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The empty hallways of Bacon Academy will soon be filled with over 1,000 students returning for the 2012-13 school year, starting with a kick-off celebration and some friendly competitions.

Bacon Academy Ready For New School Year

by Katelyn Kelleher

The hallways of Bacon Academy may be dull and grey now, but they'll soon be filled with about 1,000 students in colorful bandanas, celebrating instead of dreading the first day of another school year.

Wednesday, the first day of school at Bacon, will be marked with more celebration than work. Each year, a group of students put on "First Day the Bacon Way," a pep rally-like "School-wide Amping" followed by activities out on the football field. Students, guided by a faculty facilitator, raise money over the summer and organize the event.

Usually the students are given T-shirts based on their grade, but this year they'll receive bandanas.

"It's a great way to start the school year on a positive note, rather than 'here's your syllabus, here are the rules,'" Interim Principal Mark Ambruso said.

When students head back to the classrooms on day two, they might notice a few changes.

Some administrative changes have already been implemented, including former Bacon Academy principal Jeffry Mathieu making the move over to central office to start as superintendent of schools following the recent resignation of Karen Loiselle-Goodwin. Ambruso, formerly one of Bacon's two assistant princi-

pals, became interim principal.

Monday, Ambruso said there have been some last-minute staff changes at the high school in recent weeks.

"There has been some change in staff we didn't anticipate, but some people have either left or retired," he said. "A lot of shifts."

Ambruso was one of those shifts, leaving one assistant principal office vacant. Two applicants, one internal and one external candidate, went through a final interview for the interim position with Mathieu Tuesday. "If it's internal, it takes another shift," Ambruso said.

Mathieu said Wednesday a hire has been made but the candidate has not yet signed the documents.

In addition to administration changes, Ambruso said he was holding interviews this week to replace a business teacher who resigned two weeks ago, had replaced the football coach and hired a choral instructor to replace a staff member who left after more than a decade at Bacon. There was also an unexpected opening in the physics department and for a half-time nurse.

"Things are moving light-speed here," he said. "A couple weeks ago none of [these staff changes were] in place, none of this was even

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RHAM Schools Prepare for New Year

by Geeta Schrayter

The days of summer are dwindling down. The dipping nighttime temperatures, the Labor Day references, the Halloween candy that already lines the grocery store shelves and the constant commercials touting sales on clothes and shoes, backpacks and pencils can only mean one thing: it's time to head back to school.

For students, the thought of returning to the classroom was probably pushed as far from their thoughts as possible – for as long as possible – replaced instead with trips to the beach, afternoon barbecues, late nights with friends and sleeping in. But over at RHAM Middle School, preparations for the arrival of the kids that, as the school's assistant principal Carri-Ann Bell said, "make the school feel alive again," began shortly after they left in June.

RHAM Middle School Principal Mike Seroussi said Monday the preparations have been going "very well." The building was cleaned weeks ago, he explained, saying the custodians did "a really nice job getting it done inside and out around the grounds."

Students have also been coming in on different days throughout the summer to walk around and meet with their guidance counselors.

Bell said summer is the time to work on all of the paperwork, teacher evaluations, student

schedules and initiatives.

Seroussi added there wasn't anything new going on for the 2012-13 school year, but returning for the second year is the *One Book, One School* program as part of their school climate plan to address bullying. The entire school – both students and teachers – will read the same book, then take part in a variety of activities such as a themed dance or visit from the author relating to the read. This year, the selection is *Schooled* by Gordon Korman, the story of a young boy who is tossed into public middle school after being home-schooled by his grandmother in an isolated community.

"A lot of the biggest things [from the book] carry into working on school climate, the bullying issue and trying to resolve it and be proactive and positive," said Seroussi.

"The book shows how kids do or do not accept him," added Bell.

At the high school, Principal Scott Leslie said Monday work on the safe school climate plan – and a committee to go along with it – was continuing, as well.

Leslie explained the committee will work to "more effectively open communication" around bullying. He said there were already different plans in place to address the issue such as the

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Preparations for the start of school have been taking place at RHAM throughout the summer. In history teacher Kristen DeBona's class at the high school, everything is ready for the arrival of her students on August 27.

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planned, so certainly we're moving ahead. I think the first obstacle that's come up is hiring."

Despite the changes, Ambruso said the transition into the school year will go smoothly. "Students probably will not notice a difference, staff should not notice a difference," he said. "Day one should start with no hiccups."

Being appointed interim principal has helped smooth out the start of school. Last month, the Board of Education announced Loiselle-Goodwin would retire from her position as superintendent at the end of December, at which point Mathieu would take over the position. The board hoped to have a new principal in place at Bacon Academy to replace Mathieu within the first few weeks of school; however, earlier this month Loiselle-Goodwin accepted a principal position in New York and asked to be released from her duties in Colchester earlier than expected.

As a result, the board decided to postpone the principal search until next spring and appoint Ambruso as interim principal, as he had applied for the principal position when it was posted and expressed strong interest in the interim position, Board of Education Chairman Ron Goldstein said.

"If we were interviewing right now [for the principal position] I wouldn't know what role I was doing," Ambruso said. "Am I responsible for hiring? Am I responsible for scheduling? Am I responsible for discipline? Now it's in place as far as what my responsibilities are."

Due to budgetary constraints, not much else has changed at the high school. The only new program implemented this year is a ninth-grade

electronic portfolio. Ambruso explained a New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) evaluating committee, which puts schools through a comprehensive evaluation process for accreditation at least once every 10 years, made the recommendation to create a portfolio piece, either electronic or paper, "so that students can demonstrate, not just get a grade, but actually demonstrate their proficiency and mastery."

"What's happening now is colleges are doing Google searches, they're seeing what's out there and they're seeing what a student has achieved," he said. "A letter grade is great, test scores are great, but they don't always show everything."

In addition, parents will be able to sign into the program and see what their children are learning and how they are faring.

The program will begin with the incoming freshman class and be implemented for each class after, and is grant-funded for the first year. A free program was tested on a small group of students and teachers. "Every time you're using a free program, it's not always successful, so we're hoping for more success this year going in," Ambruso said, adding the program is still a pilot.

He said the portfolio "hopefully will follow [students] so that when they leave Bacon Academy they will have evidence of what work they've mastered."

There are few significant program and staff changes at Colchester Elementary School, as Principal Jacqueline Somberg said, "we already have the best," but for the first time, students can walk from the school to their after-school



Parking spaces at Bacon Academy are open for the taking for another few days, but the lot will fill up as soon as school is back in session Wednesday, Aug. 29.

programs. Because the town put crosswalks and sidewalks from the school to the programs, the children who go to CASTLE and Apple Tree Learning Center can now be walked there from the school. Somberg said elementary school staff members have been properly trained to bring the children down and across the street safely.

Somberg said the school sent out a letter this week asking parents to grant permission to al-

low their children to be walked. Previously, students were bussed just the short trip down the street to the programs. Somberg said the buses will only be used in cases of emergency, such as weather.

District-wide, 40 teachers will be piloting a new evaluation program, in line with a program implemented in several districts by the state, Mathieu said. Otherwise, classes will carry on as usual.

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Power of Words, which teaches how words can either bring up or tear down another person, and various support groups. But in the past, there wasn't an anonymous way for students to report instances of bullying.

"So I think it'll help us," he said. "In terms of how we respond to [bullying] I don't think that's going to change so much – it's more on getting information."

Other changes at the high school revolve around state mandates.

"I think it's a really, really interesting time," Leslie said, because along with the "typical" things that go on to prepare for the year such as the aforementioned cleaning of the building, scheduling, updating the student handbook, curriculum-writing and "reflecting on policies and procedures," the school needs to work to be in line with the mandates.

"I feel like those are the things that we're really gearing up for," he said, referring to them as "uncharted territory."

He explained the biggest piece the school is preparing for is the new teacher evaluations. In the new evaluations, there's a greater focus on student achievement and feedback from students and parents. Leslie said the new evaluations wouldn't be piloted until the 2013-14 year but the school was still preparing for its start.

"The biggest change – and this is a good thing – is there's going to be a greater responsibility on our shoulders to make sure students achieve and do well," he said.

Leslie explained a school can't say a student isn't engaged or that it's the student's fault they're not doing well.

"We need to make sure support systems are in place to help the student out," he said.

One of those systems is a freshman sup-

port team. New this year, the support team made up of four freshman teachers will take incoming freshmen who may have struggled in terms of completing their homework or staying focused and work with them. Leslie said the teachers will have the same duty periods and meet on a daily basis "to provide interventions for those students."

A new data team of teachers and counselors will also take a look at and assess testing data to see where students are in terms of their achievement, "and what kind of interventions should be used to support them."

Attempts will also be made to address the parking situation at the school. Leslie explained there aren't enough parking spaces for all the student drivers. He said more kids are driving to school, and since, due to state driving laws, they can't carpool, there are simply more cars.

"It's as much a management issue as anything," he said.

Toward the beginning of the year, Leslie said the school will be looking to get some new signs out for better direction in terms of traffic flow. He added the town has been "incredibly generous" in allowing the school to use Veterans Memorial Park for some parking.

"I think we have to continue to work with the town for the best solution," he said.

As far as challenges, Leslie said the main thing will be ensuring the school has "a firm foundation for addressing the state mandates" as they come down the line.

"We want to do as much as we can to prepare ourselves and students for those changes," he said.

But challenges and changes aside, at both schools the faculty and administrators are just ready for the kids to return.



Words of encouragement adorn the windows at the entrance to RHAM Middle School, ready to welcome students on a positive note as the year begins Aug. 27.

On Monday, history teacher Kristen DeBona could be found prepping her classroom: it was neat and orderly, with the smell of cleaners wafting out into the hall.

"I kind of attacked it with Windex," she laughed, adding, "I'm looking forward to all of my freshman classes – I love their energy and their excitement."

DeBona, who is also one of the senior class advisors, said she's looking forward to planning the senior events.

Leslie added he always looks forward "to getting my students back."

"I always find it a kick to be able to work with the current senior class which often comes with unique challenges," he smiled, adding he liked "bringing up the freshman" as well.

"We're looking forward to having the kids in the building," said Seroussi. "We get bored when it's summer and then we get to sit here and read a lot," he laughed.

But with the start of school only three days away, they won't have to be bored much longer. The first day of school is slated for Monday, Aug. 27.

Marlborough Elementary Ready for New Year

by **Katelyn Kelleher**

Marlborough Elementary School will enter the new school year with funding to further develop its STEAM Room.

No, the elementary school hasn't installed a sauna. The STEAM Room, a designated space to practice the school's Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) initiative, is designed to instill modern-day community and workplace skills in students. According to the Marlborough Education Foundation, the acronym was changed to STEAM to include arts. The initiative was put in place beginning with the 2011-12 school year.

One of the highlights of the new year has been receiving a grant to make enhancements to the STEAM Room, Principal Scott Nierendorf said.

The approximately \$25,000 grant from Lowe's will be used over the next two years to purchase instructional supplies, storage and safety equipment, Nierendorf said.

Another grant from the State Education Resource Center (SERC) will be used for professional development over the next three years. Nierendorf said the nearly \$10,000 grant will focus on positive behavior support and literacy.

Staff will receive six days of professional development at the elementary school and spend an additional six days getting on-site coaching at SERC in Middletown. Nierendorf said approximately \$3,000 of the grant money will be used to cover substitute teachers during this time.

Due to a new state mandate, Student Success Plan (SSP) software will be implemented for all sixth-grade students. The program is required for all students in grades six through 12.

Nierendorf said the program teaches career readiness and lifelong learning skills.

"They're going to be making a plan for the next phase in their education," he said, meaning the students will set goals and go through steps to prepare for middle school. Further down the line, students will continue to use the program to plan for the next step.

Teachers at the elementary school are continuing to focus this year on upholding the Com-

mon Core State Standards Initiative, a national effort to align curriculums at schools in all states. Currently, 45 states have formally adopted the Common Core standards. Nierendorf said the standards will hopefully be in place in all states by 2015.

According to the Common Core website, the standards "were developed in collaboration with teachers, school administrators and experts to provide a clear and consistent framework to prepare...children for college and the workforce."

The Common Core standards mandate certain reading, writing, language, media and technology and mathematics content and skills to be taught in the classroom.

Nierendorf said teachers at Marlborough Elementary School will continue to work collaboratively with Andover and Hebron teachers to implement the Common Core standards.

The adopted 2012-13 fiscal year budget resulted in a few changes in the school this year, most notably the elimination of the Spanish program at the elementary school level. The Board of Education made the decision in the spring to reduce the inevitable budget increase by eliminating the program, much to the objection of several parents, community members and some Board of Education members. Some of the concern was over Marlborough students heading into RHAM Middle School behind other students, as Andover and Hebron elementary schools both have Spanish programs.

However, members of the Board of Education expressed intent during the budget season to restore an even stronger Spanish program in the budget when financially possible.

A new face will greet students heading into class Monday. In late June, Dr. Maureen Ryan was appointed assistant principal and director of special education, following the resignation of Dina DeJulius, who accepted a principal position at Captain Nathan Hale Middle School in Coventry earlier this year.

Ryan, who came to Marlborough from Staffordville Elementary School in Stafford, started July 2. While she said having a month



An old-fashioned letter sign welcomes Marlborough students back, but inside the school, the latest technologies await.

to settle in was helpful, there was a lot to accomplish.

"I haven't even gotten it all done yet," she said, adding that, due to her position, she is essentially doing the work of two jobs.

Ryan said the office staff has been extremely helpful during her transition into Marlborough Elementary School, and was looking forward to the return of all the school's staff, and, of

course, the students.

"I've already met about half the teachers and I'm looking forward to meeting the rest very soon," she said.

Aside from Ryan, there were few staff changes from last year, with the exception of a part-time special education resource teacher. Kasha Morris was brought in to replace Diana Hansen, who left for another district.

Another Bright, Successful Marlborough Day

by **Katelyn Kelleher**

In an annual effort to give back to the community, the Marlborough Business Association opened up the gates of the usually residents-only Blish Park Sunday for Marlborough Day.

Free food, games, prizes, and plenty of live entertainment brought people out to Blish Park on a bright, sunny Sunday. Regular beach-goers mixed with out-of-towners and local politicians to partake in the festivities.

Marlborough Day is a decades-long tradition highlighting the services offered in town. Although the annual summer celebration took a short hiatus during the mid-2000s, the Marlborough Business Association brought it back five years ago. Sunday, residents from Marlborough and elsewhere turned out to experience all the town has to offer.

Dante, Seraphina and Gratiana Marino, along with their mother, Nancy, have been going to Marlborough Day since it restarted five years ago and seemed to be enjoying the day. The three kids showed off some fresh ink – airbrush tattoos – that they got at one of the booths. Dante liked the games best. Along with yard games and plenty of Frisbee and catch going on, East Hampton gardening center Paul's and Sandy's Too sponsored the Monster Mobile Arcade, a trailer full of arcade games.

Gratiana liked looking at all the booths, which were offering face painting, crafts, food, and some small items for sale. The highlight for the family, Seraphina said, was the entertainment, particularly local band Dino and the No Names. The kids' brother, Dino Marino, fronts the band.

The three were excited to see the band perform twice, opening and closing the stage at Marlborough Day. The five RHAM students, Jake Fenton, Dan Busa, Tom D'Auria, Ryan DiPasquale and Marino, missed out on their chance to perform at last year's Marlborough Day. Rain forced the 2011 festival to end early, right before Dino and the No Names got to perform. To make up for it, and because the band

was generous enough to lend their sound system for the entire day, they took the stage twice.

The Jacqueline Roach School of Dance had another successful dance demonstration this year. Director and choreographer Shannon Yager said the dance school has held a booth and a demonstration at Marlborough Day for the past five years. This year, about 20 kids, ages three and older, participated in a Zumba and hip-hop dance demonstration. Yager said the dance school always provides a sample of what they teach in their classes when they come to Marlborough Day.

The audience also welcomed back a favorite entertainer, magician Jonathan Jacques, sponsored by Liberty Bank. Jacques took volunteers on stage as he performed at his fifth Marlborough Day.

Even the Marlborough Volunteer Fire Department got in on the fun, shooting a stream of water from a truck into the middle of Lake Terramuggus.

While the food, games and dancing wound up all the kids, adults were able to wind down with a free chair massage from the Oneida Holistic Health Center booth. Plenty stopped by to enjoy a free massage, massage therapist Sue Barrett said, even a child supervised by her grandmother. Oneida offered several body products and bracelets for sale at their booth.

One of the newest businesses in town, intuitive coach and energy healer Maria Olympia, said building a clientele base started slowly but has been growing, and Marlborough Day was helping them spread the word about their First Friday Free Healing nights. Olympia explained the first Friday of each month from 7 to 8:30 p.m. Oneida's practitioners offer free 10-15-minute healing sessions.

Joining the town officials at the Democratic and Republican town committee booths were Republican U.S. Senate candidate Linda McMahon, Republican state Rep. Pam Sawyer, Democratic state Senate candidate Cathy Osten and her Republican opponent, state Rep. Chris



Airbrush tattoos were a hit at Marlborough Day last weekend. From left, Gratiana, Seraphina and Dante Marino show off their ink.

Coutu – the latter of which had a campaign car for supporters to sign.

As afternoon hit, more people took shade under the pavilion and enjoyed the music of local bands The Sweetest Key and the Modern Riffs.

Marlborough Business Association administrative assistant Jessica Olander, who was stationed at the welcome center at the entrance to the park, said the day was another success, add-

ing the turnout was reflective of the beautiful weather.

At 5 p.m., the grand prize of the day was given out, a flat-screen television sponsored by Marlborough Health Care Center. Shortly after, the gates closed and Blish Park returned to a place where there's no free massage or fried dough or magic show – until Marlborough Day 2013.

Class Soon Back in Session for Belletown

by Joshua Anusewicz

Labor Day weekend will mark the literal and figurative end of summer for the youth of East Hampton, as students will be returning to school on Tuesday, Sept. 4.

Last year, the beginning of the school year was marked by fresh faces – not just of new students, but of new teachers and administrators as well. Fourteen new teachers were introduced last year across the four schools, as well as the first year as high school principal for John Fidler and middle school principal Nancy Briere, who replaced Fidler.

This year, the administration will remain mostly intact, except for one prominent name: Superintendent of Schools Dr. Judith Golden.

Golden announced her retirement back in March, leaving big shoes to fill at the top of the district. Golden will stay on board until her contract expires on Dec. 31 as the Board of Education searches for a new superintendent, a process Golden said is going well even though she has remained hands-off.

“It’s [the board’s] job and they’re doing it well,” Golden said Monday. She added that the board has already hired a consultant to help in the search and a public forum was held Thursday after press time to get community input.

In the meantime, Golden and the rest of the town’s school staff have been hard at work preparing for the beginning of the school year. Golden said the schools are “moving forward” with the district’s common core curriculum, looking closely at instruction and tracking student progress. This student progress aspect began last year with the development of a “professional learning community,” which allows the entire district to track a student’s progress as they go through the school system.

East Hampton students have seen continued success in standardized testing, but Golden said the district plans to raise the standards for its students even higher. Golden said this will be done through tracking student progress and “improving work habits” for students who appear to be struggling.

“It’s not acceptable for anyone to fail,” Golden said.

Despite the recent education reform coming down from the state, East Hampton will not be taking part in the state’s “pilot program” for teacher evaluation. Golden said the district plans to monitor faculty as it has in the past, while waiting for results of the pilot program from other towns. Starting in the following school year, Golden said the district will “plan accordingly” based on the state mandates.

On the first day of school, students – and parents – will also notice significant changes to two of the community’s schools. The most noticeable change will be at Memorial School, where the finishing touches are being placed on a new roof for the school. The roof color has been changed from blue to dark green, and the much-needed repairs are expected to be completed by the first day of school.

Another change will be the addition of a student drop-off area at Center School. Over the summer, the area was created on Bevin Boulevard to reduce the number of students being deposited in the parking lot of East Hampton Congregational Church. Golden said parents will not be able to park in the drop-off area.

There is also a construction project looming on the horizon: the high school renovation project. The new high school building committee has been meeting for several months, Golden said, and is currently in the process of hiring an architect for the project. The committee is expected to finalize a plan within the next year, in hopes of applying for state funding that would greatly reduce the cost of the project to the town. The high school facility is currently going through a 10-year accreditation process by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC), which expressed the need for various structural changes at the school, particularly in the dated science labs.

One of the issues during budget deliberations earlier this year was the lack of technological advancements at the schools. While Golden agreed that the district wouldn’t be seeing as much new technology as they would have liked, some schools will see new programs, as well as the continued integration of technology introduced last year.

Nancy Briere, principal at East Hampton Middle School, was excited to announce that most of the classrooms at the school were now equipped with “interactive whiteboards” – SMART boards and similar models – that would be integrated into the curriculum. The same interactive whiteboards will continue to be used at Center School as well. At the high school, students will continue to utilize “thin clients” that were introduced last year, which allow several students to use individual computers while working together on one mainframe.

Briere added that the middle school will continue to utilize its Positive Behavioral Intervention Support (PBIS) program, which directs students to make positive decisions in hopes of improving the school climate by reducing bullying. The program, which helps satisfy the state’s anti-bullying initiatives, has been a success so far, Briere said.

“We don’t have a lot of bullying here, and I think that’s because of our PBIS program,” she added.

The middle school will also continue to track student academic progress through the EdLine program, which allows parents to monitor their child’s grades and access teacher websites to follow assignments.

But with all of the new programs, construction projects, and state mandates aside, the school year, like every year, will come down to students learning and teachers teaching. The quiet hallways will soon be filled with activity, a welcome sight for Briere, who probably spoke for most faculty and staff when she shared her



Parents of Center School student who plan to drive their children to school can now use this newly-constructed drop-off area, located on Bevin Blvd. The area was built to curb the use of the parking lot of the neighboring East Hampton Congregational Church as a drop-off point, which has caused substantial traffic in the past.



The finishing touches are being put on a new roof at Memorial School, a project that has lasted the entire summer and is expected to be finished by the first day of school. The familiar blue color of the roof will now look considerably different with its dark green shade.

excitement for the start of the school year.

“We’re really looking forward to the kids coming in,” she said. “We have a great group of kids here.”

As for Golden, it’s a different type of excitement than she’s used to experiencing this time of year.

“It’s exciting because it’s my last year,” she said, “but it’s going to be a little nostalgic. I’m always excited for the first day of school, though.”

Even though they might not admit it, quite a few students will be, too.

Middlefield Voters Approve Hayes’ Purchase of Ski Area

by Joshua Anusewicz

After it drew support from the town’s Board of Selectmen, Middlefield residents approved an agreement last Thursday, Aug. 16, to sell the Powder Ridge ski area to Sean Hayes, the owner of Brownstone Exploration and Discovery Park in Portland.

The sale of the 226-acre property was passed at a town referendum by a 1,132-466 vote.

The land, which was purchased by the town of Middlefield in 2008 when Powder Ridge closed, was purchased for \$700,000 by Hayes, who plans to develop the land into a winter park for skiing, snowboarding and snow-tubing that would complement his current summer park at Brownstone. Hayes has pledged to put in roughly \$2 million worth of work into the property, with plans to open for business by December 2013.

Hayes said Monday he was relieved to have the support of the Middlefield residents.

“I’m very pleased to see the residents got

behind our project and gave it a resounding ‘yes,’” Hayes said.

The former ski area, Hayes said, has been on his radar for two years as a potential site for another park. While other areas around the state had looked promising, Hayes said the property’s proximity to Brownstone provided a unique marketing opportunity.

“With [Powder Ridge] being so close, we believe we could market the two parks as one year-round facility,” Hayes said. “We’ve proven that an extreme board park can work in this area, and we believe we can do the same thing in Middlefield.”

Another aspect that appealed to Hayes was the chance to accommodate all walks of outdoor enthusiasts. Hayes said that while Powder Ridge was always considered a ski area well-suited for beginners, the mountain featured one of the most difficult terrain parks in New England, as well as the only half-pipe in Con-

necticut. Hayes added that he plans to include other challenging obstacles at the park, including racing courses and jumps of varying difficulty.

“You will still be able to come and learn how to ski and snowboard, and others can enjoy the more extreme side of the sport,” he said.

Now that the sale is all but final, Hayes doesn’t plan to waste any time developing the park. He said Monday that in the next few weeks, he plans to close the sale and begin securing and enclosing the property before winter comes. (Over the past few years, the property has been susceptible to theft of property, particularly copper.) Hayes said he hopes to begin renovating some of the structures on site, as they are in poor shape.

“They are in bad shape,” Hayes said of the buildings. “They absolutely will not survive another winter, so our objective is to restore

those structures.” According to the contract he signed for the purchase, Hayes is expected to invest at least \$2 million into the property.

Hayes hopes to build off the success of Brownstone, which has been a success story in Portland since it opened in 2007; on most summer days, the park can be seen filled to capacity. Brownstone has also been an asset to the town, providing jobs, drawing out-of-towners to Portland businesses and broadening the tax base.

With the Portland park stable, Hayes said he felt the company was ready to expand.

“I think the timing was right for Brownstone, because the company has matured,” he said.

So next summer, when the wakeboards and zip lines are put away at Brownstone, don’t fret; just break out your winter jackets and snowboard and head across the bridge to Middlefield, to the area’s newest ski park.

Andover Elementary Spiffed Up for the School Year

by Geeta Schrayter

The corridors on the bottom level of Andover Elementary School are freshly painted and the newly waxed floors shine and reflect the sunlight that pours in through the windows. The bulletin boards are laden with words of welcome and the names of students and teachers and the classrooms are clean and orderly, with desks all aligned and books neatly stacked.

But those gleaming hallways and organized classrooms are empty: the “life” of the building is missing. And according to Principal Dave Griffin, it will remain that way until Monday.

“Having the children come back – that’s what puts the life into our building,” he said.

But while the faculty and staff at the school anxiously await the arrival of the students, they’ve kept busy preparing for another year.

“Our teachers, honest to goodness, it’s just amazing – from the time they get the call that their rooms are ready they’re back in here,” said Griffin. “They’ve been in here since July so the building’s really not been empty.”

Third grade teacher Jen Pugh could be found in her room on Tuesday. She said everything was just about set for the students and she was excited about “starting life fresh.”

“It’s wonderful: a new set of students coming in that are just excited – it’s great. I can’t wait. It’s here before you know it,” she said.

And while the teachers prepared their classrooms, other staff and administrators worked on other routine summer work like redoing the schedules, ensuring the staff handbook is up-to-date, filing records, compiling the records for last year’s sixth-graders moving over to the middle school and “a lot of curriculum work.”

“It’s a busy time of the year,” said Griffin. “You come in here and you’re busy right until the last minute.”

As far as the building goes, Griffin said along with the usual cleaning routine – the building was “95 percent spic-and-span” on Tuesday – the lower corridors and the stairwell were painted, a few holes were fixed and some old

heating pipes were removed.

“It looks very neat and clean and very welcoming to students and staff,” he said.

Academic-wise, Griffin explained they were preparing for the shift over to the Common Core State Standards.

“Kindergarten and first grade will be fully immersed in Common Core curriculum” this year, he said, while second through sixth grade students will have a transition piece developed by the state.

“So in addition to the Connecticut state standards we’re currently operating under, teachers will also have those additional pieces of the Common Core” to implement.

Griffin continued on to say the different state mandates coming down would prove challenging for the district. For instance, he explained under the Student Success Plan, the school has to track student progress beginning in sixth grade. Each sixth grade student will have to sit with an advisor to take inventory of their progress.

“They’ll have to come up with a [career] goal,” he said, adding “that’s kind of a challenge in a way because we’re talking about a sixth-grader deciding on a goal for down the line – and again I think what they want are children to start thinking about options in life.”

Griffin added he had also received a piece of legislature explaining the school will now need to survey the community to identify the number of immigrants.

“In our reporting we used to have to report nationalities, now it’s immigrant status... I’m not quite sure how all that is fitting in. I imagine it has something to do with the new immigration laws and policies,” he said.

Also, under the new safe school climate legislation, students, parents and teachers will have to be surveyed “on a number of items related to school,” such as how they feel about the school and academics and if they feel the school is a safe place to be. Two grades will take part in the survey, which must occur every two years.



At Andover Elementary School, the classrooms are primed and ready for the return of students and of the new year, which begins August 27.

“So we’re going to have to choose the grades, survey, tally, then report to the state,” Griffin said.

Griffin also noted new teacher evaluations would be implemented in the coming years and teachers will now be evaluated in part based on the growth of their students.

“So those are some of the challenges that are coming forward that should be interesting,” he said.

There will be some new equipment at the school this year as well. In the preschool class, Griffin said a SMART Table had been purchased, “which is really cool.”

The children sit at the table and work through different tasks, such as manipulating shapes or

coordinating colors, with a partner.

“So now for preschool all the way up to sixth grade we have SMART Board technology,” Griffin said.

He added the bus company would also be installing new monitoring devices that record voice as well as video in all of their buses.

“This way it takes the grayness out of who did what because it has sound and it also has visual,” he said, adding the monitors were a sign of the times and just one more safety precaution.

But, of course, the hope is the big yellow buses will be incident-free this year, which begins when they drop Andover’s kids off for their first day of school on August 27.



Emergency management coordinator Richard Klotzbier welcomed a group of 15 residents this week that will serve as the town’s first Community Emergency Response Team (CERT). The group will be activated to assist residents during numerous situations, including natural disasters and large fires.

East Hampton’s First CERT Team Sworn In

by Joshua Anusewicz

On Tuesday night, 15 volunteers were officially sworn in as East Hampton’s first Community Emergency Response Team (CERT).

The team completed 20 hours of training over eight weeks, and is now certified to assist during emergencies in town. According to Richard Klotzbier, the town’s emergency management coordinator, the team will be available to help in numerous situations, including shelter management, crowd control, and evacuations.

The need for a CERT became apparent over the past year, with a tropical storm, a freak nor’easter and the devastating Bevin Bell fire all taking place in the past 12 months. Klotzbier said that in all of those instances, the CERT could have been called in to assist.

Klotzbier called the team of volunteers “ambitious” and prepared to serve in times of need.

“We’ve got a good team here,” he said of the CERT. “It’s a great start.” Klotzbier added that the group plans to go through additional training almost every month, which will include shelter building by the Red Cross, search and

rescue, and first aid.

The 15 members of the CERT are: William Avery, Rachel Farkas, Victoria Farkas, Eric Germain, William Hiers, Judy Klotzbier, Anne Klotzbier, Michael Lavoie, Karen Olson, Maureen Perrotti, Angela Sarahina, David Shulman, Theresa Shulman, Richard Spiess and Kevin Visintainer. Each of the members’ certifications will be good for one year.

Town Manager Michael Maniscalco and Town Council Chairwoman Sue Weintraub were also on hand Tuesday to welcome the new volunteers and thank them for their efforts.

“The number one priority in our community is safety,” said Weintraub.

“We appreciate your volunteer efforts,” Maniscalco added. “A lot of things wouldn’t go on in town without the participation of people like yourselves.”

The CERT will be run under the direction of Klotzbier, who will contact the state to activate the team in times of need. To find out more about CERT, visit citizencorps.gov/cert.

Fire Destroys Portland Home

by Joshua Anusewicz

An early morning fire Wednesday ripped through a Portland home and burned for over an hour as firefighters battled the “difficult” blaze.

Portland Fire Marshal Ray Sajdak said the fire occurred just before 2 a.m. Wednesday on 25 Breezy Corner Rd. Firefighters that reached the scene first observed a “fully-involved” fire in the upstairs apartment of an attached garage, Sajdak said.

With mutual aid from several towns, including Glastonbury, East Hampton, East Haddam and Middletown, firefighters worked for roughly an hour and a half on the blaze, which Sajdak said spread into the second floor and roof of the home.

Sajdak said the fire was a difficult one to battle, as the remote area is not equipped with fire hydrants. Firefighters were forced to

shuttle water from tanker trucks to the house, which sits about 800 feet from the road and over 100 feet uphill. Sajdak added that the garage also held various chemicals from the homeowner’s son’s landscaping business, which forced firefighters to “back off a little bit” several times.

The one occupant of the home was able to escape the house with no injuries, Sajdak said. The homeowner, according to Sajdak, was first alerted to the fire by the smell of smoke coming through the air conditioning, then seeing an orange glow in the window.

The fire caused “extensive” damage to the home, Sajdak said, and is no longer habitable. Sajdak said that the cause of the fire has yet to be determined and, due to the extensive damage, may not be determined at all. He added that the fire was not deemed “suspicious.”

Portland Boat Works Owner Passes Away

by Joshua Anusewicz

It's safe to say that Portland has valued its shipbuilders over the years, and with the town resting on the shores of the Connecticut River, the longest river in New England, there have been plenty of them.

The most prominent name in the town's shipbuilding history is Gildersleeve, the family that helped drive the town's shipping industry in the 1800s and is now memorialized throughout the community. Gildersleeve ships helped transport the town's brownstone across the world, putting Portland on the map as a place of industry.

Though the quarries no longer produce brownstone, and old shipping vessels have been replaced with modern pleasure crafts, boating still plays a major role in Portland, as marinas run up and down the town's stretch of river. And for over 60 years, the town's boaters – and many others in the area – have known and respected another name in the Portland boating community: Jarvis Barton.

Barton, the former owner and founder of Portland Boat Works on Grove Street, passed away on Thursday, Aug. 9, at the age of 91. A U.S. Navy veteran, Barton leaves behind his wife of 67 years, Doris, and his three children: Gregory, Paul and Jean.

Barton – affectionately known as “Jarv” – was born June 10, 1921, in East Hampton, and attended East Hampton schools as a child. After graduating high school, Barton served in U.S. Navy during World War II, serving on the *U.S.S. Runner*. During his service, Barton was stationed in Tokyo Bay during the signing of

the peace treaty on Sept. 2, 1945, that effectively ended the war.

It was when he came back from his tour of duty that he began his career in boating. After being employed at the former Holter's Boat Yard, Barton purchased the company from the owner after he passed away, thereupon founding Portland Boat Works. The family-owned business has been a mainstay in the community ever since, housing and servicing hundreds of boats over the years, forging strong relationships with all of those who did business with him.

One local who had a strong relationship with Barton is Don Snyder, who knew Barton for over 20 years, ever since his father began keeping his boat at Portland Boat Works in 1990. Having lost both of his grandfathers before turning one year of age, the young Snyder looked up to Barton as a grandfather, a bond they maintained until the day he died.

“He was just a fun-loving guy who loved life, loved his family,” recalled Snyder, who now keeps his own boat at Portland Boat Works. “They broke the mold with guys like Jarvis. They don't build them like that anymore.”

They don't build boats like they used to anymore, either, but nobody told Barton that. When he wasn't working – which wasn't often; “he worked seven days a week, right up until the end,” Snyder said – Barton was usually tinkering on some kind of project, which included the restoration of antique cars, vintage boats, carousel horses and band organs. Barton even

built an entire boat by himself once, Snyder said, naming it the *George E. Bumstead*, after a former employee of his who had passed away, a true sign of the type of person he was.

“He just went above and beyond for people all of the time,” Snyder said. “He was a great judge of character; he had a natural ability for it.”

That showed in the people he employed, many of whom have been with the company for many years. Employees like Irene Nichols can recall Barton being “very good to work for” and the mutual respect shared between him and his customers.

“He had a lot of friends and customers who thought very highly of him,” Nichols said. “He worked well with everyone.”

Snyder mentioned Barton's great relationship with the customers, as well, remembering him zipping around the boat yard in his golf cart, chatting with people as he went.

The loss of Barton has had a sobering effect on those who knew him, as employees and customers alike have taken his passing hard. Last Friday, over 250 people – some from out of state – attended a memorial service for Barton at Portland Boat Works, a tribute to his life and the effect it had on others.

“It just tells you the kind of person he was,” Nichols said of the high attendance. She added, “I'm not sure you could even cover all that he did over the years. He was a very giving person, but he did it quietly.”

Nichols said she will remember Barton like



Those familiar with Portland Boat Works will remember Jarvis Barton, who passed away earlier this month, cruising around in his golf cart with his friend, Tommy Girl.

most probably will – always working, always tinkering on a new project, or sketching for the next project. While his legacy will live on in his work, for those who knew Barton, he will be remembered most for the relationships he forged with those around him, which won't soon be forgotten.

Almost Time to Hit the Books in Portland

by Joshua Anusewicz

The days are getting shorter, the nights are getting a little cooler and the children of Portland might be feeling a little droopy lately. As the summer winds down, they know what time it is – time to go back to school.

While parents and students have been busy making trips to the store for new clothes and school supplies, the faculty and staff of all five Portland schools have been hard at work preparing for the return of their pupils next Wednesday, Aug. 29.

Like other towns across the state, this year will be marked by sweeping changes in the Portland school system, all a part of the state's new education reform. The new legislation will see the most change in how students, teachers, and administrators are evaluated, holding the school districts accountable for adhering to the strict new guidelines.

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Sally Doyen said Tuesday integrating the changes into the school system was not going to be easy.

“It's going to be a challenge,” she said, “but I'm looking forward to working with the teachers and administration to get it done.”

Portland schools will not be a part of the state's “pilot program” for teacher evaluation, Doyen said, but the school district will be working to implement the evaluations over the next two years.

Along with state reforms, the district – and particularly the Board of Education – will be focused on two particular issues throughout the next school year, Doyen said. The first, she related, was the possibility of adding all-day kindergarten. While the discussion is currently in the preliminary stages, Doyen said it has been considered by the board as a possibility “down the road,” with the current focus being on researching teacher availability and classroom space. Doyen said the board would also be meeting with the schools' PTOs and the community at large to gather input.

The other matter the board plans to look into is the future of the modular classrooms at Valley View School. The modular classrooms, which house the first-grade students, have outlived their life expectancy by a considerable margin, but have remained functional “thanks to the upkeep of the maintenance staff” for the school district, Doyen said. The matter has been addressed by the board and a separate school building committee in the past year, but Doyen said “no major changes” have been decided upon yet.

As the district as a whole looks into changes on the horizon, Doyen said there will be substantial changes awaiting students in the three elementary schools on Wednesday. At Valley View, Gildersleeve and Brownstone Interme-

diate schools, iPads will now be part of the curriculum; Doyen said that each school will be equipped with two carts of 25 devices each, which will be shared by the entire school. Doyen said the iPads will be used in various capacities by the students, particularly in reading; she said the iPads are equipped with “reading instruction applications” that will provide the students with a wide range of tools to improve reading skills, including recording their voices while reading and looking up the definitions of words.

Eileen Katz, principal at Gildersleeve, said that the school would also have a cart of MacBooks for student use, as well. On top of being used as part of the school's curriculum, Katz said the new technology would be used to monitor student progress, an idea that began last year with the implementation of handheld cameras and video recorders used to create a “portfolio” for each student. Katz said the hope is to use the portfolios throughout the students' time in Portland schools to see how much they have progressed.

And if the iPads and MacBooks aren't enough, all of the classes in Gildersleeve are equipped with SMART boards as well, Katz said.

Another addition Katz mentioned is the integration of a new writing and reading program from kindergarten through sixth grade; last year, the elementary schools utilized a similar program in math that Katz called “a huge success.”

“It's been a great fit with students and teachers,” Katz said of the math program, adding that the district saw improved Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) scores in the subject.

Gildersleeve School will also see a unique addition this year, as Katz said trash and food disposed of at lunches will now be put into a large composter. The compost, Katz said, is planned to be used on the school grounds, possibly to create a garden.

At the middle school/high school, Doyen said there will be no major changes in technology or student programs, but there will be a new handicapped parking area located within the drop-off circle in front of the building. The parking area, Doyen said, will be cut into the grass circle in the middle of the drop-off area.

With changes in place and more changes on the horizon, the excitement in Portland schools is building. But the excitement is highest for the start of the school year; Katz said she's already seen teachers and new students coming in and out of the building in recent weeks, preparing for what is hoped to be yet another successful year.

“You can feel the buzz and the anticipation,” Katz said.



It's hard to believe, but in less than a week, these chairs will be in their proper position and filled by Portland High School students, ready to learn. All Portland students will report to class on the first day of school, Wednesday, Aug. 29.



This quiet, empty, and clean hallway at Portland High School will soon be chock-full of students, busily visiting their lockers as they go from class to class. Teachers and administrators have been hard at work, preparing their classrooms and holding last-minute meetings to prepare for the upcoming school year.

Colchester Boards Agree on Energy Savings Program

by **Katelyn Kelleher**

The boards of selectmen, finance and education came to consensus Tuesday about an energy savings program to pursue and to finance it through lease-purchasing.

The project involves working with an Energy Services Company (ESCO) to make energy efficient improvements to town and school facilities. The town chose Honeywell for the project after putting out a request for proposal in March 2010, which then assessed town buildings for options to make them more energy efficient. Honeywell reported back with energy-saving package options.

In his Aug. 9 "Selectman Notes," posted on the town website, First Selectman Gregg Schuster said the company guarantees the town "a certain level of energy savings in order to cover our financing costs. If we do not achieve the energy savings guaranteed, the ESCO must write us a check for the difference."

Director of Facilities Greg Plunkett presented the boards with two options: alternative "A" and alternative "B." Both alternatives did away with several capital items presented on an original plan in June, Plunkett said, adding he thought it was the consensus among the boards "that the capital projects included really weren't appropriate."

Plunkett said the capital items included some security items in Town Hall and "things that just never seemed to get into the budget."

Alternative "B" was the original plan without those capital items and alternative "A" took out the capital items and anything that did not have energy savings within a "reasonable amount of time," Plunkett said.

The board quickly came to a consensus that alternative "B" was the plan to pursue. Though alternative "A" was about \$300,000 less than \$3.95 million alternative "B," many incentives provided by Connecticut Light and Power

would be lost with the reduction of items in alternative "A."

In alternative "B," "we get \$19,000 base incentive, an additional \$137,000 bonus incentive, which drops down the whole cost to \$140,000 incrementally," Schuster said. "Then we get an additional \$17-18,000 a year in energy savings. The payback really doesn't change that much when you go from alternate 'A' to alternate 'B.'"

Including the incentives, it would take 10.79 years for the town to see payback on the project cost with alternative "B" and 10.96 years with alternative "A."

Plunkett said Connecticut Light and Power offered the \$137,061 bonus incentive because the town would be addressing multiple energy conservation measures in each of the facilities. "We're not just changing lights," he said.

The project would include upgrades and replacements in Bacon Academy, Jack Jackter Intermediate School, Colchester Elementary School, Cragin Library, both fire companies and Town Hall among other town facilities.

Board of Education member John Reever said he was concerned about technology replacements that would take years for the energy savings to exceed their cost.

"Are we really doing ourselves a service locking ourselves into technology that might not work or might be way obsolete?"

Selectman Stan Soby compared the project to purchasing a home. "When people buy a home, they finance it with a 30-year mortgage. Nobody expects the faucet to last 30 years," he said. "There are certain things that are going to have to be replaced. You have to look at the savings."

Chief Financial Officer Maggie Cosgrove added the items would have to be replaced eventually, but the town wouldn't get the incentives

if they were not included in the project.

Cosgrove and Honeywell representative Doreen Hamilton listed several towns that have seen "tremendous savings" through energy-saving projects, including Danbury, East Hartford, Middletown and Reading, Mass.

Because of the savings, the project is, essentially, revenue-neutral, Board of Education Vice Chairman Donald Kennedy said.

"It's netting close to zero," he said. "If it's better than that, great."

The boards came to a consensus that a lease-purchase agreement is the best way to finance the project after taking into consideration the length of time and issuance fees involved in bonding.

Issuance fees for a bond total approximately \$75,000 and the timeline to put together a bond is much longer than a lease, Cosgrove said. The bond would also be a 14-year period at a 2.25 percent interest rate for the savings to be higher than the costs.

Cosgrove said the town should get good rates from putting a lease out to bid and, depending on the length of term, interest rates around 2.5 percent.

"The difference between a lease and bond, the numbers are not a huge difference, but there is a great deal more work involved in a bond, the timeline is longer and as a result we potentially would miss out on the incentives."

The town would have until Nov. 6 to sign a letter of award to Connecticut Light and Power for the incentive money to be set aside. Steve Wells, a resident involved with the project, explained the town would not be obligated to move forward with the project, but would have a certain amount of time to complete the project once the letter is signed to receive the incentives.

The boards had some debate on how to go about a public vote on the project. While a bond would require a referendum, a lease allows the votes to be cast at a town meeting, provided none of the debt would be paid during the current fiscal year.

Selectwoman Rosemary Coyle said a referendum would give everyone an opportunity to vote, since it would be held for the entire day. A town meeting is limited to the number of people who are able to attend.

The town "has a long history of people coming to vote who have never come to a town meeting, who don't know what they're voting on," Board of Finance member Thomas Kane said. "They're hearing misinformation on the street. When it comes down to it, I'd rather have fewer informed voters than everyone in town with 20 percent of them actually knowing what they're voting on."

Board of Finance Chairman Robert Tarlov said the same people who show up at a referendum could also show up at the meeting and agreed that residents often hear misinformation around town that could sway their vote.

"I want people when they vote in any matter to do so in an educated fashion," Schuster said. "This is a complicated project, there are a lot of numbers. I feel very comfortable to ask people to give us an hour of your time, sit down, let us explain this project to you and why we think this makes sense and then let's have a vote."

Ultimately, the boards decided a town meeting would be the best way to vote.

Schuster said he will check with the town attorney about the possibility of sending out informational mailings to residents and will work on organizing multiple public hearings before holding a town meeting.

Colchester Selectmen OK Reorganizing of Departments

by **Katelyn Kelleher**

The Board of Selectmen voted Thursday, Aug. 16, to accept a proposed reorganization of the facilities and public works departments, and authorized the first selectman to sign all necessary documents to implement the changes.

Under the new organization, the director of facilities, operations and grounds would become the director of operations, responsible for supervising the custodians, transportation and food services for the school district. For the remainder of the fiscal year, the position would continue to be funded 31.55 percent by the town and 68.45 percent by the school. Beginning with the 2013-14 fiscal year, the position will be fully-funded by the Board of Education. However, the director of educational operations would continue to work with the town on the William J. Johnston Middle School/Community Center/Senior Center project and the Energy Performance Contract project.

The facilities manager, formerly in charge of supervising the custodians, would remain funded half by the Board of Education and half by the town, but would be moved to work under the director of public works.

The grounds crew leader would be moved from working under the former director of facilities, operations and grounds to working under the director of operations in the Public

Works Department.

The Board of Education voted in favor of the reorganization at a July 10 meeting.

There would be no change in salary for the facilities manager or grounds crew leader. The director of educational operations, previously the director of facilities and operations, would see a \$10,000 decrease, which would offset a \$10,000 increase to the director of public works.

Also at last Thursday's meeting, members from the Planning and Zoning Department discussed options for a \$300,000 Main Street Investment Grant (MSIG) application to beautify the town. The grant favors "shovel-ready" projects that will contribute to the economy of towns right away, Town Planner Adam Turner said. A memo from Turner identified three such projects, but recommended a Main Street and Linwood Avenue streetscape for the application, due Sept. 28.

Wetland Enforcement Officer Jay Gigliotti presented the plan for the streetscape, which would connect sidewalks from the Colchester Federated Church to the main entrance of Stop & Shop on Linwood Avenue. Stamped concrete would be put between the sidewalk and the curb and there would also be plantings, a retaining wall and lighting installed on the south side of the road.

"The grade on the south side of Linwood Ave. is not safe for pedestrians," Gigliotti said.

Original plans included a welcome sign, but Gigliotti said it would drive costs up too much. Instead, there will be a "green area" at the intersection of Main Street and Linwood Avenue.

Gigliotti said the project would cost approximately \$250,000-300,000 and the town could apply for a maximum of \$500,000.

Ford said the town should "go for the gold," and look into applying for the whole grant, possibly enough to put sidewalks on the other side of the street. However, Town Engineer Sal Tassone said there is not enough land on the other side of the street for the sidewalks.

The selectmen also approved a \$7,000 contract with Zambelli Fireworks for the town's 57 Fest Sept. 22 and a potential date in 2013 for the same amount, subject to budget approval in the 2013-14 fiscal year. Selectman James Ford said the town cannot commit funds in subsequent budgets.

Zambelli was selected over other companies within the price range due to its extensive grand finale, a memo from Recreation Manager Cheryl Hancin said.

The board also approved a resolution to renew \$9,998 in grant funding for the senior center's Making Memories program. The pro-

gram is designed to help dementia patients.

Action was postponed on the proposed discontinuance of an abandoned portion of Reservoir Road. The item was supposed to be reviewed by the Planning and Zoning Commission at its Aug. 15 meeting, which was canceled.

Schuster said he was going to forward three proposed ordinances – pertaining to Sunday alcohol sales, the Open Space Advisory Board and building permit fees – on to town counsel for review. The proposed Sunday alcohol ordinance is to align the town's Sunday alcohol sales with the state's permitted hours. Proposed changes to the Open Space Advisory Board would require the seven-member committee to consist of a representative of the Colchester Land Trust, a representative of the fish and game club and five members at large.

The building permit fees ordinance would double the fee for work done without the proper permits, with the total payment not exceeding \$1,000. Selectwoman Rosemary Coyle pointed out that doubling fees is the most popular penalty from information available from other towns.

The next Board of Selectmen meeting will be held Thursday, Sept. 6, at 7 p.m. at Town Hall.

Beloved Former Bacon Principal Remembered

by **Katelyn Kelleher**

When a young, poor boy showed up to school in the middle of winter, freezing in just a T-shirt, Everett Herden found him a coat.

That memory came to mind when Bob Duguay thought back to his time as a teacher at Bacon Academy.

“It was done without a lot of pretense; the principal stands there as they get off the bus,” he said. “He just wanted to make sure he had a coat to wear.”

Herden, 80, a former teacher and principal at Bacon, passed away last Saturday, Aug. 18, at the Middlesex Hospital Hospice in Middletown.

Duguay, who taught at Bacon from 1971-75, when the elementary and middle school shared a building, called Herden his mentor. He remembered him as an upbeat, cheerful straight-shooter who “had two concerns: for the well-being of his students and teachers.”

Herden spent his entire 35-year education career at Bacon, starting as a biology teacher in 1959, advancing to administrative roles and retiring as a teacher in 1994. He established the Bacon Academy Biology Scholarship, still awarded to two graduating seniors annually.

Irene Herden knew her husband had a big

impact on his students, many of whom she said kept in touch with him after graduation.

“He just liked teaching,” she said. “He always loved it.”

She then added with a slight laugh, “Not the paperwork, but the teaching.”

Herden spent much of his free time impacting students’ lives as well, serving a total of 24 years on the East Haddam Board of Education, from 1977-88 and 2001-11, as both a member and chair.

The board’s current chair, Nancy Haslam, also considered Herden a mentor. “When I got on the board he stepped up and introduced me to a lot of the protocols.

“He has such phenomenal insight and was really a phenomenal educator,” she said. “Whenever something controversial or difficult would come up before the board he was able to see it from the students’ vantage point. He was a man of reason.”

Even after deciding not to run again for a seat on the Board of Education again in 2011, Herden and Haslam kept in touch.

“He would call from time to time and see how I was doing,” she said. “I just, I lost a good friend.”

Haslam said Herden “touched a lot of life” in East Haddam, despite never actually teaching there.

“He had a very quiet way about him, but when he spoke people listened because he always knew how to deal with so many situations that really impacted students,” she said. “They felt very connected to him. ... He was so well-known and respected in our community for his work on behalf of young people and families.”

Herden also served on the East Haddam Democratic Town Committee, along with current chairman Brad Parker, a friend of Herden’s for over 40 years.

Parker spoke of Herden’s service on the Board of Education as a dedication to the students of East Haddam.

“A lot of time when people get on those types of boards they have an agenda – they might have a kid in school,” he said. “Everett only wanted what was best for the kids. That’s all that was on his mind.”

Board of Education member Amy Apostoleris said Herden’s enthusiasm for education came through in all the decisions he made.

“He brought a lot of experiential input from having been in education for so many years, just things that worked and were tried and true,” she said. “He just really wanted to make sure that kids got an education and nothing was held back.”

When Herden wasn’t devoting himself to education, Parker said he was a sports enthusiast, following UConn football and men’s basketball.

After retirement, Herden and his wife also traveled all over the state to senior centers, teaching driving courses to people over 55 for auto insurance reductions. “He was very active and community-minded,” Parker said. “It always made him feel good.”

Herden also retired at the rank of full colonel from the United States Army Reserve Medical Service Corps after 37 years of service.

Haslam is still coming to terms with the loss of her friend and mentor. “I just still find it hard to believe,” she said. “But we’ll move on being better people for having known and associated with him.”

Herden’s obituary is found on page 13 in this week’s *Rivereast*.

Hebron Selectmen Eye Starting Charter Revision Process

by **Geeta Schrayter**

The time has come to open up the town charter for revision, the Board of Selectmen agreed at its meeting Thursday, Aug. 16. But before the process gets underway, selectmen feel it would be best to hold a workshop to discuss what possible changes should take place.

“We should have a workshop first before pulling the trigger,” said selectman Mark Stuart, in reference to the timeframe imposed by state statute for the completion of a charter review. According to the town attorney, state statute mandates that once a resolution is made to initiate a charter revision, the board has 30 days to appoint a Charter Revision Commission. Afterwards, the commission has to submit its report to the selectmen no later than 16 months after its appointment.

Stuart continued on to say a workshop should be scheduled and an attempt should be made to get as many participants from within the town government to attend as possible along with informing the public of its occurrence.

“So even though it’s not a public hearing, the workshop will provide an opportunity right then before the commission is formed for some early feedback,” he said.

The selectmen also discussed what the makeup of the commission should be. Stuart

said he’d like to see an eight-member committee, and two of those members should either be currently serving on a board or have served previously.

“They bring a different perspective,” he said, “because they operated under the charter.”

Selectwoman Gayle Mulligan said she agreed with Stuart’s point.

“I think it’s important to have someone on there that’s functioned under the charter,” she said.

Board of Selectmen Chairman Jeff Watt said he didn’t have an issue with having commission members that were past members of town boards, but he wasn’t so sure about having current town officials on there.

“I think it should be more the citizens who are on there,” he said.

In the end, the selectmen decided an effort would be made to have someone who had served previously on a board as part of the commission, but if none stepped forward, “then we’ll look for a current elected official,” said Watt.

The charter revision timeline was also discussed. The selectmen felt that if the charter were revised with the intention of having it ready to be voted on at the November 2013 election, the commission may not have an adequate

amount of time to prepare the revisions, hold public hearings and then submit them to the selectmen, who would then make their own recommendations to the proposed revisions.

But if the changes weren’t voted on until the 2014 election, and the revision began soon after the workshop, that would leave a significant amount of time between the commission’s completion and the vote.

“I just think out of respect for the commission, we have to move along [with the vote] at that time.”

Also, Watt said, if the goal was to have the revisions ready for the 2014 election, the process could be held off until the timeframe would match up.

Still another option would be to hold a special election on the proposed changes. However, selectmen said they felt a special meeting may not bring out the required amount of voters.

Executive Assistant Donna Lanza said she’d work up timelines for each election so the selectmen could decide which option would fit best.

The workshop to further the discussion on a charter revision is scheduled for Saturday, Sept. 15.

Also at the meeting, a paving bid was awarded to G&G Paving for the rental of paving equipment.

Tierney explained other companies who had submitted a bid wanted a day rate, “but G&G wants to house the equipment at public works and pay by the hour.”

He said that setup works in the town’s favor, because if there’s a day when the operator is sick or it rains and paving doesn’t occur the town won’t be wasting money.

“If we’re paving, we’re paying. If we’re not, we’re not,” said Tierney, adding the town has worked with G&G for years – “we’ve been doing it every year since I’ve been in town.”

The selectmen voted unanimously to award the bid to G&G paving at a rate of \$960 per day; Tierney noted that while the rate is listed as “per day,” the company “breaks it out” to be hourly.

G&G “has served the town well and is pretty inexpensive,” Tierney said.

The next board of selectmen’s meeting is scheduled for Thursday, Sept. 20, at 7:30 p.m. in the Town Office Building, 15 Gilead St.

Hebron Residents Agree to Amston Land Conveyance

by **Geeta Schrayter**

At a brief town meeting held Thursday, Aug. 16, residents agreed unanimously to accept the conveyance of two parcels of land from the town to the Amston Lake District via quit claim deed.

The conveyance was part of an agreement between Hebron and the Amston Lake District (ALD) for the demolition of Old Fire Station No. 2, which hadn’t been used since the new Fire Company No. 2 was completed on Route 85 in 2005.

When the station initially fell into disuse, the property was offered to the ALD; however, the district’s interest was in the land, not the building, and preserving open space in its watershed.

As a result of discussions between the district and the town as to an agreeable scenario, the decision was made to demolish the fire station. The ALD Board of Directors felt it would

be easier for the town to handle the demolition; it would then reimburse Hebron for the cost of the project up to \$45,000. Then, after the demolition was completed, the land would be handed over to the district at which point they would start paying taxes on the parcels, which total .57 acres.

But before the demolition could take place the land needed to belong to Hebron. The .31-acre parcel where the parking lot sat already belonged to the town, but the .26-acre parcel that housed the fire station belonged to the ALD – that is, until a special town meeting held Aug. 2 where residents voted unanimously to accept the .26-acre parcel.

The abatement process for areas of the building where asbestos was used then began the week of Aug. 10. On Thursday, Interim Town Manager Andy Tierney said the abatement pro-

cess was on schedule and the demolition was scheduled to begin on Sept. 4, weather permitting.

Last week’s town meeting was attended by 43 residents. Among them was selectman Dan Larson, who said he thought the demolition and conveyance was “a good thing” – but added, on a more bittersweet note, “it does close out a chapter in the history of the Amston Lake Fire Company,” which he called “a very proud organization.”

“We’re very lucky to have people in our ranks who have been involved [with the fire department] for 30-40 years,” Larson said. “I just think it’s great and my hat goes off to them.”

Hebron resident Bruce Degray, who started volunteering with the Amston Lake Fire Department in 1959 and said he is still responding, called the situation “a sad thing,” and said

he’d built the portion of the roof that had been removed earlier in the day as part of the abatement.

“When you build something and it’s being torn down – it’s hard,” he said.

Degray continued on to say he felt the demolition of the building might have been prevented had the building been maintained properly over the years. He said the fire department has used the building for training, and it could have been kept as such. But, he added, the town said they didn’t want to do that, so the offer was made to the ALD and the present situation arose as a result.

And in the end, despite being hard, Degray voted along with the other 42 residents present in favor of the conveyance and the resolution passed unanimously.

Hebron Ready to Head Back to School

by Geeta Schrayter

Hebron's elementary schools are primed and ready for the return of their students. The grounds have been groomed, the floors gleam, the classrooms are organized and decorated and the teachers had their convocation on Wednesday. Now, all that remains is for the familiar sound of children to echo through the halls.

"I'm very excited. It becomes a quiet and lonely place here without little feet pattering up the hallways," said Superintendent of Schools Ellie Cruz. "I love the first day of school: the energy, the parents on the sidewalk with their cameras, kids getting off the buses with their new backpacks and just their joy – I'm really looking forward to it."

And as the children enter their respective buildings, they'll be stepping into schools that have been prepped for their arrival all summer long.

"There's so much that goes into the start of the school year," said Gilead Hill School Principal Kathy Veronesi.

Some of those preparations involve routine work like ordering supplies and updating the staff handbooks. Hebron Elementary School Principal Amy Campbell said this year, her and Veronesi worked to make a combined student handbook to make things easier for parents with kids at both schools.

Campbell continued to explain there was a lot of classroom movement – at least a dozen rooms were changed – particularly since the fourth grade portables had been demolished. Those teachers were distributed elsewhere in the building, which meant "a lot of moving and packing for not only the teachers but the custodians," she said.

"When someone who has taught for 30 years leaves a classroom, there's 30 years of stuff," said Veronesi, calling the custodial staff "remarkable."

Every summer the building is thoroughly cleaned and in order to get the floors waxed, each room needs to be emptied. Adding the room moves on top of that meant the process was "a huge, huge endeavor and it took the whole custodial staff working as a team to make that happen" Veronesi explained.

She added restrictions on the use of pesticides for ground maintenance meant more work – and more weeds to deal with – when keeping up the schools' properties.

"Honestly, there was a weed bigger than a kid outside [Gilead Hill School] at the beginning of summer. I was like 'that weed could eat a child!'" Veronesi laughed. "But the town came in and they just did such a beautiful job in terms of cleaning up all the shrubs and stuff outside the school and I think it makes a difference."

Veronesi stressed the importance of making sure both the interior and exterior of the school is clean, safe and well-kept.

"I want people who walk into this school to feel really, really proud of what happens here," she said.

Veronesi added everything was also set for full-day kindergarten, but she noted it wasn't really a new initiative since there had always been two sections. The difference this year is there will be five.

Campbell said there will be one less bus this

year due to the drop in enrollment, which meant reconfiguring some of the runs. Parking has also seen some changes at Hebron Elementary, in an effort to have fewer cars backed out onto Route 85 and improve the pick-up and drop-off process. The visitor parking lot will now be the lot closest to the baseball field, she explained. During pick-up, children will be lining up and using the exits on either side of the gym based on their last name "so there's less congestion in the hallway, which was a safety concern."

In preparation for the switch to the Common Core State Standards, which looks to align curriculums throughout the country, volunteers from each grade level got together at the beginning of the summer to work on writing units in line with the standards, explained Campbell.

"We've got the beginnings of two reading and two math units ready for each grade level," she said, adding the same group continued to work throughout the summer on refining the units and they now needed to be taught to the rest of the teachers.

"We are providing some professional development that will go along with that. We're hoping our grade levels are able to do a pilot run of those four units," she said.

"Call me crazy, but it's so exciting," Veronesi said of the changing curriculum. She added the units will be piloted, then the teachers will meet "and debrief and improve" them.

Campbell also felt implementing the Common Core would be exciting - but challenging, too.

"Our students do very well, so we're very excited to be able to increase the rigor of the work that we're asking them to do," Campbell said. "Will it be challenging? Yeah, but teachers have worked hard to make the implementation as smooth as possible. It won't be easy but it'll be smooth."

Campbell added she was looking forward to having a full year in her position as principal (she took over in January when then-principal Kevin Hanlon moved to a different district), and she was most excited about "hopefully just a nice, calm year with no huge weather."

Last year, the school year began with the wrath of Tropical Storm Irene, which resulted in school closings. Then, a freak snowstorm in October resulted in even more days off.

But Veronesi said she always expects the unexpected.

"You expect the unexpected and you just can't call it a problem or an obstacle; it's just [the way it is]. You have 400 little people and like 65 staff members and then all their parents and cars in and out and people getting sick and then the unknowns like weather and fugitives." (During the start of Veronesi's first year as principal, she was forced to put the school into lockdown after there were reports of an escaped fugitive in the area).

"You just have to go with it," she said, adding with the right procedures in place "you're able to respond to and react to them."

"It's such an exciting place to be," Veronesi added. "It's an exciting time and I think everybody ultimately feels the same way: there's the part of this that has to do with the anticipation and really, what we want to do is we just want to get started. We just want to get the kids in



The classrooms have been cleaned and the desks have been organized. The nametags have been placed and all that remains is the return of Hebron's students on August 27.



The freshly waxed floor of the gym at Hebron Elementary School gleams: ready for students to start using it again as the school year begins on Monday.

and get going."

And administrators aren't the only ones to feel that way.

Third-grade teacher Julia Clark said everything in her room was coming together. "We just need little bodies now," she said. "I'm excited about the same things we were excited about when starting school: the newness of it, the freshness of it, meeting the students and seeing who's grown – they all come back with such a freshness about them. They're ready to go."

For second-grade teacher Rachel Thayer,

having a class of almost entirely new students was "super exciting."

"This year I have a whole brand new crew so I'm super excited... it'll be fun when I get everything ready," she said.

With the countdown to school winding down, Thayer has only a few more days to make sure everything's in place for the start of what Campbell calls "the second new year."

"In no other career do you get two new years," she smiled.

The first day of school – or the "second new year" – begins Monday, Aug. 27.

From the Editor's Desk

Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

“It’s the most wonderful time of the year...”

Around this time every year, I tend to think back to the old Staples commercial that features that old Christmas chestnut; in the spot, a man delightfully roams the aisles, picking up school supplies, while his crestfallen children slog behind him. I don’t have kids, but that commercial still cracked me up every time I saw it. The dad’s joyous expression was hilarious.

And while it’s not the most wonderful time of year for me personally – fall in New England is pretty sweet, but summer always seems to go just too fast – it is time to think about reading, writing, arithmetic, pens, pencils, erasers and all that other stuff. It’s back-to-school time once again, which means it’s time for the annual *Rivereast* back-to-school issue. There are articles by reporters Joshua Anusewicz, Katelyn Kelleher and Geeta Schrayter about the new school year starting in the *Rivereast* towns and what students and parents can expect; school bus routes; school lunch price information; and much, much more.

* * *

Speaking of heading back to school, this week I came an interesting, lighthearted list, compiled by staff at Beloit College in Wisconsin. It detailed some of the experiences shared by this year’s crop of incoming college freshmen – i.e., kids born in the year 1994. For this year’s freshmen (and be warned: some of this may make you feel just a wee bit old):

— Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis and Richard Nixon have always been dead;

— Robert De Niro is thought of more as Greg Focker’s long-suffering father-in-law than as Vito Corleone or Jimmy Conway;

— there are few memories of Bill Clinton as president;

— it may be difficult to picture people actually carrying luggage through airports rather than rolling it;

— there has always been football in Jacksonville, but never in Los Angeles;

— the Green Bay Packers have always celebrated with the Lambeau Leap;

— exposed bra straps have always been a fashion statement, not a wardrobe malfunction to be corrected quietly by well-meaning friends.;

— a significant percentage will enter college already displaying some hearing loss.;

— women have always piloted war planes and space shuttles;

— White House security has never felt it necessary to wear rubber gloves when gay groups have visited;

— Billy Graham is as familiar to them as Otto Graham was to their parents.

— Selena’s fans have always been in mourning.

— History has always had its own channel.

— chronic fatigue syndrome has always been officially recognized with clinical guidelines.

— for as long as they’ve been old enough to know what baseball was, Cal Ripken has held the record for most consecutive baseball games played, not Lou Gehrig.

— for most of their lives, their movies have come on DVDs, not videotapes.

* * *

Recently in one of my columns, I used the expression “run the gamut.” Upon reading the column, a friend asked, “What’s a gamut?” I paused, and thought, and had to honestly reply, “Um....I...don’t know.” I knew what the expression “run the gamut” meant – basically, it means “includes everything” – so this wasn’t one of those *Princess Bride*-esque moments (“You keep using that word. I don’t think it means what you think it means”). But it was just one of those expressions I’d always used without giving much thought to its origins.

If you’re like me – and really, everyone should be like me; the world would be more fun – you may be wondering the same thing. So, here’s a quick little etymology lesson:

The word “gamut” dates way back, to the 1520s, and originally stood for the lowest note in the medieval musical scale. It is actually a contraction of “gamma ut,” which derived from “gamma,” the Greek letter, indicating a note below A, and “ut,” which at the time stood for the low note on the six-note musical scale that took names from corresponding syllables in a Latin hymn for St. John the Baptist’s Day. (“Ut” later became “Do,” and today we of course know the scale as “Do Re Mi Fa So La Ti Do.”)

“Gamut” eventually came to mean “the whole musical scale.” Around the 1620s is when the more figurative, non-musical use of the phrase – i.e., “the entire range” – came into being, and then “run the gamut” developed, to mean simply “run the entire range.”

So, there ya go; next time you use that expression, if somebody quizzes you as to what exactly it means, now you know.

* * *

See you next week.

Colchester Police News

8/14: Numerous jewelry items were reported stolen from a Hillside Lane home at 2 p.m., Colchester Police said. The case is still under investigation.

8/15: Heidi Burton, 46, of 25 Prentice Hill Rd., Hebron, was charged with permitting a minor to possess alcohol in a dwelling, State Police said.

8/16: Daniel Kowalsky, 25, of 36 Harvest Ln., was charged with possession of narcotics, possession of a controlled substance, possession of a hallucinogenic substance, possession of drug paraphernalia and illegal sale of prescription drugs, State Police said.

Hebron Police News

8/15: Robert Fearon, 80, of 206 West St., was issued an infraction for not driving a reasonable distance apart after he was unable to stop and struck a vehicle making a left turn from Route 85 onto Daly Road, State Police said. The driver of the second vehicle, Chelsey Collins, 19, of 601 Cottontail Rd., Myrtle Beach, S.C., was transported to Hartford Hospital for minor injuries and a check-up. Jeremy Davis, 22, of 323 Taylor St., Vernon, a passenger in Collins’ vehicle, was transported to Marlborough Medical Center for a cut over his left eye. A 23-month-old passenger in Collins’

8/16: David Hosp, 42, of 347 Chestnut Hill Rd., was charged with DUI, operation of a motor vehicle without minimum insurance and failure to drive in the correct lane, State Police said.

8/17: Kelly Green, 34, of 39 Pickerel Lake Rd., was charged with second-degree failure to appear, State Police said.

8/18: Shawn Mawhiney, 42, of 5 Mary Ln., was charged with DUI, State Police said.

8/19: Joseph Octave, 43, of 157 Bailey Rd., Rocky Hill, was charged with DUI, State Police said.

vehicle was transported to Marlborough Medical Center as a precaution. Fearon and a 16-year-old passenger in his vehicle were not injured.

8/16: Gregory Collins, 18, of 13 Basketshop Rd., was charged with possession of drug paraphernalia and possession of a controlled substance. State Police said.

8/19: James Morrell, 21, of 61 Brookwood Rd., Bethany, was charged with possession of less than 0.5 ounces of marijuana, speeding, DUI and failure to maintain a lane, State Police said.

Marlborough Police News

8/19: Jose Perez, 31, of 47 Bodwell St., Hartford, was charged with DUI, two counts of risk of injury to a minor, misuse of marker plates, operating a motor vehicle without insurance, operating a motor vehicle without registration/license and failure to maintain a lane, State Police said.

8/10: Omal Dawson, 24, of 7 Fern Dr., Bloomfield, was charged with DUI and speeding, State Police said.

Obituaries

Colchester

Margaret Soulia

Margaret (Allen) Soulia, "Maggie," 78, of Colchester, widow of the late Charles R. Soulia, passed away Thursday, Aug. 16, at the Middlesex Hospital in Middletown surrounded by her loving family. Born June 9, 1934, in Boston, Mass., she was a daughter of the late Ernest and Isabelle (Brawley) Allen Sr.



A dedicated caregiver, Maggie worked as a certified nurses' aide at the former Colchester Convalescent Home (now Harrington Court GHC) in Colchester for nearly 40 years. She also served as caterer for both the Colchester Police and State Police Troop K for 14 years.

In her spare time, she loved creating silk floral arrangements as well as gardening, especially cross-breeding irises. But most importantly, she was a loving, patient and devoted angel on earth to so many – and will live in their hearts forever.

Survivors include six children, Mary Radway and her fiancé, Robert McDaniel, Christine and Frank Lamprey and Kathleen and Ron Petro, all of Colchester, William and Debi Collins of Lebanon, Peter and Debi Soulia of Taftville and Joseph Soulia and Donna Gervais of Tinmouth, Vt.; 13 grandchildren, Jennifer Hein, Michelle Cooper, Douglas Collins, Heather and Wayne Radway, Shane and Meredith Soulia, Frankie and Kathryn Lamprey and Jeffrey, Taylor and Sydney Petro, Chrystal Burleigh and Ronnie White; six great-grandchildren, William Hein, Julie and Wyatt Cooper and Dillon, Samantha and Peyton Soulia; two siblings and their spouses, Ernest and Janet Allen Jr. of So. Windsor and Judith and Darcy Loussier of Alaska; and numerous extended family members and friends.

She was predeceased by a daughter, Shirley Collins Gibson and a sister, Shirley Stevens.

Friends called Monday, Aug. 20, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. The funeral liturgy was celebrated Tuesday, Aug. 21, directly at St. Andrew Church, 128 Norwich Ave., Colchester. Burial followed in the New St. Andrew Cemetery, Colchester.

The family would like to extend their most sincere thanks to the staff of both the fifth floor and CCU at Middlesex Hospital for the incredible care that they provided. In recognition, they encourage that donations be made to Middlesex Hospital, Office of Philanthropy, 28 Crescent St., Middletown, CT 06457.

For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

Colchester

Bernyce Ruiz

Bernyce Mary (Hunt) Ruiz, "Bea," of Colchester, beloved wife of the late José Ruiz, died peacefully with her family by her side on Thursday, Aug. 16.

The daughter of the late Joseph and Elizabeth (O'Keefe) Hunt, Bernyce was born in St. John's, Newfoundland, Canada, where she met her husband, José. Married on Nov. 28, 1953, they lived in Newfoundland, New Mexico, New York, Colorado, Hawaii and countless other states while José served in the Air Force. After his retirement, they settled in Colchester, where they made their home.

She leaves behind her loving children, Kerry and his wife Carissa, of Windsor, Debbi and her husband Larry, of Papillion, Neb., and Cathy, Joe and Sherri, all of Colchester. The joy of her life was her eight grandchildren, Mark Ryan and his wife Jamie, Ashley, Tamara, Ronald, Taylor, Cayla, Kelsey and Sydney.

In addition to her husband, she was predeceased by four sisters, Kay, Mary, Bridget and Alma.

She enjoyed spending time with her family and friends, always ready to take a trip, whether down to New Jersey or out to Nebraska. One of her final trips was in July when she attended the wedding of her eldest grandchild, Mark Ryan in St. Louis.

Bernyce was a devout Catholic who spent two Christmases caring for the poor in Haiti with the Haitian Health Foundation. An active parishioner of St. Andrew Church, she was a member of the Ladies Guild, the First Friday Rosary Group and had served as a Eucharistic minister. Bernyce was also a member of the Auxiliary of the Adler-Boluck Post 6990 VFW in Colchester.

Friends celebrated her life Tuesday, Aug. 21, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. The funeral liturgy was celebrated Wednesday, Aug. 22, directly at St. Andrew Church, 128 Norwich Ave., Colchester. Committal followed in the family plot in St. Joseph Cemetery, Willimantic.

In lieu of flowers, donations in her memory may be made to the Haitian Health Foundation, 97 Sherman St., Norwich, CT 06360.

For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

Colchester

Walter Popowich

Walter "Walt" Popowich, 79, of Colchester, died peacefully Saturday, Aug. 18, at Middlesex Hospital Hospice Care in Middletown.

He was born Oct. 17, 1932, in New London to the late Peter and Ksenia (Zulusky) Popowich. Walter is survived by his loving wife of 51 years, Beverly (Higgins) Popowich, his sons, Martin and wife Jane Zibuda, Brian and wife, Andrea Zibuda; daughters, Doreen and husband Jeffrey Janssen and Diane Jordan; grandchildren, Rachel and husband Robert Henneberger, Matthew Przybyl, Jennifer and husband, Drew Johnston, Joshua and wife, Brooke Currie, Marjorie Jordan and Adam, Andrew, Megan and Ava Zibuda; and great-grandchildren Clara, Sofia, Phoebe, Manny, Matthew, Summer, Rebekah, and Owen; his sister-in-law, Doris Popowich; along with many dear nieces, nephews and extended family and friends.

He was predeceased by his brother, Raymond Popowich; sister, Frances Varnish; and his beloved daughter-in-law, Helen Zibuda.

Mr. Popowich worked for the State of Connecticut Department of Transportation, retiring after 37 years. He was devoted to his family and loved spending time with his grandchildren. Walt enjoyed bowling, bicycling, and the special getaways to Misquamicut Beach, R.I., with the love of his life, Beverly. He was an avid Red Sox and New York Giants fan.

Walt was known to so many as a caring man always lending a helping hand to anyone in need. He enjoyed spending time with his daughter's Jack Russell Terrier, Sara, who brought him much joy and comfort.

Friends called Wednesday, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester.

Funeral services were Thursday, Aug. 23, directly at the Marlborough Congregational Church located at 35 S. Main St. Burial in the Marlboro Cemetery will be private.

Those who wish may make a donation to his Church or The Mitchell Farm Equine Retirement Sanctuary, 300 East Haddam Rd., Salem 06420.

For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

Colchester

Everett L. Herden Jr.

Everett L. Herden Jr., 80, longtime resident of East Haddam, beloved husband of Irene L. (Bryson) Herden, passed away Saturday, Aug. 18, at the Middlesex Hospital Hospice in Middletown. Born Jan. 12, 1932, in Hartford, he was the son of the late Everett and Lillian (Mannell) Herden Sr.

A longtime educator and administrator, he earned his Bachelor of Science degree from Springfield College in 1954, his Master of Science degree from the University of Illinois in 1956 and his graduate certificate from the University of Hartford in 1972.

His career in education spanned 35 years, including serving as principal of Bacon Academy in Colchester. Whether at school or in the community, he was a consummate educator.

He was a member and past chairman of the East Haddam Board of Education for many years, founding member of the East Haddam Recreation Commission and volunteer for numerous community events. In his spare time, he was an avid hunter and fisherman.

Mr. Herden served for 37 years in the U.S. Army Reserve Medical Service Corps, retiring at the rank of full colonel.

Friends called Thursday, Aug. 23, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. Funeral services followed by rendering of military honors will be 11 a.m. Friday, Aug. 24, directly at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, 31 Main St., East Haddam. Burial in the First Church Cemetery, East Haddam, will be private.

The family expressly requests that flowers be omitted and that donations in his memory be made to the following organizations to help fund educational scholarships that were dear to his heart: Bacon Academy, 611 Norwich Ave., Colchester, CT 06415; Nathan Hale-Ray High School, 15 School Dr., East Haddam, CT 06423; Project Oceanology, 1084 Shennecossett Rd., Groton, CT 06340; Westborough High School, 90 West Main St., Westborough, MA 01581; or to the Notre Dame Preparatory School and Marist Academy, 1300 Giddings Rd., Pontiac, MI 48340.

Portland

Edward S. Dunham

Edward "Ed" S. Dunham, 64, of Portland, passed from this life Monday, Aug. 13, after a brief illness. Ed was born Oct. 21, 1947, in Willimantic, and graduated from Windham High School. He resided in Middletown and Portland most of his adult life.

Ed was a pillar of the community, always quick to offer advice to politicians and public figures. He was formerly a member of the Portland Fire Department Company No. 1 and for many years served on the Portland Fair Committee. Ed was a licensed pyrotechnic engineer for the John and Michael Dapkus Fireworks Company and proudly served as the chairman of the Portland Fireworks Committee, always striving to have the best fireworks display in the state.

Ed attended a local culinary institute and was owner and manager of Frederico's Catering Service. He was the owner and manager of Haunted Star Productions, and provided sound and lighting for concerts and public events, as well as being an agent for many bands and vocalists.

Ed was an avid NASCAR enthusiast, being one of Joey Logano's greatest fans and a dear friend of Joey's grandfather, "Butch" Logano, who preceeded Ed in death.

For 14 years, Ed worked as house property manager and chef at Xi Chapter of Psi Upsilon Fraternity at Wesleyan where he was recognized as a brother. All 750 of Ed's fraternity brothers are grateful for his unparalleled leadership as property manager at 242 High St. and as chef of the Chique Chaque Dining Club.

Ed instilled in his young undergraduate brothers his ideals of providing service before self and taking personal responsibility at all times. The annual public service dinners at Psi Upsilon will be named in Ed's honor in perpetuity. Ed will posthumously receive the Bishop Welsh Lifelong Leadership Award, the fraternity's highest award this October at Wesleyan's Memorial Chapel.

Ed is sadly missed by his dear friend and business partner, Ian Pratt, the brothers of Psi Upsilon and his many close friends who he considered to be his family.

A memorial service to celebrate Ed's life will be held at the Wesleyan Psi Upsilon Fraternity, 242 High St., Middletown, Saturday, Aug. 25, from 2-4 p.m.

Each year, Ed worked endlessly to make his favorite town event, the Portland Fireworks, a huge success. Donations in memory of Ed can be made to Portland Fireworks, c/o Portland Police 265 Main St., Portland, CT. 06480.

To send an online expression of sympathy, visit portlandmemorialfh.net.

Colchester

Bethany Louise Manning

Bethany Louise Manning, 60, of Lebanon, passed away Tuesday, Aug. 21, in Colchester. Born April 21, 1952, in Willimantic, she was a daughter of Oliver Manning of Lebanon and the late Lucille (Storrs) Manning.

Bethany, a lifelong resident of Lebanon, graduated from Lyman Memorial High School and Mohegan Community College. She was a mail carrier in Chaplin, Eastford and Ashford for many years. Later, she was a caretaker and companion to homebound seniors. She had a gift for befriending isolated and lonely people.

In addition to her father, she leaves three loving sisters and their husbands: Mary Ann and Garland Thomen, Carolyn and Jim Dalton, and Dora Jean and David Brown; and a brother, Mike Proctor and his wife Pierrette. Bethany will be remembered as a devoted and doting aunt by her nieces and nephews and their partners: Marlies Thomen and Sean O'Brien; Emil Thomen; Seth and Veronica Thomen; Ryan and Colleen Brown; Jeremy and Amy Brown; Craig Dalton and Cecilia Durban; Julia Dalton; and Shaina Proctor. She was thrilled by her six grand-nieces and grand-nephews: Scotia Thomen-O'Brien; Koen and Sarah Thomen; and Dylan, Monica and Kenneth Brown. Bethany also leaves dozens of cousins, many other extended family members and friends.

A memorial service will be held Sunday, Sept. 2, at 3 p.m., at the First Congregational Church of Lebanon, West Town Street and Exeter Road, Lebanon. Burial will be private. There are no calling hours.

Donations in her memory may be made to Gina's Friends Fund with the Windham Hospital Foundation (windhamhospital.org/wh.nsf/View/GinasFriends).

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

Colchester

Evva Benson

Evva "Duff" (Ritson) Benson, of South Daytona, Fla., formerly of Manchester and Colchester, born Feb. 19, 1927, entered into eternal rest Aug. 14, 2012.

She was the beloved wife of 63 years of Robert Carl Benson of South Daytona, Fla., and Colchester; cherished mother of Ann Benson Frost and husband Gary Frost of Manchester, Linnea McGurk and husband Peter McGurk of Randolph, Mass., Eric R. Benson and wife Virginia Benson of St. Mary's, Ga., Carl E. Benson II and wife Tina Benson of Wolcott; adored grandmother of Meryl and Ariel Glassman, Michael and Daniel McGurk, Robert C. Benson II, as well as Kristi-Lynn, Kaitlyn, Samantha and Jocelyn Jacovino; great-grandmother of lucky little Aussie-boy John Robert Farland; beloved sister of Biantha "Sally" Yuska of Newington, and husband the late Edward Yuska and James L. Ritson and wife Joanne of Bloomfield; daughter of the late Merritt Bartlett Ritson and the late Jane Gallagher Ritson, both of Bloomfield. She also leaves an ever-growing multitude of nieces, nephews, great-nieces and great-nephews, and great-great-nieces and great-great-nephews.

At age 3, she traveled to her mother's homeland of Ireland in the company of her mother's cousin, so that she might know her grandparents. She lived in Ireland until age five. Mrs. Benson was a devoted communicant of Emmanuel Lutheran Church in Manchester, and Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church in New Smyrna Beach, Fla.

"Duff," as she was fondly called, first by her father and forever by her friends and family, was an accomplished artisan in many crafts, including gourmet cake decorating, quilting, the needle arts, sewing, culinary arts, and gardening. Her cakes and cookies were famous within her communities. She set an example of artistic excellence for her children, who all followed her into various artistic endeavors.

Duff graduated with honors from Bloomfield High School in 1946. She proudly earned and received a degree from Manchester Community College while in her 60s; in the late 1930s, as a teenager, she was noted in her home community of Bloomfield, as a markswoman of nearly unapproachable talent.

Duff was active in the Property Owners Association of Lake Hayward, Colchester, and served as the organization's president for two terms. She was also extremely active in the ladies' circles of both of her churches, and served in leadership roles within these circles. She was particularly active in the Ruth Circle of Emmanuel Lutheran Church. Through her Trinity Lutheran circles, she participated in and oversaw the creation of thousands of handmade quilts, all of which were donated to support victims of natural disasters worldwide. The circles also organized free school supplies for children in her local Florida community. Mrs. Benson worked, before retirement, as a teacher's aide in the Manchester school system.

A Florida memorial service was held Tuesday, Aug. 21, at Trinity Lutheran Church, Turnbull Bay Road, New Smyrna Beach, Fla. The Connecticut service will be held Saturday, Aug. 25, at 11 a.m., at Emanuel Lutheran Church, 60 Church St., Manchester.

Donations in her memory may be made to the Shriner's Children's Hospital.

Colchester

Jeanne R. Turgeon

Jeanne R. Turgeon, 62, formerly of Norwich, died Friday, Aug. 17, at the Apple Rehabilitation Center in Colchester.

Jeanne was born in Massachusetts on March 5, 1950, daughter of the late Edgar Turgeon. She worked as a clerk at the Norwich State Hospital for many years.

Ms. Turgeon is survived by and a daughter and her fiancé, Laurie Gangwisch and Sam Gottier of Canterbury; four grandchildren, Desiree, Amber and Alyssa Rogers and Sage Gangwisch; and two great grandchildren, Lila Jeanne and Gabriel Jonathan.

Jeanne was predeceased by her son, Steve Gangwisch.

A Mass of Christian Burial was held Tuesday, Aug. 21, at St. Patrick's Cathedral in Norwich. Burial followed in St. Joseph Cemetery in Norwich. Calling hours were Monday, Aug. 20, at the Cummings-Gagne Funeral Home Norwich.

For an online obituary and to share a condolence with the family, visit cummings-gagnefh.com.

Hebron

Linda G. Wadsworth

Linda G. (Powers) Wadsworth, 71, of Hebron, formerly of Lebanon, widow of William Wadsworth, died Monday, Aug. 20, in Windham Hospital. She was born Dec. 8, 1940, in Southbridge, Mass., daughter of the late Francis and Mildred (MacPherson) Powers.

In 1962, she moved to Willimantic and became the manager of Elm Market until its closing in 1983. Linda purchased Elm Package Store in the late 1980s, which remains family operated. She was a longtime member of Soroptimist International of Willimantic and the Chamber of Commerce. Linda and Bill enjoyed many miles traveling in their motorhome.

She is survived by son Walter Cichon and his wife Cathy of East Granby; daughter Barbara Calkins and her husband Brett and their children Anthony and Chloe, all of Hebron; sister Patricia Powers and her husband James of Southbridge; brother William Powers; and several nieces and nephews.

Linda was predeceased by a sister, Judy Voloka.

A special thank you to Elizabeth Visone for the many years of exceptional care she provided to Linda.

The family will receive relatives and friends today, Aug. 24, from 10-11 a.m., with the funeral service beginning at 11 a.m. at Potter Funeral Home, 456 Jackson St. (Rte. 195), Willimantic. Interment will follow in Greenman-Card Cemetery, Lebanon.

For those wishing to make a donation in Linda's memory, the family suggests Soroptimist International of Willimantic, P.O. Box 485, Mansfield Center, CT 06250.

For an online memorial guestbook and directions to the funeral home, visit potterfuneralhome.com.

Portland

Gita Roy

Gita Roy, M.D., FACC, FACP, 65, of Portland, passed away Monday, Aug. 20, at Middlesex Hospital.

Dr. Roy was born Jan. 4, 1947, in Calcutta, India. She was a graduate of Bethune College, University of Calcutta and Medical College Hospital and University of Calcutta. She served her internships at the University of Calcutta, Middlesex Hospital and was a resident, chief medical resident and special fellow at Charleston Area Medical Center at the University of West Virginia, as well as a special fellow at West Virginia University Medical Center in Morgantown.

Dr. Roy joined Middlesex Hospital in 1977 and was the associate director of cardiology from 1977 to 1990. She joined private practice at Middlesex Cardiology in 1990, and combined served the patients of Middlesex County for the past 35 years. In addition, Dr. Roy was assistant clinical professor of medicine at the University of Connecticut Medical Center in Farmington.

She was a beloved physician, colleague, specialist and patient advocate. She was a very brilliant student and was in the top 10 percent of her class. She was a devotee of Ramakrishna Order and was initiated by her beloved guru, Swami Swahananda.

She is survived by her mother, Sova Bhattacharya and her brothers, Kalyan Bhattacharya and Swapan Bhattacharya.

She was predeceased by her father, Dr. Manomohan Bhattacharya.

Calling hours will be held at Biega Funeral Home, 3 Silver St., Middletown, today, Aug. 24, from 4-7 p.m. Funeral services will be private.

Those who wish may send memorial contributions in Dr. Roy's name to "Ramakrishna Ashrama," c/o Swami Swahananda, Vedanta Society of California, 1946 Vedanta Pl., Hollywood, CA 90068.

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