycle safety fair for kids in kindergarten through sixth grade. Robert said he would use the fair to teach children the rules of bicycle safety, bicycle maintenance and the different types of bicycles and their uses. He said he would hold the fair on the last Saturday in March or the first Saturday in April in the Elmer Thienes-Mary Hall Elementary School community room. He said he would contact the local constable, Randy Ransom, to sponsor the project. To get the word out about the event, Robert said he would put informational posters around town.

Selectman Dick Shea asked if the community room at the school would be available on the day Robert has selected to hold the fair. Robert replied that he would contact the school and ask when the room is available. First Selectwoman Cathi Gaudinski encouraged Robert to go and visit the Parks and Recreation Department, saying it might be helpful to get "extra coverage" to get people to participate in the project. Shea agreed, saying the department might be able to help with flyers or a brochure for the project. He said Robert might even want to ask the school for help.

"I think it's a good project to make the children aware of bike safety," Gaudinski said.

Boy Scout David Mazotas next presented his project, a proposal to repaint some of the walls in the food bank in town. David said many of the walls currently have spots and holes in them; he even shared pictures of the walls with the board.

"That is kind of an eyesore," he said of one of the images. He said he would try to get donations for the paint and asked the board if the town garage has any he could use. Gaudinski said he should contact Christopher Corsa, the grounds and building maintenance foreman at the Public Works Department, to check if there was paint available. David also said he would like to replace the tiles in the food bank's kitchen. Many of the kitchen's tiles are cracked and are in need of repair. There are "spider web cracks throughout the whole floor," he said.

He showed the board samples of several different types of tiles for the project. One of the samples was of tiles that slide together and don't need to be installed by a professional; he and other scouts could do the work. He also said he had looked at regular tiles, vinyl and ceramic, that would need a professional to install. David said he could likely find a tile installer to donate their time for the project.

David said he is planning on doing his project over February vacation. He attends Xavier High School in Middletown, where he is a senior, but most of the other scouts go to RHAM; however, they have the same February break, making it a good time to do the project.

"I think both projects will benefit the town

and I look forward to you doing this," Gaudinski said. She added that if either scout needed help they should feel free to contact her. The board gave the two scouts permission to go through with their project.

The "focus of it is to show leadership," Danielle Neary, chairwoman of Troop 39, said in a phone interview. Neary said she is hoping the community will help by participating in both of the scouts' projects.

* * *

Also discussed Tuesday was a request from resident Charles Burke to continue trapping animals near Blackledge River. Gaudinski said Burke traps animals, such as raccoons, beavers and minks, near the river. Other board members added that Burke traps the animals either for animal control purposes or to sell their fur. Gaudinski said Burke does the trapping in accordance with rules set forth by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP), and takes all responsibility for the trappings he does.

What Burke needed from the board, Gaudinski said, is a letter that it would issue annually allowing Burke to continue to trap. The board, however, did not vote on the request, after Shea and selectman Mike Gut raised questions about the trapping. Shea wanted to know what type of traps Burke uses. Gaudinski said she did not know, but repeated that Burke was following DEEP law. Shea replied he would like the board to hold off until they find out the answer to this question.

"I have an issue with trapping, at least the old-fashioned type of trapping," he said. Shea

went on to say that while it might be in accordance with DEEP rules, that does not mean the trappings are humane. Gut agreed, saying he used to trap a child and knew what it was like.

"The method that they are using...we have to be very careful with it," Gut said.

Shea suggested they get a copy of the regulations Burke would be following and wait until the next board meeting to make a decision.

Gaudinski agreed and said she would get more information.

* * *

The board also briefly discussed the 2012-13 budget. Gaudinski said she plans on having the proposed spending plan ready to discuss by February. In response, Shea said the board should have one or two "extra dedicated" meetings to talk about the budget.

Gaudinski agreed, and said that when she has "a better sense" of what the budget will be, she will schedule meetings. She said she would contact Shea and Gut with the dates and times of any extra meetings.

Other meetings the Board of Selectmen will likely have will be with the Water Pollution Control Authority (WPCA). Gaudinski said the WPCA would like to have a meeting with the board to discuss its budget, unconnected properties and moving forward with the sewer project.

"I'm sure they need all the help they can get," Shea said.

* * *

The next Board of Selectmen meeting is Tuesday, Feb. 7, at 7 p.m. at Town Hall.

Pre-Budget Planning at Marlborough Board of Ed Meeting

by Bailey Seddon

With the budget season just around the corner the Board of Education held a pre-budget meeting last Thursday, Jan. 12.

Superintendent of Schools David Sklarz began the meeting by going down a list of things the board has to factor in when deciding on a budget. As he did so, he said "there is a certain reality check" to figuring out what the schools need and how much the board can afford. Last Thursday's meeting was called to get a sense of how the first draft of the budget should look.

Sklarz started with the section "Guiding Principles," which are initiatives that support and maintain programs important to the school district. These initiatives, he said, are "just a good investment."

Under this section, Sklarz talked about how Elmer Thienes-Mary Hall Elementary School will see a lower student enrollment, according to statistics from the New England School Development Council (NESDEC). According to its website, nesdec.org is a "private, not-for-profit educational organization," which focuses on "planning, learning and teaching/professional development, executive searching and research and development."

After visiting and doing research in Marlborough, NESDEC determined that Elmer Thienes-Mary Hall Elementary School could see as many as 20 fewer students next year, and in five years enrollment will be down to 600 students; it is currently at 655.

Sklarz said the trend is affecting other districts as well. Hebron and Andover have "even worse" projected student enrollment decreases, he said. Enrollment drops mean future staff cuts would be necessary, though Sklarz said he and the board would try to do that with the least impact as possible. For instance, the school would try to reduce staff by attrition, by factoring in retirements and resignations.

Another important factor in next year's bud-

get is alternative funding sources, Sklarz said. He talked about money the school got from sources such as the Marlborough Education Foundation (MEF) for things such as the schools new Science Technology and Math (STEAM) room.

"We couldn't have afforded that" without the MEF grant, he said.

Sklarz next dove into the subject of "Budget Drivers." He said last year the board had to factor in \$85,000 for concessions of teachers. Board of Education Chairwoman Betty O'Brien said the teachers agreed to extend their contracts another year and instead of getting a 4 percent increase, or \$170,000, they split it up over two years. This year, he said, teachers will get the \$85,000, plus the next 2 percent increase.

Utilities, such as electricity and heat, are also big factors in the budget, Sklarz said. He said electricity will not increase, but oil is projected to rise by about 18 percent, or almost \$20,000. There are other expenses which will be up from this year, Sklarz said. The 2011-12 budget did not include legal fees for negotiating a new teachers' contract, as the district was able to work out a deal without lawyers. This year though, Sklarz said, the district will need to hire legal assistance.

"We really need to start thinking of the budget in multi-years," said Sklarz.

The next topic was "Budget Assumptions." Sklarz said last year there was one autistic child in the school that the school had to factor in, and now there are three. He said this kind of assumption should be budgeted in because students such as these may need extra help in the form of a paraprofessional in the classroom. Sklarz also said it was "a compliment to our school" that the parents of the autistic child wanted to come to Elmer Thienes-Mary Hall Elementary School.

Another assumption Sklarz mentioned is that, as enrollment goes down in the next couple of years, class sizes could possibly go up. However, Sklarz said the school will try to stick with the new class size guidelines to make sure class sizes stay stable. Some teachers, he added, already have 26-27 students per class and he does not want that number to go up too much. O'Brien said the new class size guidelines are "a great step toward increasing transparency."

Board member Carol Shea asked Sklarz if the so-far mild winter meant the school's heating bills will be less. Sklarz said he's not sure, but said it is something he would look into and consider in the budget. Shea also asked if the computer lease agreements are due this year. Sklarz said they were, and this was yet another factor in how much the budget would be.

The computer lease agreement "always seemed very high to me," Shea said.

Shea also asked about staff health benefits, which she called "the biggie." She mentioned the fees would be increasing 20 percent for the next school year.

O'Brien also remarked on the fees, saying, "Those costs are astronomical."

O'Brien thanked First Selectwoman Cathi Gaudinski for coming to the meeting and for being so available to her and the board. O'Brien said she has met with Gaudinski several times and finds "it's just really helpful."

"It goes back to transparency," said board member Bob Clarke.

Sklarz asked school board members if they want him to make a draft showing what the budget would look like, with all of the information they had talked about factored in. Board member Ruth Kelly said this would be futile right now, because the board is not at the point where they know exactly what they are budgeting for. O'Brien said Sklarz could come into

the next meeting with some kind of range for a budget by looking at other towns' budgets, just to give the board an idea of where they want to be.

Clarke felt Sklarz should do what he did last year and develop three proposed budgets to give the board several options. The proposed budgets would range from a zero-increase spending plan, to one with a high increase over current spending. Some board members, however, felt that a zero budget is not one they wanted to see. Board member Mimi LaPoint said the school board has been cutting things in the last couple of years and she does not want to see more deep cuts.

"I don't want to see another budget that's zero," LaPoint said. Sklarz agreed, saying, "We cannot do that anymore."

Clarke, however, felt differently, saying, "A zero budget is instructional."

Whatever the budget may be, Sklarz said it was important to keep things the school needs but cut things they could afford to eliminate. He said the board "has to have the political will and the courage" to cut things.

The board last discussed the community outreach that board members have undertaken throughout the town. Board members agreed that these were good meetings because the board can communicate directly with residents, as opposed to simply taking citizen comments during meetings.

Resident Cliff Dennis told the board he likes the outreach meetings and feels they are a good idea because "people want information." He said it can be frustrating to go to a meeting and give comments but not get any feedback.

* * *

The next Board of Education meeting will be held Thursday, Jan. 26, at 7 p.m., at Elmer Thienes-Mary Hall Elementary School.

Portland Selectmen Form Committee to Research ‘Property Maintenance’

by Joshua Anusewicz

When driving through the intersection of routes 66 and 17 in the heart of Portland, one of the first things you notice is the former gas station located on Main Street. The abandoned structure has been considered an eyesore by many residents and town officials who hope to one day see a burgeoning town center that promotes economic development for the town.

First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield and the rest of the Board of Selectmen have heard enough from the residents, and took their first steps toward adopting an “ordinance of property maintenance” at the board’s regular meeting on Wednesday night.

“We have to be careful what we call it,” advised selectman Mark Finkelstein, who avoided using the term “blight,” which he said he feels is too restrictive.

Finkelstein might have the most experience with the topic on the board; in 2002, along with current selectmen Kathy Richards, Brian Flood and Carl Chudzik, Finkelstein spearheaded a committee that looked into the possibility of a blight ordinance for Portland. One of the steps he took was researching every blight ordinance in Connecticut, a tedious task that helped yield a draft ordinance that was presented to the board

at that time.

The problem at the time was that the ordinance could not be enforced as the town didn’t have a zoning officer. Now that there is a zoning officer, and with the selectmen having an increased awareness of the blight issue in town, the board has considered revisiting the proposal.

Flood also said that without a zoning officer, the town “couldn’t come to a solution” on how to deal with a property that was considered blighted.

“We need to establish an ordinance that has teeth, but protects the rights of the property owners,” Finkelstein said. Finkelstein recommended that the board form a committee to research an “ordinance of property maintenance.”

Interestingly enough, the three individuals who volunteered to serve as the committee were those who didn’t serve on the committee previously - Bransfield and the two newest selectmen, Fred Knous and Ryan Curley. The committee hopes to present a draft ordinance to the selectmen that will weigh the blight with the property owners’ rights.

“It’s how you balance that, that will be the tough thing to do,” Bransfield said.

Bransfield said she has spoken with the

town’s attorney, Jean D’Aquila, who recommended that if the town were to adopt an ordinance, it should establish a “citation hearing procedure” that will allow the property owner to appeal the ruling. D’Aquila said that the selectmen could appoint an appeals board that would review the citation. Bransfield said that, in cases of blight, the majority of property owners comply with the citation because they were unaware of the issue.

“It’s those that don’t comply that we would need to handle with punitive measures,” Bransfield added. She also stated that it would allow the town to consider extenuating circumstances and take into account the situation of the property owner.

There is currently no timetable for an ordinance to be drafted.

* * *

Sticking with the theme of abandoned properties, the selectmen officially approved the demolition of the building at 5 Main St., a deteriorating property that has served as the town’s senior center and youth services offices in the past.

According to Bransfield, the town has looked

into repairing or selling the property, but said that the building is in such poor shape that it would “be cost-prohibitive.” The building also contains numerous hazardous materials, said Director of Public Works Rick Kelsey.

Before the selectmen voted to approve the demolition, Deb Ellsworth of the Portland Historical Society spoke with the board about the possibility of preserving wooden trim work from the house, which was built in the 1860s. Ellsworth said that if any of the wood could be salvaged, the historical society would like to save it as “memorabilia” from Portland’s past.

The board agreed with Ellsworth’s proposal, and also agreed that it should be something that the town should look into in similar situations in the future.

Bransfield said the cost of the demolition is currently unknown because the amount of hazardous materials has yet to be assessed. The project is expected to go out to bid in the near future.

* * *

The next scheduled Board of Selectmen meeting is Wednesday, Feb. 1, at 7:30 p.m., at Portland Library, 20 Freestone Ave.

Discussion of All-Day Kindergarten in Hebron Continues

by Geeta Schrayter

No definitive decisions on the subject were made, but Board of Education members last week kicked around the idea of expanding all-day kindergarten in the district.

Not everybody was sold, and there were questions aplenty about the possible expansion. The idea of expanding all-day kindergarten proved to be controversial when proposed in 2010 – and was considered to be a main reason the 2010-11 town budget was defeated on its first trip before the voters that year. (The budget finally passed on its third referendum.)

Superintendent of Schools Ellie Cruz is in support of expanding all-day kindergarten, and presented the board with her reasoning for the change, which included increased expectations of students.

She explained this year’s kindergarten classes will be the first to take the new standardized tests in 2014 and expressed concern over their ability to perform.

“Whether full-day or half-day, they already don’t have the structure and content to be successful on those tests,” she said.

Cruz explained a normal half day of kindergarten had been analyzed – transitions from switching subjects or using the restroom had been timed – and it was found that while the children are present for two and a half hours during a half-day of kindergarten, actual instruction only takes place for an hour and 20 minutes.

During a full day, she said, instruction time increases to four hours.

Additionally, Cruz explained a full day of kindergarten provides more opportunities for students to understand the curriculum.

“If a child misses a concept or an idea or understanding of a content area in the morning,” she said, “the teacher can cycle back to that in the afternoon – you don’t have that option in a half-day.”

Other districts in the area already have, or are looking to implement, all-day kindergarten, she continued, including Wethersfield,

Glastonbury, Lebanon and Andover.

“I think the reason most [towns] are moving to all-day kindergarten is that they’re recognizing half is not enough time,” said Cruz, adding, “everything that we miss [in kindergarten] becomes a building block that the child doesn’t have” in later grades.

Board member William Moorcroft asked if there were any other way, apart from all-day kindergarten, to teach the children the information they need, but Cruz stated increasing the amount of instruction during a half-day would mean eliminating playtime for students.

“The idea of taking away play so that [students] can sit at a table and do content work just kind of flies in the face of what we know as good in early childhood classroom” education, said Cruz. “If we don’t have the freedom and the opportunity and the time to do that, these kids are going to miss out not just on standardized tests but on other important skills too.”

Board member Stephanie Raymond agreed, later saying the children can’t sit there “and have stuff thrown at them for two and a half hours.

“So what are we going to do? We’re going to take out the house corner and the sandbox and everything else – all they would do is sit there and be taught at – and that’s not feasible for a kindergartener,” she said, adding, “I just don’t see that you can get what you have to teach done in the amount of time allotted.”

Cruz also explained the finance factor of all-day kindergarten, and ways it would be funded.

In an effort to work with the board and the community, Cruz explained she “recognized the fact that as teaching needs shrink and other needs shrink,” administration should shrink as well.

To that affect, Cruz said the decision was made to have a special education director three days a week, then cover the rest herself – a decision that saves the district \$52,000.

“I’m willing to do that to help fund all-day

k,” she said.

Cruz also felt it was important to note kindergarten wasn’t the “budget driver” in the 2012-13 spending plan, which Cruz proposed last month at \$12.25 million.

“The drivers in this budget are really things that are beyond our control,” she explained, referring to factors such as the loss of educational jobs funding and higher insurance rates. “That’s what’s going to make [the budget] so difficult.”

While Cruz said she felt Hebron had an advantage over other districts because of the community and parental support, she said there was concern the edge will be lost “because we cannot remain competitive or flush with districts giving *all* kids the opportunity to learn” through full-day kindergarten.

But member Dominic Marino expressed concern children aren’t as productive in the afternoon, questioning the amount of instruction time a full day of kindergarten would actually provide.

“They’re not as productive as they could be,” he said. “They’re not at their peak, they’re not self-actualizing because they’re tired.”

Marino also reminded the board “the town voted very, very emotionally against having all-day kindergarten,” when it was last sent to referendum.

However various board members explained the community needed to be educated on the situation.

Raymond, who said she’d been advocating for full-day kindergarten since starting on the board over four years ago, said “it just makes sense. You have more time to learn.” But she added the community didn’t seem to realize what was required of the children.

“I don’t think anybody in this community understands what we have to teach these kids in kindergarten,” she said, adding it’s “not about learning how to put blocks together, or playing in the house corner anymore.” Now, she con-

tinued, children “need to know how to count, add, algebra, read books... it’s not the same as when I went to school.”

Board secretary Tina-Marie Blinn agreed, saying “we have to change the mindset.”

At the meeting on Jan. 5, the topic was also discussed, and a few residents expressed their desire for the change. Former Board of Education chair Mark Allaben was present, and said he felt the lottery system currently in place was “unfair to students in the community.”

“It’s kind of obvious to me that all-day kindergarten offers significant advantages,” he said, adding, “we should think really hard about making sure that all children in Hebron have the opportunity for that all-day kindergarten program.”

Hebron resident Lori Butterfield also expressed support, explaining she had moved to town from a community where it was offered for everyone.

“I have another child going into kindergarten in September, and the idea of her not having that opportunity because of the limited number of slots in all-day kindergarten does make me very concerned,” she said.

Lynn Fraga, whose son will also start kindergarten in the fall, shared similar feelings.

“It’s something that my husband and I both have believed in,” she said.

But whether their son will be able to attend all-day kindergarten is still up in the air, as the board decided to table the topic for discussion and resolution at a future meeting.

“I think that we should not make a decision tonight on the kindergarten issue,” said Board of Education Chair Kathy Shea, adding another week or two would provide the opportunity for additional questions and more information from Cruz.

“In the end I think some of what it’s going to boil down for us is – what will this board feel is a reason for a percentage increase to pass off to the town in that last meeting in January.”

Hebron School Board Discusses New Hosting Option

by Geeta Schrayter

At the Board of Education meeting on Jan. 12, Hebron administrators and board members were presented with a proposal for moving the school's email hosting from the RHAM server.

Superintendent Ellie Cruz said discussion on the possibility began after it was discovered the cost of hosting off RHAM's server was "more extensive than what RHAM was really and truly charging us," she said.

As a result, she stated RHAM was asking for a "pretty significant" increase, to a little more than \$20,000, up from the \$9,000 that's budgeted each year.

Cruz went on to say that "triggered conversation" as to what would happen if email was hosted in a different way.

The possibility was initiated by the town, she continued, and work began with Dan Salazar of the Connecticut Center for Advanced Technology Inc. to "explore what it would look like" to host it differently.

Along with cost savings, Cruz mentioned Tropical Storm Irene and the October nor'easter, as well last year's snowstorms as reasons a change might be beneficial.

"The power would go down, the server would go down or sometimes email just crashes for whatever reason [at RHAM], and our email and ability to function would be impacted tremendously, as well as the town," said Cruz.

If hosted by Salazar's company, "we won't be subject to those kinds of interruptions be-

cause of things interfering with RHAM's server," she said.

Salazar was present at the meeting to go over the proposal, which includes a change in the server location, licensing, archiving and internet access. For the first year, the cost would be \$18,955.23, including a one-time hardware and labor fee. Afterwards, the yearly cost would be \$8,624.46.

* * *

It was also announced at the meeting that eight faculty members would be retiring.

This year, Cruz explained that for the first time in her history, "a retirement incentive to help support the budget process which we knew was going to be extremely challenging," was put forward.

Working alongside the teachers union, Cruz stated an "attractive" retirement incentive package was created for individuals who "were considering retirement in the next year or two."

The deadline was Jan. 9, and by that time, Cruz said, "I received – and I'm saying this sadly - eight retirements" from teachers at both Hebron Elementary School (HES) and Gilead Hill School.

"We're deeply, deeply grateful for their work and dedication," said Cruz, adding that she "expressed joy for their future, but with deep sadness that they're moving on."

Board of Education Chairwoman Kathy Shea

also thanked the teachers, stating "on behalf of the board, we'd like to thank all of those teachers for all of those years and dedication to our kids."

* * *

In response to concerns over traffic flow, changes to the drop-off and pick-up processes at HES were also discussed. Assistant Principal Amy Campbell explained changes had been made to the parent drop-off area in the middle of December.

"We extended the times that parents were allowed to drop their children off in the morning," she said, adding staff felt "that this was a nice solution. It seems to not have as many cars backing out onto Route 85."

Based on data gathered by staff at the school, it was shown on average, 108.7 cars drop off students. From 8-8:15 a.m., 29.8 cars drop off, while 85.6 cars drop off students from 8:15-8:30 a.m. The data collected was from a four-week period between Dec. 12 and Jan. 13.

Students can now be dropped off from 8-8:30 a.m. During the 8-8:15 a.m. timeslot, students are housed in the library, and supervised by staff, and although it "gets a little crowded about 8:12-8:15 when the students are released to the classroom," Campbell said the change "seems to be working quite nicely."

In the afternoon, a slight change was also made to allow parents into the building to pick

up their children at 3:05 rather than 3:10.

"That isn't working quite as smoothly yet as we'd hoped," said Campbell, adding some of the parents were "congregating" in areas.

"We joked today we can train our children a little bit faster than we can train our parents on where to stand," she said.

"It is a little helter-skelter," said Board of Education member Tina-Marie Blinn, who added any information that could be given to parents on the new protocol would be helpful.

Information on where to stand had been sent out in the last newsletter, said Campbell, and additional staff would be helping with crowd control.

"Students will walk down the hallway, meet the person picking them up and then continue down the hallway to be checked off by staff," the school newsletter, *Talon's Tales*, explained.

"We're asking parents to remain in the foyer area," and not enter into the hallways, said Campbell.

She explained they wanted to give the new procedure a little more time to see if it helps once everyone becomes used to the change, but if not, "then we'll go back to the drawing board and see what other solutions" there are, she said.

* * *

The next Board of Education meeting is Thursday, Jan. 26, at 7 p.m., in the Gilead Hill School music room.

RHAM Board of Education Approves Raises for Teachers

by Geeta Schrayter

A newly-approved contract with the RHAM Education Association calls for teachers at the regional middle and high schools to receive an overall 5.95 percent pay increase over the next three years.

The RHAM Board of Education unanimously approved the three-year contract at a meeting last month.

The contract, which takes effect on July 1, 2012, and runs through 2015, provides no salary or step increase for the 2012-13 fiscal year, but RHAM Superintendent of Schools Bob Siminski explained "5.95 percent is the cost over three years."

In the second year, teachers will advance a step and receive a general wage increase. Individuals at the top step will receive a 1 percent increase.

Steps, Siminski explained, are a way to determine salary increases based on years of teaching experience.

"The teachers advance based on experience," he said. "Schools in our area, you'll see that they range from 12-15 steps" and the range of years to get to the maximum is 13-16, he said. At RHAM, it's 18-20 years.

"So you can see the difference in the RHAM steps and everybody else," said Siminski.

In the third year of the contract, teachers will advance another step and receive a general wage increase, with those at the maximum step receiving a .5 percent increase.

For example, Siminski explained, if a new teacher were hired with a bachelor's degree, they would start on step one and be paid \$42,383 during the 2012-13 year.

In 2013-14 that teacher will advance to step two and receive \$44,199, up \$1,816 or 4.28 percent. In the final year, the same teacher would advance to step three and

receive a wage increase of \$1,562 or 3.53 percent, to \$45,761.

"I think that it's a fair contract given the current economic conditions and the issues facing the towns," said Siminski, "and I think that it's significant to note that the board is attempting to address the cost of increasing health insurance by making those involved more responsible for their own care."

In the contract, the board will continue to fund less of the high-deductible Health Plan (HDHP) and employee contributions for PPO and POS plan premiums will increase.

In 2012-13 the board will fund 45 percent of the applicable HDHP deductible. In 2013-14 it will decrease to 40 percent, then 30 percent the following year.

In regards to employee contributions, Siminski noted "we are currently at 19.5 percent and by the end of the contract we'll be at 21 percent, and of the towns in the area, that's the highest."

In 2013-14, employee contributions will reach 20.5 percent.

Office co-pays will also increase to \$30 in 2013-14, up from \$20. Siminski said these were also the highest in the area.

Additionally, co-payments for prescription drugs will increase from a managed plan of \$10, \$20 or \$30, depending on the brand, to \$10, \$25 or \$40.

Board of Education Chairman Mike Turner supported Siminski's explanations, saying "all in all, you know, we had some medical concessions too from the union, so when you kind of look at that and where some of the other settlements have been this year, it's a pretty good agreement."

The current contract runs through June 30.

Amston Lake Water Advisory Lifted

by Geeta Schrayter

Customers of the Amston Lake Water System can use their water once more, after the "Do Not Drink" advisory was lifted Wednesday afternoon.

The advisory was issued Jan. 6, after elevated levels of copper were discovered in the system. Per regulations set by the Environmental Protection Agency, copper level concentrations are not to exceed 1.3 parts per million (ppm) in drinking water, but tests conducted by Connecticut Water showed copper levels in excess of 5 ppm.

In a service update from the company's website, it was explained the canceled advisory meant customers could now use the water "without any restrictions," for "drinking, cooking, preparing food and other direct consumption."

After "First Draw" samples from Wednesday morning showed copper "below the action level" of 1.3 ppm, the decision to cancel the advisory was made "in consultation" with the state Department of Public Health (DPH), the update continued.

A "First Draw" sample is taken first thing in the morning, and is "designed to represent the highest levels of copper you'll find in the house" since the water has been sitting in the pipes, exposed to the copper throughout the night, explained Connecticut Water Director of Corporate Communications Dan Meaney.

Copper levels in the samples ranged from 0.02 ppm and 0.46 ppm and had been declining since a pH treatment was added to the water on Jan. 11.

Meaney said last week the situation was "very unusual," because elevated copper levels are normally isolated to a house or two. However, in this scenario, it was more widespread. Meaney explained Thursday that while initially, electrical current was considered a possible cause, pH level "seems to fit the scenario better."

"The source we know is the copper household plumbing," he said, explaining the levels of copper in Connecticut Water's wells and distribution system were below detection levels. "We still don't have a final conclusion on what

caused the copper to come out of the pipe and into the water," he said, but added, "once we started raising the pH, the copper levels decreased dramatically."

Based on that fact, Meaney stated "our thinking is that the pH levels in the wells were changing," and consequently caused the copper to come out of the pipes. When samples were initially taken after the advisory was issued, Meaney said pH levels in the source wells were a little above seven – the midpoint on the pH scale. Samples from three days later showed pH had dropped to a little over six.

"We don't know why the pH from the source wells dropped but that's a pretty dramatic decrease," he said, possibly explaining why it was such a widespread area.

Going forward, Meaney explained the company was implementing a plan that had been shared with DPH to monitor the pH adjustments on a daily basis "to make sure it stays in an optimal range."

Additionally, copper levels from representative homes throughout the system will be tested twice a week for the first month. If levels are consistently below the action level then the monitoring will decrease to once per week "for some period of time."

Meaney added water and copper piping samples had been shipped to a corrosion control firm on Jan. 14 for scientific analysis, the results of which had not yet been received.

"They wanted to look at the pipes and the water to see how they're interacting," he said. "Until we get that, we don't have a definitive answer."

In the service update on the website, the company apologized for the inconvenience the situation caused, but said it wanted customers to be confident in the quality of their water.

"We regret that it took so long to resolve, but wanted to be sure we had consistent sample results so you could be confident in the water quality," the update read.

Individuals with questions can call 1-800-286-5700 or email info@ctwater.com.

Obituaries

Marlborough

Robert Charles Sanville

Robert Charles Sanville, 73, of Marlborough, beloved husband of Claudette (Gregoire) Sanville died Thursday, Jan. 12, at Middlesex Hospital Hospice. Born Feb. 15, 1938, in Littleton, NH, he was the son of the late Armand R. and Lydia (Perkins) Sanville Sr.



Bob had graduated from East Hartford High School and had served his country in the Air National Guard. He had worked as a printer for the *Hartford Times* newspaper for 20 years, and then the *New Britain Herald* newspaper for 24 years before his retirement.

Bob and his wife Claudette had moved from East Hartford to Marlborough in 1979 and were communicants of the Church of the Holy Family in Hebron, where they were members in the choir. They had celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary and at the time of his passing were married for 51 1/2 years.

Bob was a member of the Hartford Elks Club Lodge #19, the American Legion, the Moose Lodge in Marlborough and the APA Pool League. He was a self-taught musician and loved to play the organ and the accordion at family functions. He especially loved his animals, Timmy, Tabby and Maxine.

Besides his loving wife Claudette, he is survived by his many very special nieces, nephews, grandnieces and grandnephews.

He was predeceased by his brother, Bill Sanville, and his two sisters, Lucille Little and Judith Ann Sorenson.

A funeral procession will begin at the Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton, on Saturday, Jan. 21, at 10 a.m., followed by the funeral liturgy at 11 a.m. in the Church of the Holy Family in Hebron. Burial will follow in Marlboro Cemetery in Marlborough. Friends may call at the Spencer Funeral Home today, Jan. 20, from 5-8 p.m.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the Middlesex Hospital Hospice Program, c/o Middlesex Hospital Department of Philanthropy, 55 Crescent St., Middletown, CT 06457.

To leave online condolences, visit spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

East Hampton

Naomi N. Clarke

Naomi N. (Melsky) Clarke, 80, of East Hampton, widow of the late Harvey L. Clarke, died Saturday, Jan. 14, at Aurora Senior Living of Cromwell. Born Oct. 11, 1931 in Claremont, NH, she was the daughter of the late Anthony S. and Patricia (Scooponovich) Melsky.

Naomi had lived in East Hampton for more than 25 years and was active in the East Hampton Senior Center and the VFW Women's Auxiliary.

She is survived by her daughter, Lorrie Mock of East Hampton; three grandchildren, Michael, Christian, Jacqui; six great grandchildren Alex, Abbey, Andrew, Logan, Megan, and Matt.

She was predeceased by her six brothers, two sisters and her grandson Roger.

Friends called at the Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton, on Tuesday, Jan. 17, followed by a funeral service that evening in the funeral home, with the Rev. Thomas Kennedy officiating. Burial will be at the convenience of the family.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the VFW Post 5095 Women's Auxiliary, North Maple Street, East Hampton, CT 06424.

To leave online condolences, visit spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

Colchester

Wayne P. Vincent

Wayne P. Vincent, 70, died Thursday evening, Jan. 12, at the Harrington Court Nursing Home in Colchester. Wayne was formerly a longtime resident in Jewett City. He was born Dec. 22, 1941, in Burlington, VT, son to the late Albert and Olive (Maple) Vincent.

A graveside service was held Tuesday, Jan. 17, at the New Mount Calvary Cemetery in Burlington, VT.

Funeral arrangements are being handled by the Gagne-Piechowski Funeral Home 490 Voluntown Road Jewett City, CT.

Colchester

Nancy Risigo

Nancy "Kim" Risigo, 63, of Colchester, beloved wife of Joseph, passed away Saturday, Jan. 14, at the Middlesex Hospital Hospice, with her loving family by her side after a long, courageous battle with multiple sclerosis. Born Feb. 18, 1948, in Waterbury, she was the daughter of Ann (Kalas) Summa of Old Orchard Beach, ME, and the late James Summa.



She grew up in Naugatuck and during her teens, she volunteered at Waterbury Hospital and was a 1966 graduate of Naugatuck High School. Kim then attended M. Kavula Institute of Hair Design from 1966 to 67 and went on to work as a hairdresser in Waterbury, Colchester and Moodus for a total of 23 years.

Her struggle with M.S. prevented her from continuing her career, so she then pursued her interest in arts and crafts. She began using her talents in cake decorating and flower pressing.

From 1989-99, she built a business of preserving flowers, "Gold Leaf Designs." This entailed pressed or freeze-dried wedding bouquets and a multitude of framed pressed flower creations which were ordered throughout the country.

Nancy had a deep passion for being a devoted wife and mother and loved being a homemaker, especially cooking. Her courageous and positive demeanor in dealing with her affliction was an inspiration to those who knew her. Her physical presence will be deeply missed. Her angelic-like spirit will always be felt by those who loved her.

In addition to her mother and her loving husband of 42 years, she is survived by her son, Marc of East Hampton; and numerous extended family members and friends.

The family would like to thank all those who provided for her care, needs and comfort over her long period of illness.

Friends may call Saturday, Jan. 21, starting at 9:30 a.m. at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester, before an 11 a.m. chapel service. Interment will be private in the New St. Andrew Cemetery, Colchester.

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

For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

Portland

Anthony P. Rotondi

Anthony P. Rotondi, 54, of Moodus, formerly of Portland, husband of Suzanne (Breault) Rotondi, passed away Friday, Jan. 13, at Middlesex Hospital. He was the son of the late John and Rose (Milardo) Rotondi.



Born July 29, 1957, in Middletown, he worked for Jackson Chevrolet in Middletown for many years. He was also a member of the N.R.A.

Besides his wife, he leaves his son, Rick Rotondi, a daughter and son-in-law, Rachael and Matthew Bertels of Ledyard, sisters, Carmelina Little of Westchester and Eleanor Palonis of Meriden and many nieces and nephews.

He was predeceased by a brother, John Rotondi. Memorial services were held Thursday, Jan. 19, at Valley Bible Church, 220 Turkey Hill Rd., Haddam. Burial will be private.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Valley Bible Church, 220 Turkey Hill Rd., P.O. Box 250, Haddam, CT 06438.

Portland Memorial Funeral Home, 231 Main St., Portland, has charge of arrangements. To send an online expression of sympathy, visit portlandmemorialfh.net.

Colchester

Sandra Jean Caiafa

Sandra Jean Caiafa, 51, of Colchester, passed away Monday, Jan. 16, at the Wm. W. Backus Hospital in Norwich, surrounded by her loving family. Born May 1, 1960, in Springfield, VT, she was a daughter of the late Fredrick and Patricia (Anisworth) Longe.

Sandy had worked as a certified nurses' aide in convalescent care for a number of years before her illness. She found a special relationship with the Lord and had become a faithful member of the Christian Life Chapel in Colchester.

She is survived by two children, PFC. Paul M. Caiafa, U.S. Army, Wiesbaden, Germany and his wife Sarah, and Danielle Caiafa of Connecticut; two stepsons, Jason Doyle and his wife, Dawn of Colchester and Matthew Doyle of Newington; her fiancé, Tom Bowman of Colchester; four siblings, John Longe of East Hardwick, VT, Shelly Singh and Robin Buckbee, both of Largo, FL, and Susanne Caiafa of Ormond Beach, FL; 12 grandchildren, Blake, Nathan, Kaden, Dakota, Elizabeth, Heather, Austin, Patrick, Avery, Caleb, Logan and Charlize; her best friend, Kimberly Dorfman and her daughter, Melissa of Simsbury; her former husband, Michael Caiafa of Ormond Beach, FL; and numerous extended family members and friends.

In addition to her parents, she was predeceased by her husband, William Doyle, Jr. and two siblings, Ann Odle and Russell Longe.

A celebration of her life was observed Wednesday, Jan. 18, at the Colchester Federated Church, 60 Main St., Colchester. Revs. Michael Brubaker and Art Langdon officiated. Burial will be private.

In her passing, Sandy was able to give the gift of life through organ donation.

In lieu of flowers, donations in her memory may be made to the Christian Life Chapel, P.O. Box 91, Colchester, CT 06415.

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

Hebron

Francis Henry Williams

Francis Henry Williams, 93, of Hebron, passed away suddenly Monday, Jan. 16, at his home. Born Sept. 30, 1918, in Worcester, MA, he was a son of the late Henry and Mary (Downes) Williams.

His sister Evangeline (Williams) Andrews and brother George B. Williams have predeceased him.

Frank was a proud veteran, having served as a first lieutenant in the U.S. Army during WWII. He transitioned to the National Guard and retired many years later with over 20 years of service. Frank married Margaret Joyce Scanlon on May 10, 1948, in Hartford. The couple moved to Hamden where they settled and raised their family. Margaret predeceased him on Jan. 7, 1998.

He leaves behind his son Mark Williams of Hebron, with whom he made his home, and daughter Leslie Williams, LtCol, USMC Ret. of California; daughter-in-law Jo-Ann Williams, and grandson Ryan Williams, both of Hebron. His granddaughter Kerry Williams is predeceased. He also leaves several extended family members and dear friends.

Frank was devoted to family, friends, hard work and sports. After his retirement from subsequent careers as a private detective and as a personnel incentive awards director for the U.S. Postal Service, he continued to enjoy working part-time for the Yale University Law Library. Painting then became his newfound passion and many of his paintings were sold and grace the homes of family members and friends.

He was a member of the National Association of Retired Federal Employees and former treasurer for the New Haven Federal Postal Employees Credit Union. As a 53-year member of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Catholic Church in Hamden, he frequently volunteered to bring parishioners to medical appointments.

Frank was a sports enthusiast and an avid fan of the New York Mets, Yankees, Giants and the UConn women's basketball team. Most endearingly, he will be remembered by his family and friends as a selfless man; kind, hardworking, magnanimous and light-hearted. A loving son, brother, husband, father, uncle, and grandfather, Frank embraced and shared the joy and journey of life.

Friends may attend calling hours today, Jan. 20, from 4-6 p.m., at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. A Mass of Christian Burial will begin directly at Church of the Holy Family, 185 Church St. Hebron on Saturday at 9 a.m. Burial will follow in Mt. St. Benedict Cemetery in Bloomfield with full military honors.

Donations in his memory may be made to the Salvation Army, 262 Main St. PO Box 707, Norwich, CT 06360.

For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

Colchester

Jane Patricia Dangler

Jane Patricia Dangler (Kelleher), 92, formerly of New Milford and Colchester, died peacefully Thursday, Jan. 5, in Asheville, NC. Born in Schenectady, NY she was predeceased by her husband, John B. Dangler Sr.

Jane served in the U.S. Army (WAC) during World War II. She was stationed at Phoenix Memorial Hospital and Fort Meade Hospital and assisted in the care of wounded soldiers. She had a passion for sewing and was an expert seamstress. She enjoyed collecting dolls from all over the world.

Jane loved family gatherings, and being surrounded by her children and grandchildren. She had a spirit for adventure, and was always open to new experiences. Her famous saying was "I am always ready to go anywhere." While raising her four children she made numerous trips to Candlewood Lake and always said the housework could wait. She loved to travel and attend cultural events. Even towards the end of her life she had this fighting spirit to enjoy life to its fullest.

She is survived by her son, John B. Dangler and wife Pat of Aiken, SC; and daughters, P.J. Anello and husband Frank of Candler, NC, Shirley Viggiano and husband David of Glastonbury, and Dianne Dangler of Colchester; eight grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Memorial services and burial took place in New Jersey.

Memorial donations may be made to CarePartners Adult Day Services, PO Box 25338, Asheville, NC 28813.

Hebron

Marie Cecile Comeau

Marie Cecile (Richard) Comeau, 88, of Hebron, passed away Thursday, Jan. 12. She was the wife of the late Dolphe Comeau.

She was a seamstress at Capital Sewing in Hartford, and an active parishioner of Church of Holy Family in Hebron. She enjoyed spending her days with her many friends at the Russell Mercier Senior Center.

She is survived by her daughter, Mary Anna Santangelo and her husband Romeo, of Amston; son, Ange Comeau and his wife Gail of Newington; a daughter-in-law, Margaret Comeau of Naugatuck. She is survived by five grandsons, Richard, Allen, and Jason Comeau, Philip Crowe, and David Santangelo. She is also survived by five granddaughters, Karen Medura, Carriann Mulcahy, Amy Lynn Thompson, Cary Lynn Parella and Dyan Santangelo. She was also blessed with four great-granddaughters. She will also be missed by several of her nieces and nephews.

She is survived by two brothers, Vincent Richard and his wife Emilia of Canada, Achille Richard and his wife Rita of Naugatuck; two sisters, Marie Louise Comeau of Canada, Anna Sirois and her husband Henry of Canada.

She was predeceased by two sons, Ola and Alonzo Comeau; a daughter-in-law, Zerina Comeau; a sister, Theresa Tremblay; and a brother, Neree Richard; and her best friend, John Larkin.

A Mass of Christian Burial was held Tuesday, Jan. 17, at Church of Holy Family, 185 Church St., Hebron. Everyone is asked to meet directly at church. Burial will follow inside Rose Hill Memorial Park, Rocky Hill. Calling hours were held Monday, Jan. 16, at Rose Hill Funeral Home, 580 Elm St., Rocky Hill.