

RIVEREAST

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Signs urging residents to vote for or against the budget at Tuesday's referendum lined the driveway to Town Hall. Ultimately, none of the five budget items passed.

Colchester Voters Balk at Budget

by Katelyn Kelleher

Town Hall was busy Tuesday as residents came out to vote on the 2012-13 fiscal year budget, which resulted in none of the five items passing.

From 6 a.m. to 8 p.m., residents could vote on the \$51.06 million overall budget, a 1.12 percent increase from the current fiscal year, and the majority of the votes were no.

Both the town operations budget and Board of Education budget had nearly twice as many votes against them as they did for them. The unofficial referendum results listed 1,488 no votes and 742 yes votes for the \$13.149 million town operations budget, which was a 3.87 percent decrease from the current fiscal year.

The \$37.897 million Board of Education budget, a 2.84 percent increase, was also voted down with 1,415 no votes and 812 yes votes.

The three bonding items - \$3.2 for roads repair, \$1.125 million for the acquisition of two fire apparatus and \$615,000 to purchase 75-acre Slembeck Farm - fared no better. Residents voted against the road bond 923-1,286, the fire apparatus bond 870-1,341 and the land purchase 796-1,412.

As a result, the town operations and school budget will return to the Board of Finance. The board will hold two special meetings Monday and Tuesday, May 14 and 15, both at 7 p.m. at

Town Hall. The board will also discuss the budget at its regular meeting on Wednesday, May 16, at the same time and location.

Opinions on the budget varied during the referendum, with residents pulling strongly for both outcomes.

Resident Stacie Luizzi said she voted in favor of each of the five items on the budget and was pulling especially for the school budget. "We want to pass that school budget," she said. "I just think we need to get stuff going in our town, so that's what I did."

Resident Kathleen Pace was adamant that the proposed budgets are too high and the increases fall on the taxpayers. She said she planned to vote against each of the five items.

"They've increased the taxes in this town way too much," she said. "We were hoping that they'd bring some more industry in there to get the load off the taxpayers' backs...it can't be on the people's backs all the time. I can't vote for this, I just can't."

For those on a fixed income, the increase is detrimental, Pace added. "It's costing us too much. We're retired and we only have 'X' amount of money to live on and they're just squeezing us more and more and more," she said.

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For Pollock, a Dream Come True

by Mike Thompson

It's a long way from Hebron to Phoenix, AZ. But from Hebron to New York City is decidedly shorter, so for RHAM High School 2006 graduate A.J. Pollock, last weekend was something of a homecoming, as Pollock's Arizona Diamondbacks came to Queens to take on the New York Mets.

It was the Diamondbacks' first trip to the area since Pollock - the team's top pick in the 2009 baseball draft - was called up to the majors last month. The *RiverEast* caught up with Pollock before last Saturday's game, and chatted with him about what his experience in the big leagues has been like thus far.

"It's been awesome, man," Pollock said. "It's a dream of yours coming up as a kid and you're playing baseball every day, and you always want to be here, so it's pretty cool when you step on the field and realize that you ... kind of accomplished what you wanted to do."

"You reflect on it," he added. "You reflect on all the years of hard work and what you put in and now you're here."

It's no doubt a "pinch me" kind of moment - as is finding yourself surrounded by names you've known primarily through *Sportscenter* highlights.

"You kind of look around and start seeing guys you've followed the last five, 10 years of your life," Pollock said. "The first couple games of doing that ... you're a little jacked up. I saw [longtime Atlanta Braves star] Chipper Jones

my second game, and it was kind of cool."

"But once you've passed that," he continued, "then it's about competing and winning games."

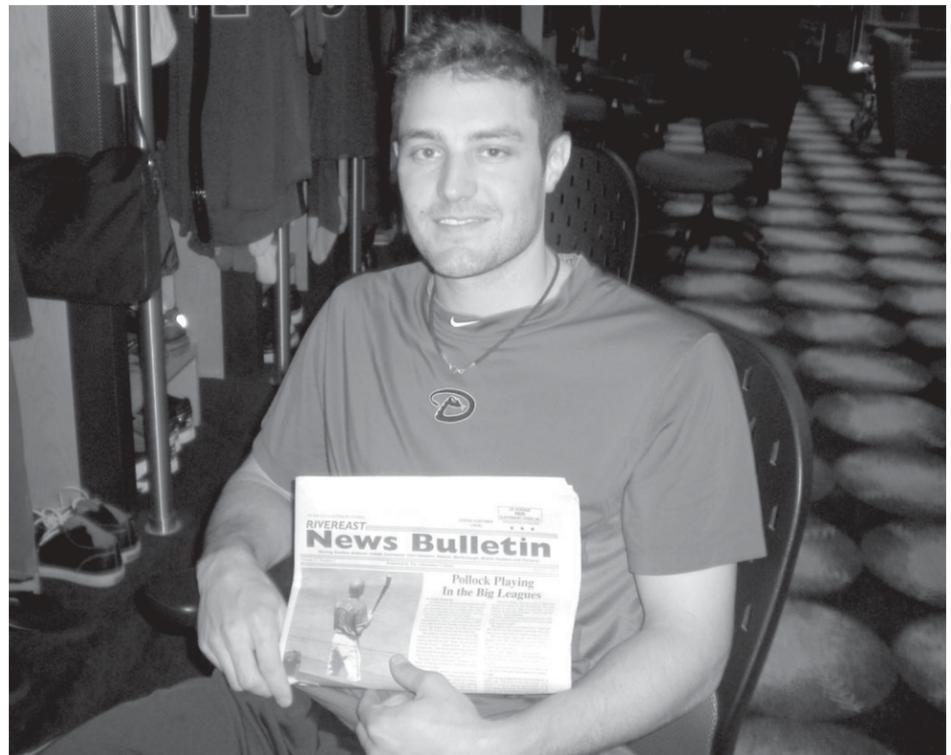
It's also about getting that first big-league hit - which, for Pollock, took a little bit longer than he would've liked. The 24-year-old right-hander went hitless in his first five games, before getting a pinch-hit single against the Phillies' Jose Contreras in his sixth game. Pollock wasn't a huge fan of "having your first hit kind of lurking over you," but he saw the positives to the wait.

"It would've been nice to get it done earlier, but it built a little character; I had to stay with it," he said. "It was good to get that one out of the way. I never really thought about getting hits before; I'm usually just concentrating on having a good at-bat, and competing well."

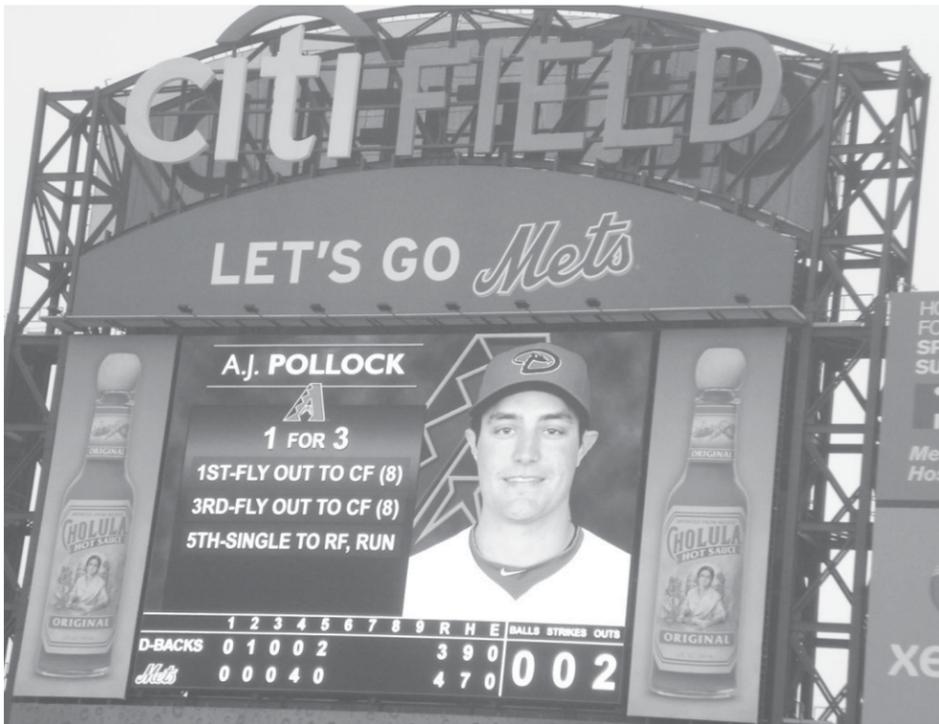
It's a big-league tradition for a player to get the ball back after he gets his very first hit. So what did Pollock do with his? He gave it to his mom, Karen, who, along with her husband Al, was in the stands for Pollock's first six games with the Diamondbacks.

Pollock's initial eight games were played at home, and then the D-Backs hit the road, travelling to Miami, FL, to play the Marlins; Washington, DC, to play the Nationals; and then to New York. And as he's gotten closer to home, more longtime Connecticut friends have come to see him play. He said a couple of friends visited him in Washington, and once he got to

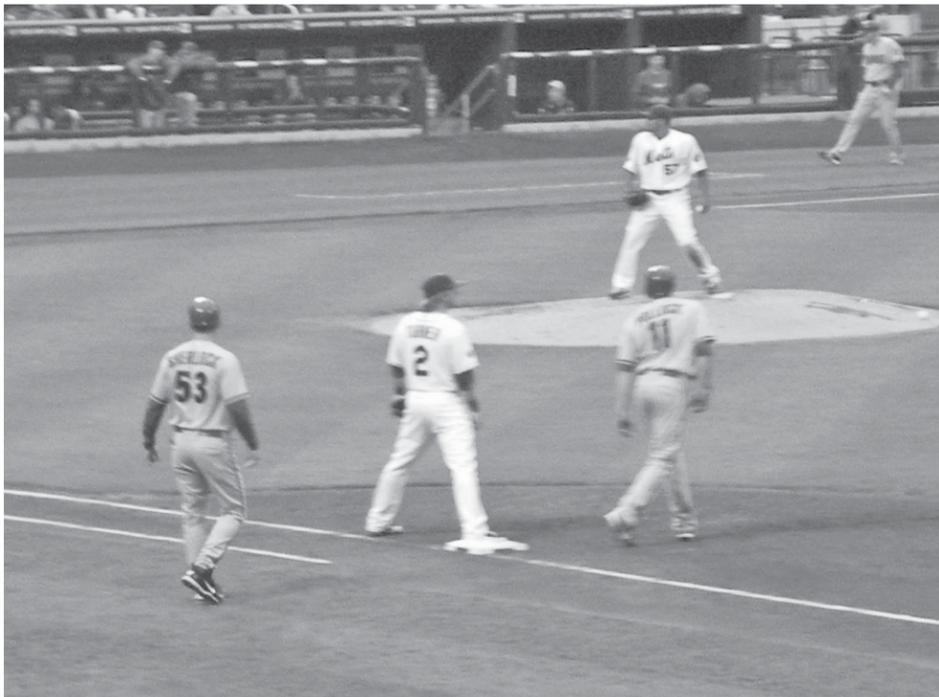
See Pollock Page 2



A.J. Pollock, the Arizona Diamondbacks' top draft pick in 2009, was recently called up to the big leagues. The *RiverEast* caught up with him before a game in New York last Saturday, and presented him with the April 27 issue, which had a cover story about the 2006 RHAM High School graduate's big-league call.



Pollock got his name up on the big screen at Citi Field last Saturday. The screen is shown here during his sixth-inning at bat.



Pollock is shown taking a lead off of first base, following a single against the Mets' Johan Santana. Pollock swiped 36 bases in Double-A last year.

Pollock cont. from Front Page

New York, the floodgates really opened. A friend from Glastonbury saw him play last Friday, and Pollock said Saturday he's seen "all my buddies from back home at RHAM."

Pollock added he's liked all the stadiums he's seen thus far. He grew up a Mets fan, but had never seen them play in their current park, Citi Field, which opened in 2009. He said the new park "is pretty cool."

"It's nice; all the parks are nice," he said. "What's cool about being up here is everything is really well-done." Which, it sounds, isn't always the case with the minor leagues. "You could be in A-ball playing in a high school-level field," he said with a laugh.

But, fancier digs aside, Pollock said there are still a lot of similarities between the minor leagues and the majors.

"The competition's better" in the big leagues, he said, "but once you move past that, it's the same game, the same game as the minor leagues. You've just got to control yourself a little more. There's a little more adrenaline, because of the stadium and stuff. But besides that, you realize that you're still playing the same game you played for 24 years."

And while Pollock faced some solid pitchers during his first weeks in the big leagues, he said that at Triple-A — where he had been hitting .340 at the time of his call-up — he'd been seeing good pitching, as well.

"The pitching isn't overwhelming," he said. "It's more about executing what you want to do. Once I start to do that, I'll be alright."

Pollock hadn't been starting regularly since his call-up, and entered Saturday's action with just three hits on his big-league resume — including that initial single against Philadelphia. But he was in the lineup Saturday, hitting lead-off against veteran lefty Johan Santana. Pollock wound up going 1-for-4 with a single and a run scored.

After the game — which the Diamondbacks lost, 4-3 — Pollock said he "felt pretty good"

against the Cy Young Award-winning Santana.

"It felt like I was more on my pitches than the last couple of times I went out there," he said, sounding very confident his hitting was just around the corner.

"You start feeling it," he said. "You start getting more comfortable out there and taking pitches better and you're seeing them better, and you just, you get that feeling right before you start getting hits."

(This week brought evidence Pollock may be on to something. After sitting for Sunday's game, Pollock played this past Monday in a game at home against St. Louis — and went 2-for-3 with a run scored.)

Pollock also would've liked to have seen his team win, although, with the score so close, he never felt Arizona was out of it. After all, the Diamondbacks had the most come-from-behind wins in Major League Baseball last year.

"Being down by one in the last inning, we don't panic over that stuff," he said. "In another situation like that, I'm sure we'll come through."

However, Pollock was thrilled when he looked over from his perch in centerfield and saw, in the stands behind third base, a group of RHAM High School baseball players, clad in their school uniforms. Coach Paul Steiner had brought them to the game.

"It was awesome to see everyone in there," he said.

In short, Pollock sounds very much like someone who's having the time of his life — and why shouldn't he be? In less than six years, he's gone from roaming center at the RHAM High School baseball field to roaming center in big league parks across the country. It's a big deal — something that, as Pollock indicated before taking the field Saturday, isn't lost on him.

"I kind of try to take a step back and just realize what's going on here," he said, "and just enjoy every part of it."

Colchester Budget cont. from Front Page

Giuseppe Pace, who also planned to vote no on each of the items, said he would see few benefits from his tax increase. "We don't get an extra 15 percent increase on our pay," he said. "I can understand if you get something out of the 15 percent [tax increase]. What do we get out of it?"

He added that residents already lack many utilities. "We don't have garbage pick-up, we don't have city water, we don't have city sewer, we don't have any lights on our street and God forbid if you try to get a police officer to find people that are speeding down the street because the speed limit is only 30 miles per hour and they're doing well over the speed limit," he said. "So what are we getting for the extra money? Absolutely nothing."

Several residents, like Barbara Hock, said they planned to vote for the Board of Education and the town operations budgets but against the three bonding items.

Resident Roberta Avery said she planned to make the decision on the spot when she got inside. "I'm not sure yet, I'm still thinking about it," she said.

Board of Finance Chairman Robert Tarlov

said he wasn't shocked that the items were voted down, but was surprised at the number of no votes, which he attributed to residents not fully understanding the revaluation. "A lot of people I knew were having tax decreases when they thought they were having increases," he said.

However, Tarlov said, there were definitely increases. "Certainly for every person that's had a tax decrease, there were probably two with increases," he said.

Tarlov said the economy has to get better to have reliable, traditional sources of funding, like federal aid. "These are tough times and they're not getting better," he said.

He said the Board of Finance wanted to give residents a chance before cutting services and there was a lot to the budget. "A couple new initiatives we thought were important, especially on the bonding side, and I certainly understand that there was a lot to absorb," he said.

For now, the board will work on the town operations and education budget and put the bonding items aside. Tarlov said there is a possibility that some of the bonding items could be revisited in the fall, but there is no guarantee.

From the Editor's Desk

Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

I came across an interesting list the other day entitled, simply, "Eight Items the Facebook Generation Will Not Buy." What exactly is the "Facebook Generation," you may ask? It's been more commonly referred to over the years as "Generation Y," and is also sometimes called the "millennials." If you were born sometime between 1980 and 1999, it's a generation you're part of.

Just how these generation lists get defined is a little strange to me. I mean, since I was born in 1979, I'm not a member of that generation; instead, I'm a "Generation X" member. But, in terms of shared experiences, aren't I far more likely to have those with someone born in 1980 or 1981 than I am with someone born in, say, 1962? Likewise, someone born in 1998 probably has more in common with someone born in 2001 than with someone born in 1984. I'm not sure what the best boundaries are for defining generations, but I'm not necessarily sure the year of one's birth is it.

But, that's beside the point, I suppose. The point of the list, which I found over at Yahoo Finance, was to state eight items teens and 20somethings aren't using at quite the same rate their predecessors are. Some of the items weren't shockers at all — such as, fewer younger people are using landline phones these days — but a few of the entries surprised me. Among these was email. According to Yahoo, from December 2009 to December 2010, time spent using email by the 12- to 17-year-old age group dropped 59 (!) percent. In comparison, time spent using email by people 55- to 64-year-olds has increased 22 percent, and it has increased 28 percent among those 65 years and older.

What's happening with email among "Generation Y"? The Yahoo story doesn't say, but just by looking around, I'd guess texting is what's siphoning away those younger eyeballs. It's all over the place these days.

Another surprising entry on the list — particularly considering how popular craft beer is these days — is light beer. In 1990, Budweiser sold more than the top three light beers combined. Twenty years later, though, Bud Light sold as much as the top four regular beers combined. "The country has taken a major generational shift in favor of light beers, which now account for four of the five most popular beers sold domestically," Yahoo wrote.

A pleasant surprise, though, was that cigarette smoking appears to be down. While, Yahoo said, smoking rates among young people have typically exceeded that of the general population, recent years have bucked that trend. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the share of people 18 to 24 years of age who were current cigarette smokers decreased by 17.6 percent from 2005 to 2010 — the largest decrease

among any age group. By comparison, the share among 45- to 64-year-olds dropped only 3.6 percent.

Less encouraging: the amount of Americans 65 and older who smoke actually increased 10.5 percent.

* * *

Anybody watch the Orioles-Red Sox game Sunday? Okay, stupid question; this is Connecticut, I'm guessing a lot of you watched it. But did you watch the whole thing, from beginning to end, though? That might be a different story.

The game went a mind-boggling 17 innings. And it started with Baltimore jumping out to a quick 5-0 lead, off another sub-par Clay Buchholz performance. I was watching the Mets game Sunday, so I only saw a bit of the game; the last part of it I saw was when the Red Sox hit a grand slam to tie things up 5-5. I had no idea things would remain tied for quite some time.

I was shocked to read later the thing went 17 innings. And amused when I read the recap. It was, literally, a game for the ages. Among the historical achievements:

Baltimore, having run out of pitchers, turned to designated hitter Chris Davis to pitch the 16th and 17th frames. Not only did he throw shutout baseball — striking out All-Star first baseman Adrián González at one point — but, by getting the win, he became the first American League position player to get a victory as a pitcher since Rocky Colavito in 1968.

That's not all. Davis had a terrible day at the plate, going 0 for 8. But by notching the win, he became the first pitcher to go 0 for 8 at the plate and get a victory since Rube Waddell in 1905. Yes, that's right — 1905!!

The Red Sox also wound up using a position player on the mound at the end of the game, outfielder Darnell McDonald. Thus, this became the first Major League game since 1925 in which both teams used a position player to pitch. Ty Cobb of the Tigers and George Sisler of the Browns — two eventual Hall of Famers — closed out the second game of an end-of-season doubleheader on Oct. 4 that year.

(By the way, that 17th inning must've been pretty painful for McDonald. Not only did he cough up a three-run homer in the top half of the inning, but in the bottom half he grounded into a double play to end the game.)

I love baseball, and Sunday is one of the reasons why. You never can tell when you're going to witness history. Any given game could be a classic, something you'll talk about for years to come. (Especially if you were at the game; can you imagine seeing that game live? Talk about getting your money's worth.)

Yes, it truly is a grand old game.

* * *

See you next week.

Marlborough Resident Attempting Solo Motorcycle Race – At Age 68

by Katelyn Kelleher

A Marlborough resident determined to defy expectations about people his age will attempt to ride his motorcycle solo through a grueling 18-hour race in June.

Donald Lewis, 68, said he likes to wear his age on his sleeve and, with several age-related world records, he hopes to add to his achievements by finishing the Baja 500 vehicle race as a solo effort.

Lewis had stopped motorcycle racing in 1978, but took it back up again in 2006, looking for a challenge.

“I was sitting around thinking of something that would be a big age-related challenge,” he said. “It took me a long time to get good at it.”

The June 2 race will mark Lewis’ 17th effort in the Baja series of vehicle races in the desert of Baja, California, Mexico. It will be his sixth Baja 500 – but his first attempt at the 450-mile course solo.

“Up until this point, it’s been a team effort [with as many as six to a team], and I’ve been the leader of the team,” he said. “But riding solo is just a unique kind of thing.”

Lewis said probably no more than three or four people will attempt the race solo. “There’s a real probability that I will not finish, but I wouldn’t be entering if I didn’t think that there was a chance that I would finish and I think I can do it,” he said.

Lewis is always looking for the next big challenge to take on, he said. In 2006, he and his now ex-wife became the oldest married couple to summit Vinson Massif, the highest mountain of Antarctica.

“For me it’s just a huge significant personal challenge and solo is hugely significant in doing something like this,” he said. “Doing it at my age is beyond what most people comprehend as possible.”

Although he has several age-group victories to his name, Lewis is a formidable competitor to people in other age groups.

“I’m the first person east of the Mississippi that’s ever had any success doing this—I’ve had multiple class championships and multiple race victories,” he said. “The guys I was against had panic in their eyes in the last race because I started off [in 2006] as ‘don’t worry about this guy,’ to all of a sudden, ‘Oh my God, this guy can beat us.’ Panic. Sheer terror in their hearts.”

Lewis said he has the ability to beat teams in his age group while he rides solo, but most likely they have to run into some problems for him to do so.

“You can win, yes, but when you’re competing against a team of six fresh, good riders, it’s

tough,” he said.

Teams will “daisy chain” their way through the course, Lewis said, with one rider racing for several miles, then the next taking over.

Lewis works hard to maintain a level of fitness that allows him to race competitively. He regularly drags a tire up and down his road – two if it’s raining – has numerous exercise machines in his home and spends his time riding wherever he can.

Lewis is at a disadvantage to his competitors living in the western part of the country, though, because the east coast terrain is very different, “which is why you go down early and pre-run for a week and a half,” he said. “You’re out pre-running the whole course possibly multiple times. I’ve ridden every part of it down there already so I know what it’s like, but still pre-running is good.”

The terrain is what turns 450 miles into an 18-20 hour race. “Averaging 25 miles an hour in this cross-country race would be a target achievement for me. Eighteen hours of continuous motorcycle racing is physically demanding beyond comprehension,” he said. “There’s a dry lakebed that my GPS in the pre-run showed me doing 95.5 miles per hour, so you’re really flying down there but you’ve got gas stops and you’ve got difficult stuff.”

While there will be a few miles of tar or pavement here and there during the race, there are obstacles to slow Lewis down. “There’s silt that’s several feet deep, finely powdered dust that you’re going really slow through; up rocks and over hills,” he said. “It’s like racing from here to Miami, and there’s a lot of different kinds of conditions between here and Miami.”

The Baja series includes “trophy trucks” and cars as well as motorcycles. “There are more than a hundred people competing. They start every 30 seconds and start the cars, which can travel up to 140 miles per hour, three to four hours behind the motorcycles to give them a chance to spread out,” Lewis said. “It takes them 10 hours to catch me, but they will catch me. Every single one of them will catch me.”

Lewis said some of them are million-dollar trucks and described being passed by them as getting eaten alive. “It’s just the loudest thing. It’s just like closing your eyes because there’s so much dust you can’t see two inches in front of your face,” he said. “I have been hit by those cars twice in my race series—one time it knocked me over and the other time I was deep in silt and the front tire pushed on my boot twice. It doesn’t sound like a big deal, but with just a little more friction he probably would’ve



Motorcycle racer Donald Lewis will be competing in his first solo effort at the Baja 500, a 450-mile race in Baja California, Mexico on June 2.

rolled over and probably torn my leg off in the process.”

Motorcycle racing is pricy with a small payout. Between his \$6,000 race bike, \$4,000 pre-run bike, a \$1,000 entry fee, a \$1,000 pit fee and the costs of getting to Mexico and staying there, the \$400-600 check he would receive if he wins in his 60-plus age group doesn’t make it a “for profit” professional sport.

While Lewis was previously sponsored by Foley Services in Glastonbury, where he was president until his retirement 18 months ago, he is now looking for sponsors. “Anybody who is a sponsor I would be more than willing to give them the rights to follow me along the way with live GPS tracking,” he said. “I even have a house rented down there [from May 23 to June 3], so if I had a major sponsor I have a bedroom available... they could actually go down for the event and stay in a house.”

Interested sponsors can reach Lewis at 860-978-2532 or DonaldELewis@aol.com.

Although he hopes to offset some of the costs, his main goal is to continue to prove that his age doesn’t limit him.

“I’m 68 years old and I’m out racing motor-



A holder of several age-related world record titles, Lewis, 68, said he is always looking for the next challenge to take on.

cycles,” he said. “I’m pretty happy to carry the flag for the older people in the world.”

East Hampton Budget Soundly Defeated

by Joshua Anusewicz

When a proposed town budget was rejected at its first referendum last May by only four votes, members of the Board of Finance weren’t sure how much needed to be done to get the budget to pass. A handful of votes the other way and it passes, most thought.

On Tuesday, however, the proposed budget for the 2012-13 fiscal year was defeated 1,051-777 at a town-wide referendum, signaling to the board that the budget only has one way to go – down.

“I’m disappointed,” said Board of Finance Chairman Matthew Walton shortly after the results were announced. “It’s back to the drawing board.”

The spending package sent to referendum totaled \$38.69 million, a \$930,439, or 2.46 percent, spending increase from the current fiscal year. Of the \$38.69 million, a total of \$26.94 million was allotted for the education budget, a \$726,338, or 2.77 percent, increase from the current year.

If approved, the mill rate would have been 26.28, an increase of 0.6 mills, or 2.34 percent, from the current fiscal year.

Last year, after the proposed 2011-12 budget failed 585-581 at the first referendum, the finance board cut \$100,000 from the Board of Education spending plan, and the new \$37.76 million town budget passed at a second referendum a month later, by a 1,129-788 vote.

Finance Director and Interim Town Manager Jeff Jylkka shared the same feeling as Walton, adding that he was “upset” the budget didn’t pass.

“We have our work cut out for us,” he said Tuesday night, after the votes came in.

That work, both Walton and Jylkka agreed, would include looking over the entire budget, not just the town operations or education spending. Walton said that, in discussions he’s had with residents recently, voters came out against the budget for reasons that reflect overspending on both sides. He hesitated to guess where any additional cuts would come from, saying “it’s totally up to the [finance] board,” but did say that the budget as a whole was “pretty lean” as presented on Tuesday.

“I’m hoping for some more input from the public,” Walton said, “so we have some direction on where the budget needs to be cut.”

The lack of input from the public was a sore spot for the finance board during its budget deliberations, which began as far back as March. With few residents – outside of elected officials – present to speak for or against the budget, the board approved \$175,000 in cuts to the Board of Education budget in April, as well as shifting a proposed town engineer position from full-year to half-year.

The budget would then see an additional \$125,000 in cuts to the education spending proposal from the Town Council, which officially sent the budget to referendum last week.

Listening to the drumbeat of residents in East Hampton in recent weeks, the Board of Education spending proposal and the town engineer position have been the primary points for those advocating against the budget.

Those against the education budget have cited a steady spending increase in recent years that does not correlate with the shrinking enrollment of the school district, and have targeted administration and teacher salaries, the largest

portion of the budget. This year, however, Superintendent of Schools Dr. Judith Golden and the school board have stated that a decrease in state and federal funding, coupled with an end to negotiated teacher salary concessions, are the main causes for the budget increase.

Another concern from voters this year was the inclusion of a new town engineer position, which was ultimately moved to a half-year position pending a decision from a soon-to-be hired town manager. The position was proposed by former Interim Town Manager John Weichsel and Public Works Director Keith Hayden, who both lobbied that the position would end up saving the town money by reducing the cost of contracted engineering services by keeping engineering in-house. Over the past seven years, the town has paid an average of \$195,411 in engineering fees per year.

Opponents of adding the position have questioned the necessity of adding the position during a time of financial difficulty for residents, while others have recommended that Hayden, who is a certified engineer, could complete any engineering tasks.

“That’s why they decided to pay [Hayden] extra money when they hired him,” one anonymous resident said after voting “no” on Tuesday. “So I don’t see why not.”

Jylkka said, however, that removing the town engineer position would only change the budget by a few thousand dollars, as estimated contracted engineering services would have to be added back in. “It might not even change” the mill rate, he added.

Though most voters declined to speak with the *RiverEast* after voting, the few that did were

opposed to the budget and felt that they shouldn’t request increases at a time when many residents were struggling financially.

“Just too high,” said one anonymous voter briskly.

Another anonymous voter specifically challenged the Chatham Party, which holds the majority on the Town Council and picked up two seats on the school and finance boards last November. “The Chatham Party has a record of foolishly spending money,” the voter said, citing a recent investigation into a property on Spellman Point Road. “If it’s voted down, that will be a prime example.”

One promising factor of Tuesday’s referendum, however, was the voter turnout, which was up almost 700 from last year’s first referendum. Walton said Tuesday that the town made a stronger effort to inform residents on the referendum and the budget figures, which included increased signage, newspaper advertisements and mailed-out pamphlets.

Walton said he was “pleased” with the turnout, regardless of the results, because it gave the finance board a true sense of the town’s attitude toward the budget. “The margin states that the public is not happy,” he said.

The Board of Finance plans to waste no time heading back to the budget, as a special meeting has been scheduled for Tuesday, May 15, at 6:30 p.m. at East Hampton Middle School. Once the finance board reaches an agreement, the budget will then be sent to the Town Council for approval and then be sent on to a second referendum.

Jylkka said that he expects the second referendum to be held in the first week of June.

Grant Paves the Way for More Parking at Marlborough Arts Center

by **Katelyn Kelleher**

Visitors to the Marlborough Arts Center and Museum soon will have more room to park, thanks to exterior improvements underway.

The Hartford Foundation for Public Giving awarded the center \$33,000 to expand its overflow parking lot, improve exterior lighting and add a storage shed. The grant includes funds from the Elliot Family Fund and the Skip Steiner Fund at the Hartford Foundation.

Marlborough Arts Center board member David Bourbeau said the expansion should add about 25 spaces to the lot. In the past, the center has encountered problems with parking during their large events when people “park all over the street and everything else,” he said.

Currently, there is a paved lot at the center, which can accommodate a small number of cars. A level section of dirt behind the pavement can hold a few more, but the two areas would not be adequate for parking cars for a large event.

At times, people have had to park on North Main Street in front of neighbors’ homes, and in some instances people have been shuttled down from the commuter parking lot. Bourbeau said the center got its neighbors’ permission to expand the overflow lot.

Marlborough Arts Center recording secretary Diane Sandler said the grant will be a great help.

“Getting this grant to expand our parking lot is really huge because it’s going to really help us especially when we do a major amount of events, which is during the holiday season,” she said. “Every weekend, because we’re open Saturday and Sunday, we get people, but when we have our receptions, like Saturday we’re going to have a reception...we usually have 30 to 40 people. We have our Friday night café and we usually get 40 to 50 people once a month.”

During Christmas time, Bourbeau said, the center will have elementary schools and bands, sometimes with up to 100 people in the building, so parking is tight.

Bourbeau said the new gravel overflow lot should help to alleviate that problem.

“It’s strictly overflow parking, we’re not going to pave it,” he said, adding it will take 450 square yards of material to do the project. “It’s excavation, fill it, grade it, pack it.”

The grading, to level out the area before the gravel goes down, is the priciest part of the project, at \$19,000. A portion of land beyond the current overflow area needs to be raised.

“It doesn’t look like a lot of room, but it is,” Bourbeau said of the new space.

Tentatively, the project was due to start yesterday after press time, and will take approximately five days to complete. However, Bourbeau said, it may start later than that, due to contractor delays and the weather.

“We originally were going to start Monday and have it finished Friday,” he said. “Now we’re planning on Thursday but it may be next Monday to Friday.”

If the project did start yesterday, it will be put on hold Saturday so as not to interrupt the center’s reception. The original paved parking lot can still be used during the reception; there will be trucks and equipment on the overflow lot.

“We’re going to have a crowd and we’re going to have to just make due,” Bourbeau said.

As soon as the \$33,000 grant was received, Bourbeau said, the tree removal began in the area intended to be the overflow lot; this took place over the last two months.

Marlborough Arts Center treasurer Pattie Bullock said Marlborough Lawn and Tree Service did the work at a lower than expected cost.



The parking lot at the Marlborough Arts Center will soon be expanding to accommodate approximately 25 more vehicles. The gravel overflow lot is funded by a \$33,000 grant from the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving.

“Their original quote was \$8,500, and they gave us a donation of \$2,000, so it was \$6,500,” she said.

Bourbeau said it was unfortunate that so many large trees were taken down for the lot, but a neighboring resident was glad to take some of the wood off their hands. Some was turned into woodchips for landscaping purposes at the center.

To that effect, the project itself is green, as the overflow lot is being constructed with gravel instead of pavement. It will also avoid water runoff.

After the gravel lot is completed, Bourbeau said he will work on getting flood lights and a storage shed at the center with more of the grant money. “That’s in the next month or two,” he said.

Marlborough Budget Heads to Town Meeting Monday

by **Katelyn Kelleher**

Residents will decide the fate of the proposed \$21.58 million budget for the 2012-13 fiscal year Monday, May 14, at the annual town meeting.

The meeting, which will start at 7 p.m. at the Marlborough Elementary School cafeteria, will give residents a chance to vote on the overall \$21.58 million budget, which includes the town operations and local and regional education budgets.

The overall proposed budget is a 1.96 percent increase from the current fiscal year. The spending plan includes \$4.42 million for town operations, a 1.13 percent increase from current year spending, and \$7.33 million for the town’s portion of the RHAM schools budget, a 1.98 percent increase. (The RHAM budget, however, was defeated at a tri-town referendum Tuesday – a related story appears elsewhere in this issue – so that figure may change.)

The \$7.20 million local Board of Educa-

tion budget showed the largest increase, at 3.35 percent, and included staff and program cuts.

Also in the budget, \$115,839 was recommended for capital and non-recurring expenditures to go toward the 2015-16 revaluation reserve, the North Main Street sidewalk project, a new roof on the Blish Park Pavilion, thermal imaging cameras for Marlborough Volunteer Fire Department and a new Ford F-350 and two mowers for the Public Works Department.

Residents will vote separately on a \$45,000 transfer from the undesignated fund balance to establish a “future capital expenditure reserve” within the capital non-recurring fund and to enter into a five-year lease-to-purchase agreement, not to exceed \$185,000, for the acquisition of a roll-off truck for the transfer station.

Check-in for the annual budget vote will begin at 6:30 p.m.

New Roof for Memorial School in East Hampton

by **Joshua Anusewicz**

At an uncharacteristically brief meeting Tuesday, the Town Council unanimously approved a bid on a project to replace the roof of Memorial School this summer.

According to Facilities Manager Frank Grzyb, the town received four bids for the project and awarded the contract to Silkton Roofing of Manchester for a cost of \$2.9 million. Grzyb said that the bid came in under the amount that was budgeted for, leaving just over \$300,000 for contingency.

Grzyb said that the new model roof for the school is “one of the best roofs on the market” and has a 25-year lifespan. He added that

Silkton Roofing has worked on projects in East Hampton before and has “done a great job in the past.”

The project is expected to kick off shortly after students leave school for summer vacation and is scheduled for completion by the time the students return in September.

“It’s an aggressive schedule,” Grzyb said, “but we’re committed to finishing before the students return.”

At a recent meeting, the Board of Education stated that the state is expected to reimburse the town half of the cost of the project.

Portland Budget Vote Set for Monday

by **Joshua Anusewicz**

A relatively quiet budget season may have thrown residents off, but it’s true – the town will hold its annual budget referendum next Monday.

The proposed budget for the 2012-13 fiscal year, approved by the Board of Selectmen, sits at \$30,446,595 — \$11,991,899 going to general government and \$18,454,696 going to the school board. This represents a \$630,794, or 2.12 percent, spending increase from the current fiscal year.

The 2011-12 budget was approved by referendum last year at \$29.82 million, \$11.73 million for general government and \$18.10 million for education.

The budget total was reached after two days of budget deliberation in April, in which the Board of Selectmen pored over each line item in the budget and cut \$65,695 from the original proposal. These cuts included a reduction in electricity costs, due to a lower-than-expected bid, and a 3-4 percent drop in the cost of health

insurance for town employees.

First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield said Wednesday she was “very pleased” by how the deliberations went and that the selectmen were able to come to a unanimous decision on the budget. She agreed that this budget season was particularly quiet, but added that the budget wasn’t “terribly out of the ordinary.”

“We’ve presented a very lean budget in past years,” Bransfield said, “and the Board of Selectmen are staying on that same path.”

She stated that the main goal of the board is to maintain the services that the town currently provides, while looking at places to reduce expenditures. “There aren’t a whole lot of new initiatives,” Bransfield added. “We’re not cutting any staff, including in our education system, which has performed very well.”

Most of the bump in spending can be found in the public safety and public works line items, which would include a brush/leaf bucket for the highway department and a new sport-utility

vehicle for the police department. There will also be projects at the senior center, the high school building and athletic grounds and for the town’s computer system that are included in the increase.

There is also an increase in the education budget, which would be the school board’s first increase since 2010. The \$18.45 million tabbed for education would be a 1.98 percent increase from the current fiscal year; Superintendent of Schools Dr. Sally Doyen has said a considerable amount of the increase is due to a lack of grant money coming into the school system this year, which totaled roughly \$240,000 this year. The school system, however, will be able to maintain the same level of teachers, staff and programs.

Elected officials in town have continually touted the school system and its accomplishments in the past year, which have included a rise in state test scores at all levels and Brown-

stone Intermediate School being named a Blue Ribbon School of Excellence by the U.S. Department of Education. Just recently, Bransfield said, Portland High School was awarded a bronze medal by *U.S. News and World Report* in its listing of the best high schools in the country; only 47 schools in Connecticut received a medal.

One concern Bransfield did mention, however, was the voter turnout. Last year, just over 12 percent of voters came to the polls, with the budget passing by just 39 votes, 374-335. And with the low turnout during this year’s budget deliberations, a dearth of voters is a distinct possibility.

“I’m hopeful that citizens will take time out of their busy schedules to come out and vote,” Bransfield said optimistically.

Voting will take place on Monday, May 14, from 6 a.m.-8 p.m. at the Portland Senior Center, 7 Waverly Ave.

Former East Hampton Resident Killed in Ghana

by Joshua Anusewicz

The U.S. State Department confirmed Wednesday that Timothy Masley, a former resident of East Hampton, was killed in Accra, Ghana, several weeks ago.

A representative from the department stated that “limited information” is available on the matter and that Ghanaian authorities are handling the case.

“We are working with the family [of Masley] currently, and we extend our condolences to them at this time,” the representative said.

Although no information was available from the state department on the circumstances surrounding his death, media sources in Ghana have reported that Masley, 50, and a Ghanaian friend suffered a heart stoppage due to poisoning.

According to a news article at ghananation.com, a confidant of Masley’s stated that Masley was scheduled to testify in a case against a Ghanaian man, Paul Norbi, who has been arrested in connection with the murder.

The confidant told the website that both Masley and his Ghanaian friend were instrumental in the arrest of Norbi, who allegedly sold “a gold concession” from a mining company that Masley owned in Ghana; Norbi was a minor shareholder in the company without the authority to act on behalf of the company, the report states.

The confidant said Norbi sold the company and kept the money from the transaction, which totaled 1 million Ghanaian cedi (roughly \$543,000 USD).

When Masley was apprised of the information, the confidant stated, he informed the police in Accra and Norbi was arrested for the offense. It is surmised, the article states, that Norbi killed Masley and his friend in order to “destroy evidence against him.”

The article states that Masley has traveled between Ghana and the United States over the past seven years and that he acquire the license

for his mining company six years ago.

Phone calls to Masley’s ex-wife and his former landlord in East Hampton were not returned.

Though Masley lived in both East Hampton and Amston for a short time, he is known by most as a member of 1981 University of Connecticut men’s soccer team that won the national championship. Masley was a native of Storrs and a graduate of E.O. Smith High School.

Over the past two decades, however, Masley has run afoul with several business ventures. An October 1996 article in *Businessweek* magazine stated that Masley’s broker license was suspended in 1990 by the National Association of Securities Dealers; in that same article, Masley is named as a participant in an elaborate stock scheme that bilked several million dollars from unknowing investors. Masley and two business partners would purchase small start-up companies, according to the report, and merge them with larger public companies. The three men would then sell millions of shares of the company and pocket all of the money.

According to a Jan. 26, 2005, release from the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission, a district court in New York permanently barred Masley from “serving as an officer or director of a public company,” due to him allegedly providing fraudulently-issued stock to the public, which produced over \$8 million. Masley was also forced to pay back over \$15 million.

According to additional published reports, Masley served time at Allenwood Federal Prison in Pennsylvania for crimes that were unspecified.

Masley was most recently listed as a resident of East Hampton in a May 2009 issue of *The Hartford Business Journal*, which states that he ran a company called Summit Ventures LLC out of his residence on Clearwater Lane.

Sharp East Hampton Resident Helps Cops Nab Copper Thief

by Joshua Anusewicz

With help from an observant citizen, East Hampton Police arrested a man last weekend for allegedly stealing copper plumbing materials from a Young Street residence.

According to Sgt. Michael Green, on Saturday, May 5, police arrested Kendrick Jackson, 43, of 155 Cobalt Rd., Portland, and charged him with third-degree burglary, third-degree criminal mischief, sixth-degree larceny, possession of burglary tools, disorderly conduct, and operating a motor vehicle while under suspension.

Green said the incident began when a local man, Robert Baer Jr., noticed an unknown vehicle parked next to a residence at 1 Young St. at roughly 10:47 a.m. (Baer lives at 108 Middletown Ave., but his family owns the Young Street property, which is currently unoccupied.) Baer stopped and investigated the house, where he confronted Jackson, who was removing copper plumbing from the basement, Green said.

Baer questioned Jackson and called the police when he realized Jackson was burglarizing the house, Green said. According to Green, Jackson approached Baer with a pair of bolt-cutters in a “threatening manner” before leaving the scene in his vehicle. Green said that Baer followed Jackson in his own vehicle, heading westbound on Route 16.

Officers Hardie Burgin and Michael Salafia were then dispatched and attempted to locate Jackson, who was still being pursued by Baer. Green said Baer continued to give updates to Jackson’s location, but soon lost Jackson when he allegedly began driving recklessly – passing cars in no-passing zones – in the area

of Long Hill Rd. and Route 151.

Burgin and Salafia were eventually able to locate Jackson traveling westbound on Route 66, in the area of Axelrod Tire and the Riverdale Motel, Green said. Burgin stopped the vehicle and apprehended Jackson at gunpoint, he added.



Kendrick Jackson

A preliminary search of Jackson’s vehicle produced multiple items from the burglary, including the bolt cutters, copper tubing and other tools. Green said the officers also found additional items that were identified as items stolen during a burglary at 1288 Portland-Cobalt Rd., Portland, on Saturday, April 28, which included other copper plumbing materials.

According to Green, Jackson was held on \$150,000 bond, was arraigned on Monday, and is scheduled to enter his plea at Middletown Superior Court on Friday, June 1, at 10 a.m. Green said Jackson has an “extensive criminal history” that stretches over two decades, including felony burglary convictions, multiple larcenies, robbery, threatening and multiple failures to appear in court. From these crimes, Jackson has served several years in Connecticut prisons, he added.

Green said Jackson will likely face charges in connection with the Portland burglary, but as of yet no arrests have been made.

Three Escape from South Main Street House Fire

by Katelyn Kelleher

Three residents safely escaped a fire contained in a room on the second floor of their home on Monday, May 7.

Colchester-Hayward Fire Department Deputy Chief Don Lee said the fire was reported in a bedroom on the second floor of the 195 South Main St. home at 10:36 p.m.

A mother and two teenage males were already out of the residence when fire crews arrived, Lee said. “The people were home and were able to exit the building, they met us out front,” he said.

Lee said he was on the scene by 10:38 p.m. and the first fire department apparatus arrived on the scene at 10:40 p.m.

Three Colchester fire engines and a ladder truck responded to the fire as well as mutual aid from Salem, a rapid intervention company apparatus, Lee said. “Their job is to rescue firefighters trapped. It’s automatic on any building fire,” he explained.

Thirty-three Colchester-Hayward Fire Department members were on the scene as well as an additional six from Salem, Lee said.

The fire was declared under control in 15 minutes, Lee said, and companies remained on the scene until 12:04 a.m.

The family dog was rescued from the building, Lee said. A cat was rescued and given oxygen and a second cat was rescued from under a couch on the second floor. All told, all people and pets in the home were accounted for.

The fire resulted in heavy heat and smoke damage to the room in which the fire was contained and moderate smoke damage to the second floor of the residence, Lee said.

Lee said the family planned to stay with their neighbors for the rest of the night and were making arrangements to stay with relatives while the damage is cleaned up.

PHS Student Injured in Parking Lot

by Joshua Anusewicz

An incident in the parking lot of Portland High School on Monday resulted in one student being transported to the hospital with injuries, Sgt. Scott Cunningham said.

According to Cunningham, the incident happened at around 2:17 p.m. on May 7, shortly after students are dismissed from school. Portland Police responded to the call and learned that a 2001 Dodge Durango driven by Nicholas Rowe, 18, was traveling north through the student parking lot when a 17-year-old male jumped on the hood of the vehicle, he said.

After driving roughly 150 yards with the male on the hood, Rowe came to an abrupt

stop and the victim slid off the hood, falling backwards and striking his head on the asphalt, Cunningham said.

Members of the Portland Volunteer Fire Department and EMTs arrived on the scene shortly after the incident and transported the victim to Hartford Hospital by ambulance. Cunningham said that, as of 4 p.m. on Monday, the individual was listed in “guarded condition.”

Cunningham said that Rowe was issued a misdemeanor summons of reckless driving and is expected to appear in Middletown Superior Court on Monday, May 21.

Crash on Arrigoni Causes Hour Delay

by Joshua Anusewicz

A three-car accident on the Arrigoni Bridge last week caused minor injuries, but seized up traffic in the area for over an hour, Sgt. Scott Cunningham said this week.

The accident occurred Friday, May 4, just after 2:30 p.m. According to Cunningham, a 1995 Geo Prism driven by Braton Blau, 64, of East Hampton, had to come to a stop on the westbound side of the bridge. When Blau stopped, a 1993 Ford Tempo driven by James Granata, 54, of Middletown, attempted to stop directly behind the Prism, but skidded and veered into the eastbound lane.

Granata’s vehicle then struck a 1997 Chevy Venture driven by Edna Bogue, 62, of Portland, in the left front, Cunningham said. The Tempo then bounced back into the westbound

lane, striking Blau’s vehicle on the left side.

Cunningham said all three vehicles sustained moderate damage, and both Bogue and Granata were transported by ambulance to Middlesex Hospital with moderate injuries. A hospital spokesman said Thursday both had been released.

Emergency responders were on the scene quickly, Cunningham said, as the Portland Police officer stationed on the bridge was immediately able to summon the Portland Volunteer Fire Department and Middlesex paramedics to the scene. Police officers on both sides of the bridge also shut off access to the bridge to allow emergency vehicles a clear path to the scene, resulting in the delay.

Andover ĩ Hebron ĩ Andover ĩ Hebron ĩ Andover ĩ Hebron ĩ Andover ĩ Hebron

Prague to Retire

Multiple media outlets reported Wednesday longtime state Sen. Edith Prague (D-Columbia), whose district includes Andover and Hebron and was recently redrafted to encompass Hebron and Marlborough, has announced she will not seek another term in

office.

Prague, 86, was first elected into the state Senate in 1994.

A full-length story about Prague’s departure, including reaction from local officials, will appear in next week’s *Rivereast*.

Recovery Advancing for Colchester Teen Injured in Accident

by **Katelyn Kelleher**

A young snowboarder is continuing his recovery at home after four months of hospital care for a serious head injury suffered in a December accident.

Jake Shumbo, 13, fell and hit his head while snowboarding Dec. 28. While he was wearing his helmet, the blow to his head caused his brain to swell and have a small bleed. Jake's mother, Dawn, said the quick response of the family he was with quickly got him to Waterbury Hospital for emergency surgery. "The right side of his skull was removed to allow for the brain swelling," she said.

The next day, Jake was taken by Lifestar helicopter to Yale New Haven Hospital where he spent a week in the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit. After six weeks at Yale New Haven, Jake had surgery to replace the piece of skull that was removed.

"During this time, Jake's communication was limited to eye blinks and very light hand squeezes," Dawn said.

Next, Jake spent six weeks at Blythedale Children's Hospital in New York for the next phase of his recovery, and made "slow but steady progress," Dawn said.

With the hospital being a two-and-a-half-hour drive away, Dawn and her husband, Tom, had to stay with him in shifts, switching off every two to three days.

In the beginning of March, Jake was moved to the Hospital for Special Care in New Britain for the last phase of his impatient treatment. "We decided to move Jake closer to home so that more family and friends could visit and help to stimulate his recovery," Dawn said.

Jake made steady progress in New Britain, she said, and on April 24, he was able to move home.

The Shumbo family room has turned into somewhat of a hospital room and contains his therapy equipment.

"He has windows all around him so that he

can see what's going on outside," Dawn said.

Although his parents no longer have to visit him in shifts, things are hardly easier. Both Tom and Dawn are now responsible for providing much of the medical care for Jake. "We have had a crash course in becoming therapists and nurses," Dawn said.

Therapists come to the house to work with Jake, but they aren't there 24 hours a day, Dawn explained.

"We have learned a lot about stretching exercises, using equipment and how to transfer him," she said. "One of us was with Jake 24 hours a day, seven days per week for the four months he was in the hospital, so we have been providing care for him for quite a while. I think the transition to home was made easier because of that."

The transition went well for Jake's older sister, Ashley, a junior at Bacon Academy, who is "glad that we are finally under the same roof again after four months," Dawn said.

Each week, Jake participates in a full therapy regimen at home, which includes physical therapy, occupational therapy and speech therapy. Twice weekly he goes to Crossroads Physical Therapy in Columbia for additional treatments.

"Jake has greatly improved since the accident but still has a long way to go," Dawn said. "He needs to learn to do everything again. Currently he cannot sit, stand or walk without full assistance."

Jake, an eighth-grader at William J. Johnston Middle School, can speak, and though he may be difficult to understand, Dawn said "his sense of humor and personality are still there."

Tom and Dawn will meet with administration at the middle school in the upcoming weeks to determine Jake's academic setbacks. They are unsure yet whether Jake will need to repeat the eighth grade.

Jake's classmates and friends have not forgotten him, though. Dawn said Jake "has amaz-

ing friends" who visited him at the hospital and will be stopping by now that he is at home.

"Some of his friends have been organizing fundraisers at the school, others have reached out to their families for donations," she said. "The school and community as a whole have been amazing."

Shortly after the accident, Dawn said, WJJMS Principal Chris Bennett taped messages from Jake's classmates on a DVD for Jake to watch in the hospital. Additionally, "he has received lots of cards and well-wishes," Dawn said.

Because of medical expenses, such as renting a wheelchair-accessible van for outside appointments and insurance deductibles and co-payments, Dawn and Tom set up a fund in Jake's name at Liberty Bank.

"We have both had to reduce our work schedules to care for Jake, so the donations for his rehabilitation are so very much appreciated," Dawn said.

People have been generous so far. "Each week the fund receives several donations for which we are so grateful," she said.

Before the fund, the community pitched in in other ways. "We literally didn't cook for four months; family, friends and neighbors kept us well-stocked," she said.

Additionally, contractors and retailers have donated their time and materials to make structural changes in their home to allow Jake to move home, Dawn said. "Until you are in a situation like this, you don't realize the goodness that is in so many people's hearts," she said. "It has really helped to ease our burdens during this time."

"So many people have done so much for us that thank you just doesn't seem like enough," she said. "We want them to know that we thank them from the bottom of our hearts, as does Jake."

Upcoming fundraisers to benefit the Shumbo family include a read-in at WJJMS May 18 and



Jake Shumbo, 13, is recovering from a snowboarding accident at home after a four-month hospital stay.

a raffle at the Colchester Youth Lacrosse cavalcade May 19.

East Haddam resident Brad Parker and a few others will also hold a fundraiser chicken barbecue Saturday, June 16, at the Moodus Sportsman's Club at 4 p.m. Parker said he used to coach Tom Shumbo years ago.

Tickets for the barbecue are \$20 per person and can be purchased by calling Parker at 860-873-8330.

Anyone interested in donating to the Shumbo family may do so at any Liberty Bank location or send a check to: Liberty Bank, The Jake Shumbo Fund, 29 William F. Palmer Rd., Moodus, CT 06469-0364.

Colchester School Board Okays New Benefits Consultant

by **Katelyn Kelleher**

The Board of Education approved the selection of a new employee benefits consultant at Tuesday's meeting.

Lockton Companies was chosen after a rigorous selection process for both the town and the school board, Board of Education Chairman Ronald Goldstein said.

Board of Education Vice Chairman Donald Kennedy said Lockton was clearly the first choice for himself, Goldstein, Superintendent of Schools Karen Loiselle-Goodwin and First Selectman Gregg Schuster. "Each time we meet with them we walk away impressed with their expertise," he said.

Loiselle-Goodwin said Lockton came highly recommended from other superintendents.

The selection process started with a request for proposal, which was narrowed down to six companies that were interviewed. Lockton was the best choice with regards to the budget and health of staff, Kennedy said.

The consulting services will cost the town \$58,000 annually.

"We are now paying for service as opposed to a strictly commission-based arrangement," Goldstein said. "We have the ability to hold them accountable to certain standards."

Kennedy said health insurance claims for April were "a lot better" than the last few months. "\$388,000 in claims is a lot better than \$600,000," he said, pointing out that November, January, February and March each had a single high claim. "This was an incredibly dif-

ferent and bad stretch of time and hopefully we'll start to work our way up."

He thanked staff and administration for their creativity in working around the budget freeze due to the high health insurance claims.

* * *

Also Tuesday, the board authorized Loiselle-Goodwin to sign a five-year memorandum of understanding between the Department of Children and Families and the Colchester school district.

Last year, DCF was granted permission to place a social worker within Colchester's schools. Social worker Mike Riske was placed in the school in January and he and program manager David Silva attended the meeting asking to extend the partnership for the next five years.

Colchester Elementary School Principal Jackie Somberg said she "can't imagine DCF without Mike in the building."

"He is just so invaluable to staff, administration and to mental health workers," she said.

Director of Pupil Services Katherine Shaughnessy also attested to Riske's help. "We've been able to problem-solve on such a real level that it's so helpful for me," she said. "Before, it was always picking up the phone and hoping you don't get voicemail."

Bacon Academy Principal Jeff Mathieu added Riske helped him work through a situation involving a homeless student.

Both Goldstein and Board of Education

member Bradley Bernier admitted they were skeptical at first of DCF placing a social worker in the schools, but after having one, they are starting to come around. "You've enlightened me and I think enlightened the board," Goldstein said. "DCF does not need to be feared or shunned."

Bernier said he was absolutely against the idea last year. "I'm slowly being won over," he said. "I think it was based a lot on the old face of DCF. Seeing the new face of DCF and seeing how it's worked in the past year, you're winning me over. Still skeptical, but you're winning me over."

* * *

The board voted to apply for the \$15,000 William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund Literacy Partnership Proposal to improve literacy from age three to grade three. Loiselle-Goodwin said the grant was only available to urban districts last year and would help the town's preschoolers. "We still know we have more work to do [with the children in preschool]," she said. "We can see that kids make amazing progress over time in our school system, but we're still struggling with our early childhood piece and we believe we can do more."

Loiselle-Goodwin added receiving the grant would allow for an opportunity to work with experts in the field "so that we can continue to see improvements in student performance."

The board approved a research proposal for

University of Connecticut graduate student Melissa Collier-Meek to distribute a survey to teachers on intervention implementation in schools. "It can be helpful for professional development in the future or for considering the different resources available," Collier-Meek said. She added that she would share the research results with the school district.

Three field trip requests were approved. The Academy Café trip to the Culinary Institute of America and an eighth grade Newport, RI, mansion tour will be no cost to the Board of Education. The Bacon Academy senior trip to Block Island will cost \$425, however, because the number of staff needed to attend cannot be covered by other staff within the school, Loiselle-Goodwin said. She added despite the budget freeze, the schools are still trying to make important trips happen.

Bacon Academy students Laura Hahn and Joshua Kvasnik were recognized for receiving Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABE) Student Leadership Awards recognizing leadership and academic achievement. Both students are heavily involved in organizations and volunteer work both inside and outside of the school.

The Bacon Academy foil team was also recognized for winning the Eastern Connecticut Conference championship and several students were recognized for their achievements in the Connecticut Scholastic Arts Competition.

Colchester Selectmen Discuss COGs, Town Hall Hours

by **Katelyn Kelleher**

The Board of Selectmen discussed Thursday, May 3, the town's membership possibilities in various councils of governments and the possibility of changing Town Hall hours to stay open late one weeknight.

First Selectman Gregg Schuster said he had an opportunity to attend various Council of Government (COG) meetings to examine which the town should belong to, as the state is starting to push to consolidate the COGs. Currently, Colchester belongs to the Southeastern Connecticut Council of Governments (SCCOG), which has 20 towns.

"I'm not saying we should leave the [SCCOG]," Schuster said. "However, there's going to be a lot of movement over the next few years in COG. The state's moving toward consolidation; it's a restructuring."

He added that he would like to explore different COGs and what each offers. "One of the things I found is that there are very different organizations and they all provide different levels of service and capabilities," he said.

Selectman James Ford cautioned against going to a large COG. "I think we would be lost very quickly," he said. "We need to make sure we're a player in the organization we're a part of. If we don't do that, you're making sure you don't get your fair share of the services."

Schuster said although in small COGs

Colchester would be a big player, "they don't provide a lot of services and, being a smaller COG, they are ripe to be taken and merged with someone else."

The selectmen discussed the possibility of keeping Town Hall's hours late one night during the week and ultimately decided to collect data over the next few months and then revisit the item.

Town Clerk Nancy Bray said she reviewed different area towns and each have a weeknight they stay open late. She felt it would be good for Colchester to do so because of residents' work schedules and Town Hall being closed on Saturdays.

Schuster said although each neighboring Town Hall does have a late weeknight, they shut down either for an afternoon or a whole day during the week, and Colchester is larger than its neighboring towns. "The first question is...do we want to have eight or nine people there late? If the answer's yes, we really don't have to do any more research," he said.

Bray said 5:30-6 p.m. seems to be the cutoff for people coming in.

Selectwoman Rosemary Coyle suggested keeping track of people coming in by 30-minute intervals to see when Town Hall is used to determine how late it should stay open and

Schuster added the investigation could be limited to just Thursday nights.

The selectmen took no action on a land swap with Hebron at their Thursday, May 3 meeting, but in a special meeting held Wednesday morning the selectmen passed the item on to a town meeting Thursday, May 17 to vote on authorizing Schuster to sign the documents for the swap.

In 2011, Hebron approved the swap, which will transfer a nine-acre parcel of land owned by Hebron adjacent to the former Colchester landfill to Colchester and a 9.5-acre parcel on the Air Line Trail owned by Colchester to Hebron.

A memo from Town Planner Adam Turner states each of the parcels of land "would be better utilized by the other" town. Colchester could keep the parcel as a buffer between the closed landfill facility and residences. The section of the Air Line Trail is maintained by Colchester and is already serviced by Hebron's recreation department.

Coyle asked if Colchester would put any restrictions on the Air Line Trail land, as Hebron put conservation restrictions on the land adjacent to the landfill requiring it remain undeveloped. Schuster said there is no restriction.

The selectmen approved New England Soft

Serve's bid for the ice cream vendor at the town's summer concert series at a bid of \$50 per concert. It was the only bid.

The board re-appointed Denise Salmoiraghi as a member of the Housing Authority for a three-year term expiring May 2015 and John Ringo as the Board of Finance representative to the Police Retirement Board.

They also approved six tax refunds.

In a public hearing held immediately before the Board of Selectmen's meeting, Colchester-Hayward Volunteer Fire Company President David Martin spoke in favor of the fire company's lease agreement with the town on the Old Firehouse.

"This is an endeavor that the fire company has been looking forward to following through to completion. We think it's the ideal use of the property," Martin said. "We are committed to raise the money financially and provide the manpower and resources to turn that property into a fire museum and look forward to the boards and the citizens' cooperation in seeing that through."

The selectmen voted to move the item to a town meeting on Thursday, May 17, at 7 p.m. at Town Hall, immediately before the regularly scheduled Board of Selectmen's meeting.

Voters Handily Defeat Hebron Budget

by **Geeta Schrayter**

Signs were lined in front of Hebron Elementary School imploring residents to vote 'yes' on Tuesday, but voters paid them no mind – and sent the town's proposed 2012-13 budget to an overwhelming defeat.

Voters shot down the proposed \$34.28 million spending plan by a 986-536 tally. The proposed spending plan would have been an increase of \$195,698, or .57 percent, over the current year's budget. However, due to last October's Grand List dropping 13 percent, the budget proposal also featured a mill rate of 34.32, an increase of 4.06 mills, or 13.40 percent, over the current rate.

The other three questions on the referendum ballot Tuesday were voted down as well. The proposed \$25.16 million RHAM middle and high school budget was defeated by a 918-604 vote; the 314-vote margin of defeat was enough to overcome 'yes' votes in Andover and Marlborough and lead to the regional school budget's overall defeat. (A related story about the RHAM referendum appears elsewhere in this issue.)

Nine hundred sixty voters cast ballots against the proposed \$923,968 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) budget, while 557 were in favor. A fourth question, asking "shall a supplemental appropriation to the reserve fund for capital and nonrecurring expenditures in the amount of \$500 and to authorize the expenditures from said reserve fund" be approved, fared a little better, but still was rejected, by a 794-

684 vote.

As residents left the polling place at Hebron Elementary School Tuesday evening, opinions on the matter appeared to be split.

"I thought [the budget] was pretty balanced and fair," said Bill Boardman, and Dan Brodeur felt similarly.

"I thought the budget was good," he said. "I have two kids in school so I appreciate the full-day kindergarten."

But Bill Lazlo was against the budget, and felt taxes were already too high.

"We pay too much for taxes – over \$100 a week – and we don't get anything for it," he stated.

Resident Carol Lang wasn't in favor of the numbers either, and felt the town boards needed to revisit them.

"I think we have a lot of people out there that are tired of seeing taxes that keep going up," she said, adding, "I think there's genuine concern because of the current economy."

"You've got to learn to cut back on your expenditures," she continued. "I think there's a lot of people who want a lot of things all the time. I mean, we all have a wish list, but we can't always have it all right away."

Lang added, "I'm not the only one who feels this way," and when the numbers came in Tuesday night, it was apparent that much was true. Of the 24.3 percent of registered voters who turned out to make their feelings known, the majority said 'no' to each question.

"Obviously the message is pretty clear from voters," Board of Selectmen Chairman Jeff Watt said Wednesday. Moving forward, Watt said the board would get together to address the town government portion of the budget, as well as CIP, to see if the board can "come back to the voters with something that they can approve."

Watt said it wasn't likely the changes to the budget would be minor revisions here and there.

"The message is pretty clear that [the budget] was much higher than what voters were looking for," he said. "We have to look at some major cuts" to create a budget the town can approve of.

"Of course, we're disappointed that the referendum failed," Board of Education Chairwoman Kathy Shea said Wednesday. She said the school board would wait for a decision from the Board of Finance regarding changes that need to be made, and then make decisions accordingly.

"I think that pretty much everything is going to be on the table," Shea said, adding that board members would listen to recommendations by Superintendent of Schools Ellie Cruz then weigh in with their thoughts on her recommendations, as well as offer ideas of their own, to help the board come to a conclusion.

Cruz said Wednesday that she was similarly disappointed, as she felt the board had made "a tremendous effort" to control costs and showed fiscal responsibility in terms of presenting a budget that absorbed the major increases.

Cruz said she felt the board had done its "due diligence" in the budget preparation. But, she added, "I always try to have an optimistic outlook that we will continue to work together and work through this problem. A lot of school districts are facing this across the country and state so we're not alone."

Cruz said that at the end of the day, the board would make "every effort" to protect the services needed to help student achievement move forward while making the necessary changes.

With the budget defeated, the Board of Finance was due to meet Thursday after press time, to discuss what changes need to be made to the spending plan.

"We have bottom line authority so we can adjust the total town budget, total CIP budget and total board of education budget," Board of Finance Chairman Mike Hazel said, adding, "we're not here to comment on specific projects or line items."

After the board meets, a direction will be sent to the boards of selectmen and education, telling them how much money, if any, should be cut in their respective budgets.

"They will then take into consideration what we've done," he said, and at that point, it's up to the individual boards to decide where in the budget the decrease will be absorbed.

Residents will then have the opportunity to vote on the revised budget at a second referendum, scheduled for Tuesday, May 22.

Hebron 'No' Votes Lead to RHAM Budget Defeat

by **Geeta Schrayter**

Andover and Marlborough went for it, but that wasn't enough to overcome Hebron's rejection, and as a result the proposed \$25.16 million RHAM schools budget was sent to defeat Tuesday.

The proposed spending plan for the 2012-13 fiscal year failed by a combined vote of 1,031-823. The budget passed 82-56 in Andover and 137-57 in Marlborough.

However, voter turnout was significantly higher in Hebron – which, unlike Andover and Marlborough, was also holding a referendum on its town budget Tuesday – and cast 918 'no' votes for RHAM, compared to 604 'yes' votes. The 314-vote margin of defeat wiped out the victories in the other two towns, and the result was a defeat for the RHAM budget, which has been passed on its first referendum every year since 2007.

"It's always a little disappointing when it doesn't pass," RHAM Board of Education Chairman Mike Turner said Wednesday.

Turner speculated the light voter turnout in Andover and Marlborough may have contributed to the loss, as did the results of revaluation in Hebron and its impact on the town budget, which appeared to have left many in that

town in a 'vote no' mood. (The town budget in Hebron was also soundly defeated Tuesday; a related story appears elsewhere in this issue.) But he said the board would go back and look at different areas to try and trim the budget.

Turner mentioned "decision packages," such as the Freshman Academy program (costing \$30,278) and an additional maintenance worker for the fields (at a cost of \$43,152), as well as some of the funding for textbooks and supplies might be trimmed, and said the addition of funding for lacrosse (costing \$40,550) would be discussed as well.

But on Tuesday, lacrosse was a big reason Andover resident Hilary Waldman had come out to vote in favor of the budget.

"I have a son in middle school and I believe in spending for education," she said. "We specifically came to support adding lacrosse."

Andover resident Dorothy Yeomans was in support of the budget as well. She said she felt the school "absolutely" puts the funds to good use, and said RHAM does "a great job."

"The opportunities for the kids are just unbelievable," she added.

But Ylo Anson of Andover said the increase was too much.

"I could see a budget increase at 1 percent," he said. "But if it's after that my reaction is negative. This is not the time to increase the budgets."

Hebron resident Carol Lang had similar views. While noting the importance of education, she said she worried what the future would look like for the very kids costs were increasing to educate, as well as young adults such as her own children, who had already gone through the system.

"I feel bad for the younger kids. I worry about what my daughter's future [will look like]," she said. "When everything keeps going up, what's going to be left for them?"

"Obviously I'm disappointed," Superintendent of Schools Bob Siminski said Wednesday. "I think that we just need to move forward from this point on."

Siminski said the school board would go back, review the numbers and work with the towns in the region to create a revised budget to send to another referendum.

The budget wasn't the only RHAM initiative rejected Tuesday. Voters also shot down – albeit by a much closer 921-888 tally – the approval of a supplemental appropriation fund in

the amount of \$500 and the authorizing of expenditures from the reserve fund. The fund would have been established for the specific purpose of building an athletic field that hadn't been built during the RHAM renovation in the early 2000s, Turner explained.

Turner attributed the question's failure to a lack of awareness on the fund and "selling" by the board.

"I think that's one thing where we really didn't get out and try to sell that to the towns ahead of time," he said.

Turner said the money couldn't have been used for any other purpose than the field. "The fund was just a way to try to minimize any borrowing when we go to try to build that field," he said, noting state statute doesn't allow more than 1 percent of the budget be contributed to the fund.

"Our intent wasn't to put in unlimited amounts or anything like that," he said, but added that going forward, "we'll probably drop that."

Turner said the RHAM Board of Education would meet after press time Thursday, with a plan to hold another referendum on May 22.

Andover Elementary School Students Going Green

by Geeta Schrayter

At the Andover Board of Education on May 9, members learned about the Andover Elementary School initiative to increase recycling efforts and “Go Green.”

This year, explained kindergarten teacher Jaime Webber, the Read Across America theme was “Go Green.” As a result, students were prompted to think of ways to be greener around school.

“A lot of comments were to do some recycling,” she said.

And so, after speaking with Superintendent of Schools Andrew Maneggia, meetings were set up with Willimantic Waste Paper Company Inc. to find out what steps needed to be taken to increase recycling at the school.

Webber said a survey was used to determine how many people had the small blue recycling bins and how many people would need one. Maneggia said the additional blue bins were purchased, as well as larger bins on wheels, to collect the recyclables from around school.

Going forward, Maneggia said the school may be able to shrink the size of their dumpsters to offset the increase used to pay for the individual bins.

“We’re hoping that everything will come out in the wash,” he said. “I believe it will.”

Along with the increased access to recycling bins, kindergarten students are also going green by taking part in composting. A student brings a bucket to lunch each day, and everyone separates out the items on their tray that can be composted. Then, during recess, the bucket is brought out to the compost pile. The students are also responsible for mixing up and adding water to the pile to help make dirt.

Fellow kindergarten teacher Jennie Morrell explained a “pretty good” green committee was also formed, who worked to put everything in place so the new initiative could get its official start on Earth Day.

While acknowledging they didn’t want to rush into anything, Morrell said “fortunately we

were ready.”

Students then attended an Earth Day assembly where they learned what items to recycle along with the importance of doing so. To illustrate the point, Webber and Morrell showed the board a large illustrated timeline that’d been used depicting how long it takes certain items to decompose.

For example, a banana peel will decompose in three weeks, while a paper bag will take one month, a milk carton requires five years, a plastic bag needs 20 years and a soda can will take 200.

Students from each class also came up to the stage and, with the help of the audience, determined which bin to put particular items in.

“So far we’ve had a really good response,” said Webber. “Everybody’s been on board. It’s funny to hear kids remind each other ‘No, no, no, that goes in the blue bin!’”

“They’re excited about it,” said Morrell.

Also at the meeting, the board approved the technology plan for the next three years.

Technology Committee member Kirstina Frazier was present at the meeting to explain the plan and show the various ways technology is utilized at AES.

The technology committee at the school worked to develop the plan in cooperation with EASTCONN, Frazier explained. The plan’s vision statement states the use of technology “is an integral part of the teaching, learning and working environment” at AES. Technology is considered “a vital component to develop 21st century skills critical to succeed,” the statement reads, and can improve communication, thinking skills and the efficiency and effectiveness of teaching.

At AES, “technology should be considered a tool that strengthens all curricula and supports meaningful, engaging learning,” according to the vision statement.

“You’ll see a commitment to maintaining

technology at Andover Elementary and bringing in new technology,” said Frazier, who then presented the board with a video highlighting current technology use.

It was shown all of the classrooms in grades kindergarten through six have SMART boards, and every class goes to the computer lab at least once a week. iPads and other types of technology are also made available.

Additionally, the technology committee made the decision to purchase netbooks which can be used in the classroom and recently, 10 new laptops were purchased as well.

The technology plan lists five goals and strategies. The first is to engage and empower learning experiences that will prepare students “to be active, creative, knowledgeable and ethical participants in our globally networked society.”

The second is to “leverage the power of technology to measure what matters and use assessment data for continuous improvement,” by collecting and analyzing data from sources like the CMTs, common assessments and School Master, a student information system that contains demographic and achievement data.

The third goal is to support educators individually and as a team through technology, allowing them to have access to “data, content, resources, expertise and learning experiences” that will allow them to be more effective teachers.

The fourth goal is to make sure students and educators have access to “a comprehensive infrastructure for learning” by taking steps like ensuring an appropriate amount of money is budgeted to maintain and support technology each year, having a technology coordinator and a “maximum connectivity speed to the Connecticut Education Network.”

The final goal is to “take advantage of the power of technology” and use it to improve learning and efficiency utilizing time, money and staff.

The board unanimously approved the plan

until 2015.

Additionally, the board made the decision to reduce the current school year to 182 days, ending it with a half day on June 21, instead of a half day on June 22.

“Basically, the school year has been dragged out because of problems we had this fall,” Maneggia said, referring to Tropical Storm Irene and the late October nor’easter, which combined led to the closing of school for seven days.

The rest of the day, as well as the following day, would then be used for staff, because “there’s a ton of things we need to accomplish,” said Maneggia.

The change would give staff “a head start,” he added.

Moreover, he explained, “when we start getting that late in the school year it’s difficult to keep students’ attention and keep them on task.”

Board members concurred with Maneggia and felt the change was “a good idea.”

The motion was approved unanimously.

Also at the May 9 meeting, Maneggia presented the board with the status of various maintenance items. The items had been worked on as a result of last month’s decision to approve a list of maintenance requests dependent on the availability of funds.

New blinds for the library and kindergarten rooms are 50 percent complete (\$2,190), cement work on the sidewalk area by the cafeteria has been finished (\$1,300), wiring for the CO2 detectors is scheduled to be done as soon as school finishes (\$4,825) and painting for the lower corridor, foyer and fourth grade corridor is scheduled to begin June 22 (approx. \$19,000).

The next board of education meeting will be held Wednesday, June 13, at 7 p.m. in the Andover Elementary School library.

RHAM Students Emulate Famous Artist

by Geeta Schrayter

Louis Nevelson was known for her wooden sculptures. She was hailed as the leading sculptor of the 20th century and called “a pioneering grand dame of the art world.”

Her work can be found in museums and collections worldwide. But if a trip to see her art at the Musée d’Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris in France, or even the much-closer Aldrich Museum of Contemporary Art in Ridgefield, isn’t in the itinerary, a piece of art inspired by her work can be found at RHAM.

Created by a group of eighth-grade art students, the piece of assemblage art – that is, a three-dimensional artistic composition made of miscellaneous objects or found materials – came to be after RHAM art teacher Rebecca Keller taught the students about the process.

“Art at RHAM is a discipline based course based on the Connecticut State standards for art as described in the Connecticut Common Core of Learning,” Keller explained last week.

The state requires art history to be included in the course, including both conceptual aspects and exposure “to master work and the artists that create them,” she said.

“One way to do that is to incorporate the work of a specific artist or artists associated with a particular movement in art such as Abstract Expressionism into a lesson.”

And that was the idea behind the Nevelson sculpture.

Keller explained she chose Nevelson because her work is accessible to middle school students moving from concrete thinking “to one where more abstract ideas can be understood.”

Nevelson’s art, Keller said, is made up of “found objects” or “junk.”

“The idea that you can make art using the stuff of everyday life, create order and beauty, even say something others might be able to relate to using golf balls, wire, pipes, screws, toothpicks, buttons and packing material is a revelation for students in their understanding of what artists do and how they think,” she said.

Additionally, the project allowed students to learn about the compositional concerns that are also required as part of the eighth-grade art curriculum, like repeating shapes and creating a visual balance.

To prepare for the project, students discussed

Nevelson’s work and answered questions regarding her sculptures such as what holds them together structurally and visually.

Keller added another Nevelson sculpture, created by a group of students about five years ago, was also examined so students could learn from the project’s strengths and weaknesses before delving into one of their own.

And then it was art time.

Thirty-five students contributed to the sculpture, which is made up of different sized boxes, each containing a composition from materials such as buttons and screws, springs, wires, balls and even old electrical outlets.

Sometimes, Keller explained, an object might be chosen that doesn’t work because of its weight or size, causing the students to re-evaluate their composition and try something else.

“Making art is very much a matter of problem-solving,” she said.

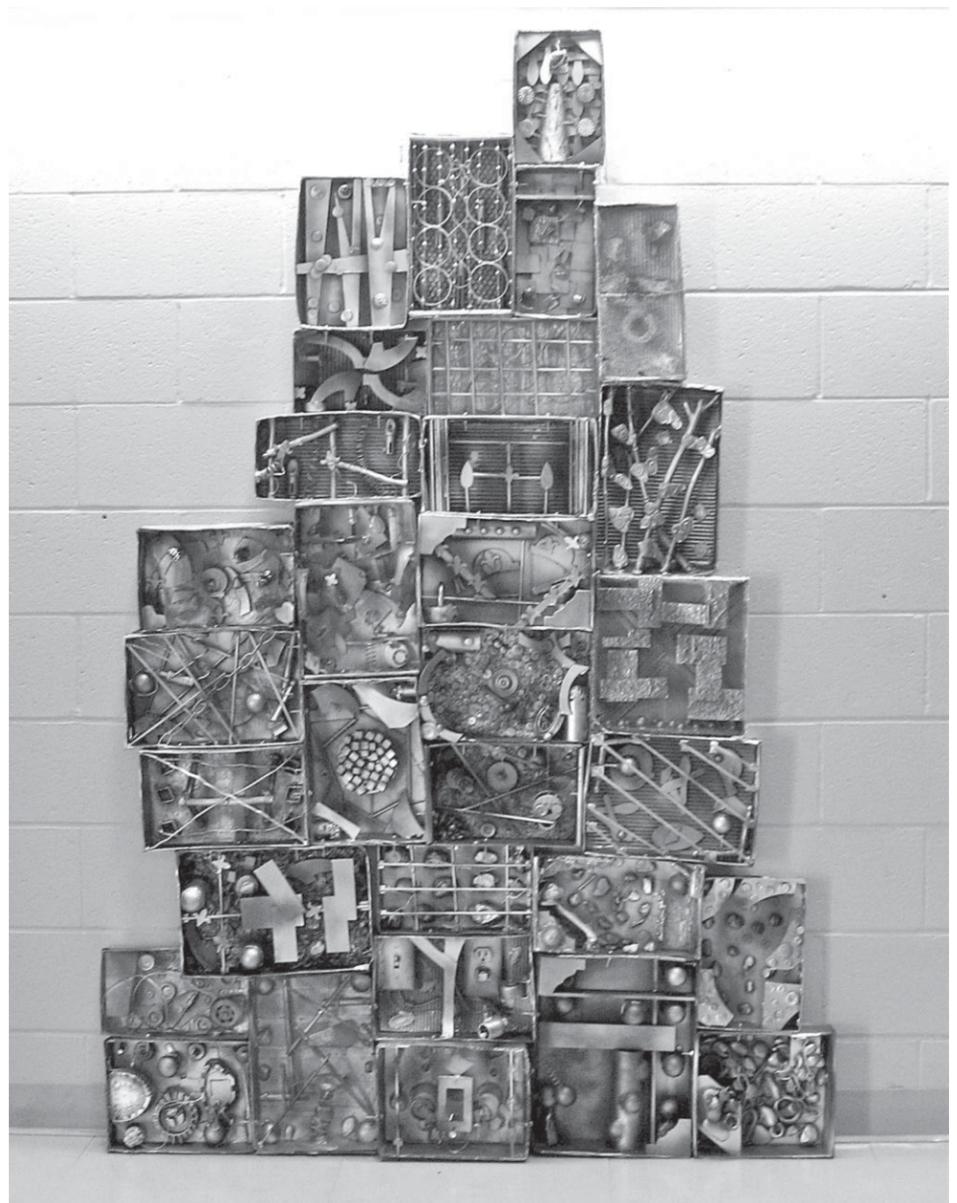
Finishing the boxes took about three weeks of 45-minute meetings each day, said Keller. Then, students helped assemble the boxes “in some kind of order” which took another two days, and resulted in a sculpture that reaches right up toward the ceiling and mimics Nevelson’s famous work.

After its completion, students were shown a film documenting the construction of some of Nevelson’s sculptures. Since they’d now taken part in the process themselves, Keller said the students were appreciative.

She added that, as a teacher, one of the things that pleases her is when her students feel successful and proud of their work – which they seemed to be as a result of their Nevelson-esque creation.

“Students were very motivated and seemed to enjoy the entire process,” she said.

And the creation of a large-scale art project based off the work of a famous artist is nothing new at RHAM. In the past, students put together a collaborative sculpture based off the work of photographer and installation artist Sandy Skoglund. Also, in the same space as the newly planted Nevelson sculpture, a mobile made by past students and modeled after those by the artist Alexander Calder hangs beneath the skylight – lending a kind of museum-like air to some of the RHAM corridors.



As part of the RHAM Middle School art curriculum, students learned about and then created a sculpture modeled after the work of Louise Nevelson. The sculpture is made up of individual boxes containing compositions made from items such as wires, balls, buttons and screws.

Andover Voters Send \$10.59 Million Budget to Referendum

by Geeta Schrayter

At the annual budget meeting on May 3, Andover residents moved to send the proposed 2012-13 budget to referendum.

Board of Finance Chairwoman Georgette Conrad explained the \$10.59 million spending package contained an expenditure decrease of \$34,570.60 below the current year.

Education spending composes the majority of the budget, with \$4.18 million earmarked for the local Board of Education – an \$88,708 increase from the current year – and \$4.04 million for the RHAM Board of Education – a \$37,517 decrease.

The budget also features \$2.345 million for general government, an \$85,698 decrease from the current year.

Major increases in the local Board of Education budget include health insurance increase (medical insurance is listed in the AES budget as increasing \$35,560), heating oil (up \$22,000), fuel for the buses (listed at \$24,500) and gasoline for a van that will be used to transport a newly out-placed student to West Hartford (\$7,458).

The additional outplacement also causes the largest increase, up \$61,000 from the current year to \$121,000.

At the meeting, Conrad continued on to explain the fire department requested a new line item for protective clothing to replace soon-to-expire turnout gear, thereby increasing their budget by 20 percent. The fire department comes in at \$115,064.76, up from \$95,639.76.

The Board of Finance also approved four capital requests: \$12,000 in repairs to the roof on the old town hall, \$8,500 for a new plow, \$130,000 to refurbish fire truck ET 215 to present-day standards, which will stretch its useful life 10-15 years, and \$5,000 to replace 15 pairs of boots for the town's firefighters.

In the future, Conrad added, the cost for new boots will be included in the fire department's budget.

Anticipated revenue is listed as decreasing

\$57,620 to \$2,523,119 which Conrad said was “fairly conservative because state funding has decreased.”

Additionally, revaluation was stated as having the biggest impact. There was a \$20 million decrease in the Grand List which Conrad explained created an automatic two mill increase “just to meet last year's expenses.” The change meant the rate had to be 29.80 “just to break even.”

“The Board of Finance worked diligently,” she said, so there would only be a further increase of one mill.

The proposed mill rate for 2012-13 is 30.80.

Before voting on the budget, though, residents got the chance to vote on whether to increase the salary of elected officials by 2 percent. First Selectman Bob Burbank said it would be the first raise there'd been for elected officials in some time.

“This will be a couple of years that elected officials have not had a raise” he said, adding it was “a modest raise that just about covers their insurance and other increases.”

There was no discussion on the topic, but the vote on the matter was rather close; residents decided 27-24 to allow the raise.

Afterwards, discussion moved to the budget. Selectman Jay Linddy, who was elected moderator, explained this was an opportunity for residents to talk about and modify budget items. A motion could be made to decrease or eliminate but not increase a specific item.

However, only one resident took the opportunity to address a specific aspect.

Debbie Scanlon explained she was against the addition of \$6,100 for an administrative assistant for the first selectman. Scanlon had previously voiced her disapproval during the March 28 public hearing.

“I just don't feel that we're in a situation to bring in a new position to the Town Hall” she said, citing the economy and saying that, although the position was for 10 hours this year,

“I feel next year we'll be looking at an increase to those hours and a year after that, it will probably be a position we're paying benefits for.”

In order to justify the addition of an administrative assistant, the Board of Selectmen prepared a sheet highlighting the duties of the position as well as those of the first selectman.

The administrative assistant would be responsible for tasks such as updating the town website, assisting the first selectman in the preparation of grant applications, reporting residents' concerns to the first selectman, conducting research, keeping track of filing dates for various state and federal forms and aiding in the preparation and forwarding of such forms, serving as the board clerk for meetings during business hours, and conducting normal clerical activities.

It was further explained the position wasn't new, but a reinstatement of one that “has been part of the selectmen's office for over 30 years.”

After the previous administrative assistant retired in 2008, selectwoman Elaine Buchardt said “a volunteer has been doing the work and not getting paid for it. I don't know how long we can continue to expect all this work being done by somebody voluntarily.”

“It's not like we don't need it,” she said. “We've always needed it.”

In response to a comment by Dianne Grenier that other positions in town hall should be examined “to see if [the administrative assistant's duties] can be incorporated into their jobs,” Burbank said the possibility had already been looked at.

“There is not enough time,” he said. “Everybody is very busy in their respective jobs. On occasion, yes, we can get someone to do some typing and help with a report” he continued, but said it simply wasn't enough.

Moreover, Burbank added, “you've got to understand how much this job [of first selectman] has increased.

Two pages of first selectman duties were available at the meeting, which included general duties as the “chief executive and chief administrative officer of the town,” fiscal duties, administrative duties regarding day-to-day operations, duties as purchasing manager and work relating to labor relations, public works, as chief of police, civil defense director/homeland security director and as representative to various regional groups.

Burbank's wife Marie said she had been doing some of the clerical work at home to help her husband for the past five years, and while she didn't mind it, it was time to reinstate the administrative assistant.

When the previous assistant retired, she said, “I was critical of the fact the town didn't go back to replace her. Well, we're here now. We need to have things replaced that she did.”

Selectwoman Julia Haverl also spoke in favor of the position, saying, “It's nice not to have to do this, but we're just playing a game with ourselves here. We're not doing what we should be doing for our taxpayers.”

Haverl said the town had “goofed” by not replacing the previous assistant and additionally, Andover was bigger now and there was an even greater need for the position.

“It has to do with providing services for our taxpayers for what they pay,” she said, adding “I would urge you to vote in favor of putting this in the budget this year.”

And while the votes were close, in the end that's exactly what those present chose to do.

Scanlon's motion to decrease the line item to the previously-allotted \$500, which would have allowed for website maintenance, failed by a 29-24 vote.

After no other residents spoke regarding the budget, a motion was made to approve the budget for 2012-13 and send it to referendum on May 15.

The motion passed 33-20.

Portland Police News

5/3: Rosalba Chiulli, 49, of 208 Main St., Apt. 35, was charged with fourth-degree larceny and making a false statement, Portland Police said.

5/6: Kyle Lapidus, 20, of 8 Arvid Rd., was charged with DUI and possession of alcohol by an underage person, police said.

5/6: Andreas Guliani, 21, of 10 Farm Ln., was charged with DUI, failure to drive in proper lane, operating under suspension, and operating an unregistered motor vehicle, police said.

5/6: Michael Manion, 18, of 57 Riverside Dr., South Windsor, was charged with possession of alcohol by an underage person, police said.

5/7: Kenneth Kowalski, 48, of 3 Sunny View Dr., Sandy Hook, was charged with second-degree failure to appear, police said.

Colchester Police News

5/1: A resident on Bull Hill Road reported her home had been forcefully entered and miscellaneous items were missing. The incident is under investigation, Colchester Police said.

5/1: Ian Reilly, 24, of 26 Woodland Rd., Rockville, was charged with sixth-degree larceny and illegal use of a credit card, State Police said.

5/2: Patrick Broderick, 43, of 364 Monaco Ln., Glastonbury, was charged with DUI and failure to drive in the proper lane, State Police said.

5/5: David Goldfurb, 62, of 94 Richmond Rd., Vernon, was charged with DUI and failure to obey a control signal, State Police said.

5/6: Evan Nicotera, 21, of 8 Turner Rd., Amston, was charged with second-degree criminal mischief, improper use of a marker/license/registration and unsafe movement of a stopped vehicle, State Police said.

Marlborough Police News

5/1: William Rene Beauchene Sr., 31, of 72 Chapman St., Willimantic, rear-ended Judith Mercier, 71, of 298 Chestnut Hill Rd., Colchester, on Route 66. Beauchene had three passengers in his vehicle: Tracy Hesselman, 40, of 22 Emerald Ave. Apt. 21, Willimantic, and James Nichols, 32, and Nadia Elhaddad, 24, both of 72 Chapman St., Willimantic. All five involved were transported by ambulance to Middlesex Hospital Marlborough Clinic with complaints of pain, State Police said. According to the state judicial branch website, Beauchene was charged with traveling too fast

for conditions and illegal operation of a motor vehicle without minimum insurance.

5/3: A purse was reportedly taken from an unlocked vehicle at Blish Park, 43 Park Rd., around 9:45 a.m., State Police said. The vehicle was the only one in the lot. Anyone with information on the larceny is asked to call Officer Randy Ransom at Troop K, 860-537-7500.

5/4: April Gineo, 25, of 38 Balaban Rd. Apt. 102, Colchester, was charged with interfering with an officer and criminal lock out, State Police said.

Hebron Police News

5/4: Daniel Larose, 18, of 264 Old Colchester Rd., Amston, was charged with threatening and breach of peace, State Police said.

5/6: Maureen Shannon, 40, of 85 Old Town Rd., Vernon, was charged with DUI and failure to drive right, State Police said.

Andover Police News

5/2: A 2004 yellow Honda TRX350FM four-wheel ATV was reportedly taken from a backyard on Route 87. State Police said the incident is under investigation.

East Hampton Police News

4/22: Shelby Lynn Galvin, 18, of 6 Starr Pl., was arrested for sixth-degree larceny, East Hampton Police said.

4/25: Maureen M. Kriksciun, 52, of 50 Stage Harbor Rd., was arrested for DUI and failure to drive right, police said.

4/25: Jason P. Lindland, 33, of 43 Daniel St., was involved in a one-car motor vehicle accident in the area of 19 Daniel St., police said. Lindland was arrested for evading responsibility and failure to drive right, police added.

4/25: Thomas F. Boucher, 41, of 20 East High St., was arrested for second-degree failure to appear, police said.

4/28: Ronald J. Deschane, 35, of 23 Main St., was issued a summons for sixth-degree larceny, police said.

4/29: Michael Curtis Sentell, 27, of 7 Starr Pl., was arrested for second-degree breach of peace and interfering with a police officer, police said.

5/6: Michael Comeau, 52, of 89 Roberts Rd., Marlborough, was charged with DUI, State Police said.

Obituaries

Colchester

Henry Romanofsky

Henry Romanofsky, 96, of Old Country Road, died at Hartford Hospital Thursday, May 3. Son of the late Joseph and Helen (Govin) Romanofsky, he was born and raised in Colchester.

He owned and operated Romie's Service Station for many years. Upon his retirement, he enjoyed his vegetable garden, working in the yard and tinkering with his tools and John Deere tractor.

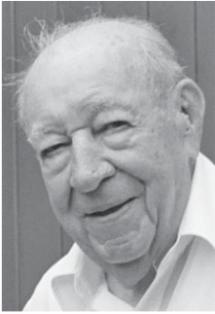
He leaves his wife, Josephine (Bryk) of Colchester; son, Henry and daughter-in-law Barbara of Rochester, NY; daughter, Barbara and son-in-law Charles Baker of Marlborough; daughter, Evelyn of Newport Beach, CA; and sister, Mary Bujnowski of Colchester. He also leaves four grandchildren, Mark and Todd Romanofsky of Rochester, NY, Amy Kane of Sunderland, VT, and Beth Mergendahl of South Windsor; and eight great-grandchildren, Matthew and Ethan Kane, Nicholas Lebel, Noah and Joshua Pearson and Nicholas, Alexander and Benjamin Romanofsky.

He was predeceased by his first wife, Mary (Ziobron) Romanofsky; brothers, Joseph, John and Walter; and sisters, Wanda Hamel and Helen Czaja.

Private graveside services were held Monday, May 7, at St. Bridget Cemetery, Moodus. Care of private arrangements was entrusted to the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home of Colchester.

Memorial donations may be made to the Colchester Hayward Volunteer Fire Department, 18-54 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester, CT 06415.

For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.



Colchester

Ethel Louise Weber

Ethel Louise (Warner) Weber, 93, of Colchester and formerly of Worcester, NY, widow of the late William G. Weber, passed away Sunday, May 6, at the Chestelm HCC in Moodus. Born Aug. 27, 1918, in Worcester, NY, she was a daughter of the late William and Pearl (Moak) Warner.

She and Bill were married Aug. 23, 1938, in Sharon Springs, NY. They were lifelong residents of Worcester until moving to Colchester in 1997. Together, they shared 68 years of marriage before he predeceased her on April 10, 2007.

She was a member of the Worcester United Methodist Church and the Auxiliary of American Legion Post 582 in Worcester. In her spare time, she enjoyed needlework but her true passion was found in her family, to whom she was ever devoted.

She is survived by three children, W. Darryl Weber and his wife, Patricia of Worcester, NY, Marcia Masci of East Haddam and Mark Weber and his wife, Mardi of Topeka, KS; six grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren; a sister, Mildred Saggese of Oneonta, NY; and numerous extended family members.

In addition to her husband, she was predeceased by her son-in-law, Robert Masci.

Services and burial will be observed in Worcester at the convenience of the family.

In lieu of flowers, donations in her memory may be made to the Methodist Church, c/o Betsy Weidman, P.O. Box 302, Worcester, NY 12197.

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



Portland

Mary Beebe

Mary (Eldridge) Beebe, 69, of Laural Grove Road, wife of the late Richard H. Beebe, died Thursday, May 3, at her home, surrounded by her family. Mary was born in Portland, the daughter of the late Herbert L. Eldridge Sr., and Anna C. (Sadlowski) Eldridge.

Prior to her retirement, Mary was employed at Lyman Gun Products. To those who knew her, she was a true friend who was always willing to lend a helping hand.

Mary is survived by her two daughters, Betty Gale and her husband Tim of Middletown, Dorothy Beebe of East Hampton; a brother, Herbert L. Eldridge Jr., of Middletown; a sister, Evangela DeMaranville of Middletown; five grandchildren; and several nieces and nephews.

She was predeceased by a sister, Helen Kozlowski.

A funeral service was held Tuesday, May 8, from Biega Funeral Home, 3 Silver St., Middletown. Burial was in Middlefield Cemetery. Friends called prior to the service at the funeral home.

Those who wish may make memorial contributions to the Weiss Hospice Unit c/o Dept. of Philanthropy, 28 Crescent St., Middletown, CT 06457.

To share memories or express condolences online, visit biegafuneralhome.com.

Colchester

Jeanette L. Stone

Jeanette L. Stone, 70, of Griswold, passed away Friday, May 4, at the Harrington Court Rehabilitation Center in Colchester. She was born Feb. 3, 1942, in Norwich, daughter to the late Theodore Lyons and Helen Lyons Lockwood.

She grew up in Griswold, graduated from Griswold High School and the Huntington Institute in Norwich. Jeanette retired from the State of Connecticut working for over 20 years in the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation.

She is survived by her husband, Carlton W. Stone; three sons, Joseph M. Cholewa Jr., John M. Cholewa, David A. Cholewa; grandchildren Joshua, Justin, Zachary and Janine Cholewa; great-grandchildren Isabella, Gabriella, Logan Cholewa and Marley Greene.

Funeral arrangements are private and are entrusted to The Gagne-Piechowski Funeral Home, 490 Voluntown Rd., Jewett City.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the American Red Cross, 209 Farmington Ave., Farmington, CT 06032.

Marlborough

James Francis Lester

James Francis Lester, 77, beloved husband of Phyllis, of Columbia, passed away Monday, April 30, at the Marlborough Health Care Center, after an extended illness. Born Jan. 16, 1935, in Willimantic, he was a son of the late James and Martha (Tew) Lester.

James was a proud veteran, having served with the National Guard in the 1950s. He retired from Gerber Scientific as a supervisor in 1992 after having worked for 35 years. James was a member and former trustee of the Elks, BPOE 1311 Willimantic. He was a member of the Columbia Congregational Church. James had a passion for golf the Green Bay Packers and NASCAR. In his youth, he raced cars at the Waterford Speed Bowl and other area racing venues. He will be remembered most fondly by his family for his wonderful sense of humor.

He will be sadly missed by all who knew him, especially his wife Phyllis, children James R. Lester and wife Lisa of Columbia, Teresa Thompson and her companion Bob LaFontaine of Lebanon and Charles Lester of Willimantic; stepchildren Robin and husband Marshall Ouimette of Santee, CA, and Thomas Fredette of Woodland Hills, CA; a brother, Willard "Butch" Lester of Port St. Lucie, FL; a sister, Kathleen Fletcher of Atlantic City, NJ; four grandchildren, James and Amanda Lester, Mallory Thompson and Amber LaFontaine; and numerous extended family and friends.

A memorial service will be held Saturday, May 12, at 2 p.m., at Columbia Congregational Church, 325 Route 87, Columbia. Burial will follow in the West Street Cemetery. There are no calling hours.

Donations in his memory may be made to the charity of one's choice.

The Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home of Colchester has been entrusted with arrangements. For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

Portland

Helen M. Kelsey

Helen M. (Zurcher) Kelsey, 96, longtime resident of Portland, passed away peacefully Saturday, May 5, at Portland Care and Rehabilitation. Born June 23, 1915, in East Glastonbury, she was the daughter of the late Frederick O. and Gladys (Ruoff) Zurcher. She graduated from Glastonbury High School in 1932.

Helen was happily married for 48 years to Edwin P. Kelsey, who predeceased her in 1984. Helen and Ed settled on Great Hill Road in Portland in 1938 and raised their family there, where she remained until 2002. As a young woman, Helen worked as a speed writer testing typewriters at Royal Typewriter in Hartford. While her daughters grew up, she worked first in the offices of the Goodrich-Hale tobacco company in Portland, and then worked for many years at Bunce's department store in Middletown.

Known for her wit, she enjoyed sharing laughter, jokes and good times with her family and many friends. She was also a wonderful cook and baker, and every summer she canned or froze much of the produce from husband Ed's large garden.

Helen is survived by her two daughters and their husbands, Judith and George Hale of Fitchburg, MA, and Sue and Jeff Tester of Hingham, MA; grandsons and their wives Jim and Suzanne Hale of Plymouth, MA, and Tim and Tammy Hale of Shirley, MA; granddaughter and her husband Kelsey and Alan Hart of Watkinsville, GA; as well as five cherished great-grandchildren, Ashley Hale, Chris Hale, Alexa Hale, Ethan Hale and Lucy Hart, along with many nieces and nephews.

She also leaves sisters Hazel Zurcher and Lorraine Zurcher of Glastonbury; brother Donald Zurcher and his wife Patricia of Manchester; and sister-in-law Jean Kelsey of Portland.

She was pre-deceased by sisters Ruth Johnson and Irene Kelsey, and brother Kenneth Zurcher.

A funeral service was held Thursday, May 10, at First Congregational Church, 554 Main St., Portland. Burial followed at Center Cemetery, Portland. There were no calling hours.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to First Congregational Church, 554 Main St, Portland, CT 06480.

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



Colchester

Alexander Palakewitz

Alexander Palakewitz, 95, of Salem and Colchester, widower of the late Elizabeth Bochain, passed away Monday afternoon, May 7, at Orchard Grove HCC in Uncasville. Born March 23, 1917, in New York City, he was a son of the late Vasily and Agripina (Koptonak) Polakevich.

Mr. Palakewitz served proudly with the United States Marine Corps during World War II. He was a supervisor in construction for many years before his retirement.

He is survived by three children, Gregory Palakewitz of West Hartford, Toney Palakewitz of Colchester and Claudia Hoskins of Salem; a grandson, H. Sean Hoskins of Colchester; a sister, Helen Newton; and numerous extended family members.

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

Amston

Dora (Mailhot) Hoff

Dora (Mailhot) Hoff of Amston, beloved wife of the late Milton Hoff, died Monday, May 7. She was born in Manchester, NH, and lived most of her life in Hartford, Wethersfield, Glastonbury and Amston.

She is survived by daughter Joanne and husband Christopher Stratton of Marlborough; son Daniel and his wife Rhonda Trahan of Andover; and daughter Lynn Laroche of Amston; and the love her life, her granddaughter Stephanie.

The family wishes to give their thanks to the many nurses and doctors at the Hartford Hospital Trauma Unit and the wonderful care she was given by the nurses and doctors in the ICU during her final days.

Friends and relatives called on the family Wednesday, May 9, at the Farley-Sullivan Funeral Home, 50 Naubuc Ave., Glastonbury, followed by a funeral service. Burial will be private at the convenience of the family.

To extend online expressions of sympathy or for further information, visit farleysullivan.com.