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Specialist Caleb Frappier stands next to his fiancée, Kelly Dixon, just minutes after taking down his yellow ribbon from the tree at the Colchester Veterans Town Green last Saturday. Frappier is the fifth soldier to return home to Colchester from fighting overseas.

Welcoming Home One of Colchester's Own

by Melissa Roberto

Twenty-year-old Caleb Frappier of Colchester hadn't been home in two years since enlisting into the U.S. Army, and he admitted it was seeing his family, fiancée, friends and his dog, Princess, that he looked forward to the most on his journey home.

But as the young soldier stepped off of his plane at Bradley International Airport last Saturday, March 23, to reconnect with his loved ones, he certainly did not expect what was in store for him back in his hometown.

The town held its fifth Yellow Ribbon ceremony for the young soldier Saturday morning at the Veterans Town Green. Frappier was shocked to receive an escort from the Patriot Guard Riders on motorcycles and in trucks adorned with American flags from the airport to the green, where even more Patriot Guard Riders and residents were waiting to welcome him home.

Members of the Colchester Hayward Fire Department and Colchester Police Department also lined the green with the Patriot Guard Riders to show their appreciation for Frappier's service.

On Veterans Day last November, soldiers' family members tied a yellow ribbon around a tree on the green in honor of their loved ones serving overseas. When each soldier returns, a ceremony is held so the soldier can untie his/her ribbon.

"It was amazing, very well-organized and very professional," Frappier said, looking back on the event. "I did not expect any of that."

Frappier first landed on U.S. soil in January to return to Joint Base Lewis-McChord in Tacoma, Wash., where he is stationed. Prior to his return to the states, he spent nine months

serving as a designated marksman/gunner for the U.S. Army in Kandahar, Afghanistan. In Afghanistan, he was responsible for scanning, carrying out patrols and missions, setting up weapons on the vehicles and making sure weapons were operational.

Saturday's ceremony kicked off with an introduction by the leader of Colchester's Yellow Ribbon Committee, Sean O'Leary, followed by words from Ray Ryan, commander of the Veterans of Foreign War Post 6990; First Selectman Gregg Schuster; state representatives Linda Orange and Melissa Ziobron; civilian aide to the Secretary of the Army Gil Sanborn; and East Hampton resident Ann McLaughlin, who spearheaded the Yellow Ribbon ceremonies in her town, giving Colchester the inspiration to start its own.

Frappier's mom, Christine Bell, was one of the Colchester residents who launched a yellow ribbon committee in town. Since her son's departure, Bell has volunteered for organizations helping soldiers and their families and even founded the non-profit organization Parents of Soldiers Together-CT.

Bell has helped plan other yellow ribbon ceremonies in Colchester – but it was particularly meaningful to plan the one to celebrate her son's return.

"For me it was almost like giving birth again," she said. "There's so much excitement and I was so anxious."

On Saturday, McLaughlin said she was pleased to come out and thank Frappier for his service.

"I'm here today because of men and women like you that serve in the military," she told him during the ceremony. "I am free and I thank

See Colchester's Own Page 2

Finance Board Rejects EHHS Plan

by Joshua Anusewicz

After weeks of delay, the Board of Finance finally held its meeting on Wednesday night to vote on the proposed renovation project of East Hampton High School. But the anticipation held by over 50 residents in attendance, almost all of which were in favor of the project, quickly dissipated, as it became clear that the finance board would most likely turn down the \$52.47 million plan.

For the residents, their worst fears were realized, as the board voted 5-2 against the proposal. Board members Mary Ann Dostaler and Dave Monighetti were the two members who voted for the plan.

The proposed "renovate as new" project, which was developed by the High School Building Committee and approved by the Board of Education, needs to pass through the Board of Finance and the Town Council before heading to a town referendum where the residents get the opportunity to vote. The project, which would include a major overhaul of the entire facility and provide additional science space,

upgraded technology and updated infrastructure, was proposed at a cost of \$52,471,220, with the town on the hook for \$28,834,540 after a 52.5 percent reimbursement rate from the state.

Despite its substantial cost, the reception from residents for the project – at least those who have attended public meetings – has been mostly positive, with the focus being on the aging facility not passing the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) accreditation process, which the district is currently taking part in. If the school doesn't retain its accreditation, graduates would have a more difficult time when applying for colleges and, some have surmised, property values in town would take a major hit.

These points were brought up by a number of residents who spoke Wednesday, almost all of which were in favor of the project. Resident Thom Cordeiro, a father of three in the district and founder of the political action committee EHHS Renovate to Educate, stated that he was

"proud" of the school as a graduate himself, but that the school "could be so much better."

"You have an opportunity to do something great," implored Cordeiro. "It's in your hands."

Resident Danny Sahn, a father of two in the district, gave an emotional plea to the finance board, relating that he only wanted what was best for his children and the children of the town that will use the facility in the future.

"I don't care what it costs, I don't care what I have to pay," Sahn said. "I don't want to shortchange my kids."

But it wasn't just parents behind the project. Linda Chambers, a biology teacher at the high school, told the board the conditions of the science labs were "abysmal" and that teachers have been reduced to "learn how to dance around the lack of materials."

"I love the school," Chambers said, "but that's a real shame for our students."

Jeff Fidler, a recent graduate of the school, agreed. "This school doesn't make the mark for some [colleges]," he said. "That does not accu-

rately reflect the pool of students that are at this school."

Lizzie Galpin, currently a sophomore at the school, related that being at the school allows students to grow in a number of ways, and that she is concerned that her younger sister might not get the same chances she's had to do that. "This school means so much to us," Galpin said. "We are so privileged to be here. I would hate to think what would happen if that was taken away from us."

The public comments carried on for over an hour, with many residents pleading for the same thing: a chance to vote. But despite the rallying cry from the public, the air of the meeting quickly turned when the Board of Finance had its chance to speak. Most of the board's concern focused on two factors: the high cost of the project and the lack of information supplied by the building committee.

"I have a problem with the cost and a problem with the information," said board member

See EHHS Plan Page 2



First Selectman Gregg Schuster is shown here welcoming home Frappier at last Saturday's ceremony.



Frappier unties his yellow ribbon from the tree in the center of town.

Colchester's Own cont. from Front Page

you.” Frappier said the presence of town officials and residents that attended Saturday’s celebration was shocking. “I didn’t know who 90 percent of the people were but they all heard of me,” he said. “It’s one of those feelings that is hard to explain.” On Saturday, Frappier was reunited with his mom, stepdad, two of his sisters, Simcha and Hope Frappier, his baby brother, Sean Bell, grandmother, aunt and uncle, cousins, his close friend Justin McGrath and his fiancée, Kelly Dixon. Seeing his fiancée again in Colchester was one of the happiest moments of his life, Frappier said. Dixon knew about the celebration, but admitted she didn’t quite understand how big it was going to be.

“There was a lot more people than I expected,” she said. An aspect of the ceremony that Frappier also enjoyed was speaking with other veterans who came to show their respect. “It’s always an honor to meet the people that served before me and hear about their experiences in the military,” Frappier said. “It’s a very big plus for me.” The Patriot Guard Riders that escorted Frappier to the ceremony had, just the day before, traveled to Bradley International Airport to escort home the body of Captain Andrew Pedersen of Madison, who was tragically killed in action last week in Jalrez District, Afghanistan. Bell said hearing of Pedersen made her even more appreciative of her son’s safe return. She added that watching Frappier take down his

yellow ribbon was a “surreal moment.” “I’m watching him take down his ribbon but I’m also thinking about the other families who still have loved ones there,” she recalled. “Say a prayer for them everyday.” Frappier’s celebration extended into the evening with refreshments back at his home in Colchester. Patriot Guard Rider Don Camden, who was present during all of Frappier’s celebrations, said “the party didn’t stop.” On Monday, Frappier said he had already paid a visit to Bacon Academy – where he graduated in 2010 – to say hello to one of his favorite high school teachers, culinary teacher Donna Kaik. In two weeks, Frappier will travel to Texas to watch another sister, Faith Frappier, graduate from the U.S. Air Force Boot Camp.

Frappier said he is pleased to have a family member who can relate to his service. “The Air Force does aerial surveillance of ground troops,” he explained. “It’s nice to know my sister is always going to have my back.” When Frappier returns to Washington he said he will go back to the daily routine of waking up at 4:30 a.m. for morning formations, followed by physical fitness workouts and drills. The young soldier said he still has three years left in the U.S. Army and will have the option to reenlist when his time is up. For the next three weeks, however, Frappier said he will enjoy spending time with his loved ones. “I’ve been back in the states for a couple months,” he said, “but I never really felt home until I came back to Colchester.”

EHHS Plan cont. from Front Page

Ted Turner. “I’m not criticizing the work of the building committee, but we have to look out for the taxpayers’ best interests. A lot of people can’t afford this.” “A good financial decision is based on facts, not emotions. I feel my role is to not inject my personal opinion,” said board member Patience Anderson. She continued, “I ask myself, ‘Is this debt acceptable?’ To me, it’s not.” “There are too many extras included, and I think some other [design] options could have been presented,” said board member Tom O’Brien. Pertaining to the cost, a good amount of the conversation focused on the scope of the project, which has changed multiple times over the year-long development process. As presented on Wednesday, the renovation project included a few components that didn’t sit well with the finance board, including a lecture hall, lights on the soccer field, and moving the school district’s central offices into the high school. According to some of the finance board, the inclusion of these components wasn’t needed and could bring the cost down if eliminated from the scope. “This won’t take long; sharpen your pencils and see what’s really needed,” said O’Brien to the building committee. But Dostaler led the charge for keeping the project as is. “I’m 100 percent behind this,” he said. “The support we’ve seen [from the residents] is unprecedented and I believe and trust that the numbers put forward are sound.” The fact that the cost was an issue didn’t come as a surprise, but the fact that the finance board felt that they had a lack of information was far less expected. Multiple board members related that they had yet to see items like a comprehensive breakdown of the costs or a finalized report on contaminants in the facility. That announcement put the building committee members back on their heels, as they felt that all of the pertinent information had been shared and that the process was as transparent as possible. “I’m a bit flabbergasted,” said committee member Michelle Barber, acting as the voice for the committee. She said all of the information has been available, either from the committee or the town offices. Dostaler took it a step further, putting the onus

on her fellow board members for not seeking out the information if they felt uninformed. “I’m very upset,” said Dostaler. “We’ve been aware of this since the \$250,000 appropriation [for preliminary design fees last year] and at no time did anyone on this board express concerns or gather information.” She continued, “I find it offensive that the board has been tone-deaf to the building committee and the residents,” which drew applause from the pro-project audience. But Board of Finance Chairman Matthew Walton rebuked her claims. “And you said nothing of the taxpayers!” he said. The taxpayers replied for Dostaler: “Let the voters decide!” “If the community disagrees [with the proposed project], they’ll vote no!” Dostaler added. The conversation didn’t change the minds of the board members, as the vote came down 5-2 to reject the proposal. The conversation, however, continued on to discuss how to move forward, possibly with a slimmed-down scope and direction from the finance board on what might pass through to a referendum. The main sticking points, again, were the soccer field lights and the Board of Education offices, which the board felt could be removed from the proposal. Walton and O’Brien both stated that by removing those elements and bringing down the cost, their votes might be swayed in favor of the proposal. But, according to Barber, the process is a little more difficult than simply hitting the delete key. The project, she said, would have to head back to the building committee, who would have to employ the help of the architecture firm, SLAM, and the project manager, Capital Regional Education Council (CREC), to draft up a new design and scope. The design would then go to the construction company, Downes Construction, for pricing, then to the Board of Education for another approval. That process could take a considerable amount of time, which the town doesn’t have a lot of if they hope to approve the project. The deadline for submitting applications for reimbursement from the state is June 30, which means the town has to pass a referendum and

have completed education specifications – which the Board of Education is currently working on – by that date. It’s not impossible to reach that deadline but, as Dostaler pointed out, “the window is closing.” Not only that, but narrowing the scope could mean a lower reimbursement rate for the project, Barber said. The majority of the finance board, however, seemed confident that removing the lights and the central offices from the plan would move the proposal along to the Town Council. “The consensus seems to be there,” said board member Tim Csere. But despite what seemed like a compromise, early calculations on how much those changes would amount to – less than \$1 million – didn’t sit well with the audience, who made their displeasure known, who seemed to feel that what amounted to a small portion in the grand scheme of the project was not a good reason to hold up the process and put the accreditation in jeopardy. “I’m not a happy camper right now, I have to be honest,” said Board of Education Chairman

Mark Laraia. “You must have a crystal ball, because you know how the residents will vote. I’m very disappointed.” Though another public comment section was not part of the agenda, the audience was compelled to continue the discussion, even as the finance board made a motion to adjourn the meeting. One resident pointed out that the tax impact of making the recommended changes only amounted to a few dollars per taxpayer, a revelation that resulted in continued shouts from the audience. The finance board was not swayed, maintaining that the building committee would have to head back to the drawing board as instructed, with the future of the project up in the air.

E-Mail Letters

Letter writers are encouraged to email their letters of 300 words or less to rivereast@snet.net. Letters submitted without a contact phone number will not be published.

Portland Residents Honored For Volunteerism

by Joshua Anusewicz

In small communities, volunteers are often an integral part of what makes a town a better place. Even more often, usually by the volunteers' own volition, the work that is done by these selfless citizens is unheralded, with little or no fanfare.

On Sunday, however, three Portland residents, volunteers all, were honored with the Ralph Paley Spirit of Portland Award, sponsored by the Portland Senior Center. This year's recipients were Phyllis Clark, John Dillon and Joanna Formica.

This year marked the fifth year the award was presented, but just the second year the award was made in honor of the late Ralph Paley, who passed away in October 2011. Paley was a founder of Paley Brothers Hay and Shavings, where he – much like the recipients of the award that bears his namesake – exhibited the virtues of charity and selflessness towards his fellow Portland residents.

Paley's granddaughter, Jillian McDermott, spoke on behalf of her family on Sunday, calling her grandfather an "unsung hero" that always put others' needs before his own.

"This award is to honor those in the community who don't always get the recognition they deserve," McDermott announced.

And this year's slate of recipients certainly fit the bill. The first to receive their award was Clark, a longtime Portland resident that, according to senior center director Mary Flood, "believes the strength of Portland is in its residents." Clark has served in various volunteer capacities over the years, including – but certainly not limited to – the senior center's Sojourn Bear program, Red Cross blood drives, Portland's Community Emergency Response Team

(CERT), the Connecticut Horticultural Society, First Congregational Church, and the local Girl Scouts.

"She's a go-to person," said Flood.

The second to receive the award was Dillon. A Portland native, Dillon was a key member of the group that resurrected the Portland Agricultural Fair, and remains a member of the fair committee. Dillon was also active in Boy Scouts for a number of years, and has been involved with St. Mary's Church, the church's youth group, Knights of Columbus, Portland Lions Club and a member of the Inland Wetlands Commission.

"And on and on and on..." said Flood, jokingly, to which one member of the laughing audience shouted, "He can't say no!"

The final recipient was Formica. Though just shy of her 97th birthday, Formica has continued to serve at the Portland Senior Center, leading Flood to make her promise that she "stay out of the kitchen and enjoy the day" while receiving her award. Flood, who called Formica "the heart and soul" of the senior center, became emotional while reminiscing over all the work Formica had done at the center over the years.

"She's the first one here and the last to leave," Flood said. "She's an inspiration, and an example of how to age gracefully."

"This is my second home," Formica stated proudly as she received her award.

Each award recipient was also presented with a citation from the state legislature, which were presented by state Rep. Christie Carpino, state Sen. Art Linares and state Rep. Joe Serra of Middletown, who is the nephew of Formica and a Portland native. Carpino called participating in the award ceremony "one of the most heart-



Ruth Kalinowski, left, a member of the Senior Center Advisory Board, presented the Ralph Paley Spirit of Portland Award to Phyllis Clark last Sunday, one of three recipients to be honored with distinction. The other two recipients were residents John Dillon and Joanna Formica.

warming things we get to do," and lauded Portland residents for their continued commitment to volunteerism and citizenship.

After the awards were presented, a wave of volunteers ascended on the room to set up an

array of refreshments for the attendees. It was simply another example of the importance of altruism in a small community, and the dedication of many residents to making Portland a better place.

Hard Budget Decisions Loom for East Hampton Finance Board

by Joshua Anusewicz

While every budget season is filled with its own trials and tribulations, it appears that this year's process will present some particularly formidable challenges for the Board of Finance. At a meeting on Monday, the general feeling was that reductions would have to be made, but where they would be made is still unclear.

Last week, the finance board was presented with the proposed budget for the 2013-14 fiscal year, which currently totals \$39,793,422, up from the current year's spending plan of \$38,345,762. The proposed budget includes \$28,096,310 for the Board of Education, \$9,724,919 for town operations, \$1,102,277 for debt service, and \$869,916 for fund transfers.

The proposed school budget is a \$1,385,470, or 5.19 percent, increase from the current fiscal year. The proposed town operations budget increased \$289,538 from the current fiscal year, while debt service and fund transfers went down \$94,260 and \$133,088, respectively.

Overall, the proposed budget increase would be \$1,447,660, or 3.78 percent. The budget proposal would yield a mill rate of 27.13, a 1.16 mill increase from the current fiscal year.

At the meeting last week, the finance board mostly reserved comment on the spending package, delaying their thoughts until this week. And, on Monday, the board members offered their opinions – but not before residents had a chance to speak, mostly to defend the proposed school budget.

As has been the case at recent meetings regarding the proposed Board of Education budget, the comments from the public – primarily parents of students – staunchly supported the

proposed increase, particularly the integration of all-day kindergarten. The proposed budget would add additional sections of all-day kindergarten and make major upgrades to the district's technology, and would also include additional faculty within the district.

Resident Jessica Stewart, who has become a regular at recent meetings, defended the addition of more sections of all-day kindergarten, but also went a step further, advocating for all kindergarten sections to be all-day. Many have pointed out that upcoming state education standards are expected to include mandates for all-day kindergarten and, as Stewart pointed out from a state Department of Education report, East Hampton is one of a handful of Connecticut towns that will not offer all-day kindergarten to all of its students in the fall.

Other residents made the all-day kindergarten discussion more personal; Peter Correia, the father of a kindergartner, related that he recently volunteered in his child's class, and his "head was spinning" due to how much teachers had to cram into a half-day curriculum. Resident Lynn Collison told the board that she was compelled to keep one of her children back in kindergarten, calling her child's experience "crummy."

But not every resident is hip to the idea. Don Coolican, a member of the school board who said he was speaking as an individual, stated that other studies show that all-day kindergarten actually has shown to have "no value" to students beyond the fourth grade. He added that the district, in recent years, has seen a decrease in enrollment coupled with an increase in staff-

ing, a point Coolican has raised multiple times in past budget deliberations.

Even though a healthy part of the public comments focused on all-day kindergarten, the finance board targeted the entire budget when conveying its opinions. Most of those opinions, however, centered on the substantial increase proposed, particularly in the school budget. Board member Tim Csere pointed out that the Board of Education budget has increased over \$8 million since 2005, a trend that he called "unsustainable."

"But has this town supported education? You betcha," Csere said.

Chairman Matthew Walton concurred. "We can't sustain the direction we're going," he stated. "It's too much."

Despite the substantial proposed increase, some board members realized the necessity of many of the funding requests. Ted Turner supported the increase in technology, calling what is currently in place "terrible," and the all-day kindergarten integration. "If we can get at least the new technology and one new teacher [for kindergarten], I'll be happy," said Turner.

Board member Mary Ann Dostaler threw her support behind the full budget increase, saying it would be "irresponsible" of the board to not approve the funding request. "We have the opportunity to throw our support behind this education budget, with the caveat that the Board of Education be fiscally accountable on a going-forward basis," she added.

The idea of the Board of Education being "fiscally accountable" was mentioned by several members of the finance board, which struck

a chord with some of the school board members in attendance. Board of Education Vice Chairman Joanne Barmasse pointed out that the board has made multiple efforts to cut costs in past years, including restructuring insurance and benefit plans for employees and negotiating salary concessions from certified staff.

Other board members hinted at a lack of communication between the two boards throughout the year – until budget season – and that the finance board is not usually keyed in on the needs of the school district. "The board [of education] comes and says, 'This is what we need, give us this,' and that's the last we hear from them," said board member Tom O'Brien.

That comment didn't sit well with Board of Education Chairman Mark Laraia, who contested that the school board has recently made an effort to include the finance board in all budget discussions. Laraia conceded, however, that no matter the finance board's decision on the budget, "we'll make it work."

Communication, or lack thereof, between the two boards will matter little come Monday, when a public hearing is scheduled for the finance board to make its decision on the proposed budget. While no information is known on if, how, or where the budget will be cut, the discussion Monday night led most to believe that reductions – perhaps substantial in nature – are on the horizon.

Monday's public hearing will be held at 7 p.m. at East Hampton High School, 15 N. Maple St.

A Night at the Symphony – in Hebron

by Geeta Schrayter

Last Saturday, classical music filled the auditorium at RHAM High School as the Hartford Symphony Orchestra came to perform “The Genius of Mozart,” an all-Mozart performance. The orchestra was brought to town by the Hebron Women’s Club, AHM Children’s Trust Fund and the RHAM Education Foundation as a way to raise money for the three groups and bring a cultural event to the area.

As someone who’s enjoyed classical music for as long as I can remember (growing up, my mother would keep it on at home as background music, and I think my best friend and I were the only middle school girls whose favorite afterschool activity was taking a nap in her room to the sound of Mozart, Vivaldi, Bach, Beethoven and other such greats), I made sure to mark the March 23 event on my calendar when I first heard about it last year. And I was excited when it finally came.

Prior to the start of the performance, attendees mulled around, found their seats and chatted among themselves. Their voices echoed around the room while the orchestra set up on stage, but as soon as the musicians were ready and the show began, all talking ceased.

During the introduction, AHM Children’s Trust Fund Chairwoman Kay Corl said to the audience “you have given yourself a treat” – and she was right. When the orchestra began to play Mozart’s Symphony No. 1 in E-Flat Major – the first symphony he created, at 8 years old – the entire audience became transfixed.

Everyone was still apart from the musicians, who skillfully moved fingers and bows across violins and cellos, trumpets, horns, bass and more. As I looked out over the audience, I noted most seats were occupied by adults – but I was thrilled to see there was also a number of children scattered throughout the auditorium.

At a December press conference, I met with area residents, state officials and members of the groups sponsoring the performance to discuss the event’s return, and at the time, Susan Griffiths of the RHAM Education Foundation said listening to a symphony that was created by an 8-year old could be an inspiring experi-

ence for children. State Sen. Cathy Osten noted the performance could give kids who didn’t hear classical music at home the opportunity to listen and potentially have their interest piqued, while state Rep. Pam Sawyer said that, for child musicians, the experience represented “the pinnacle of hopes.”

I believe those things are true, and so, I was happy to see there were actually some children in attendance. In fact, my favorite part of the performance, aside from the music itself, was seeing how mesmerized a little girl a few rows in front of me became. Although she was young – only 5 or 6 – she sat absolutely still as the musicians played, and when the first piece came to an end, she clapped enthusiastically and turned to the person sitting beside her with wide eyes and a giant smile as if she’d just seen Santa Claus. It was a heartening sight.

Osten had added back in December that when budgets are tight, arts and music are usually the first things to get cut in schools. She said the concert was a way to engage people in what could become a “lost art.” While the little girl was only one person, one is still better than none, and I’ll remain optimistic thanks to the dozen or so children I saw Saturday night that classical music *won’t* become lost. Instead, I feel it should be fostered. After all, apart from the often celestial sound of the genre, classical music is said to have a number of benefits.

In a 2004 study by the Department of Psychology at the University of California, San Diego, it was found that listening to classical music lowered blood pressure (no other genre was found to have the same effect). Then, a 2000 study from the *Journal of Behavioral Medicine* showed listening to classical music helped individuals who had trouble sleeping get some Zs, and considering the concert brought a tear to my eye on more than one occasion, I can say I agree with the 2001 study from Southern Methodist University that found classical music had an effect on emotion and expression.

And, while controversial, there’s also the “Mozart Effect,” which was the result of a 1993 study that said after listening to Mozart’s sonatas, subjects had better spatial reasoning skills



On March 23, residents of Hebron and surrounding areas were treated to a captivating performance of Mozart’s work performed by the Hartford Symphony Orchestra.

and increased spatial IQ scores. And different studies have suggested classical music can foster brain development in children (a reason my mother sent a couple of *Baby Mozart* CDs to my infant nephew) and even help premature babies gain weight faster.

When considering the above, and listening to the layers in each of Mozart’s symphonies and reflecting over the fact he wrote them all himself, his compositions make today’s idea of the term “music,” and the excitement we get when we find out a favored artist wrote their own lyrics, pale greatly in comparison.

During Saturday’s performance, there was a pattern of captivated silence whenever the orchestra filled the auditorium with the melodious sounds of Mozart, followed by a roar of applause and excited chatter between each piece. Along with Mozart’s first symphony, those in attendance were able to enjoy his Concerto in A Major for Clarinet and Orchestra, Concerto No. 3 in G Major for Violin and Orchestra and Symphony No. 41 in C Major – the last he ever wrote.

Conductor and violinist Leonid Segal said in an interview included in the brochure that the clarinet concerto – which was my favorite – was one of the most loved, while the violin concerto – which tied for that top spot – was one of the most performed.

On Tuesday, Hebron Woman’s Club Member Marcia Tecca said while each organization received proceeds from the concert to help support their work, the value in the performance didn’t have to do with money.

“The value of the event is not in money, but in the enrichment of our communities’ lives and in the support of keeping alive symphonic music by helping to grow an audience,” she said, adding many well established orchestras are under financial stress and the Hartford Symphony Orchestra “is a gift to our state.”

“It’s good to be a part of keeping that organization healthy,” she said.

I agree wholeheartedly, and when I attend the event next year (as I most assuredly will), I’ll hope to see an even greater attendance and more mesmerized children.

Solar Plan Gets Thumbs-Up from East Hampton Council

by Joshua Anusewicz

On Tuesday, the Town Council unanimously granted Town Manager Michael Maniscalco the authority to enter into a purchase agreement that will supply solar energy to Memorial School and the Water Pollution Control Authority.

The proposition of adding solar energy to the municipal facilities was discussed at the council’s previous meeting in March, but the council elected to wait until they saw a more comprehensive proposal from Solar City, the company tabbed with developing the project.

According to Maniscalco, the plan comes from a Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM) program where municipalities are asked to submit plans for solar energy on town buildings. The program is coupled with an auction of Zero Emission Renewable Energy Credits that would facilitate the design, construction, and maintenance of the solar arrays at no cost to the town. After the solar arrays are developed, Maniscalco said the town would be able to purchase electricity at a lower cost

than what Connecticut Light & Power currently offers.

Through CCM, 20 alternative energy providers were taken on walkthroughs of the two town facilities and tasked with drafting up a solar plan. Solar City, which has handled over 400 projects in Connecticut, was chosen by an independent consultant to develop the East Hampton project. Solar City’s resume includes a recent solar project at nearby Glastonbury High School and the Glastonbury Town Hall.

The solar arrays in East Hampton would provide a quarter of the electricity needed for Memorial School and half of the electricity needed for the WPCA. The arrays at the school would be located on the roof, while the arrays at the WPCA would be in an unused grassy area near the facility. Rob Miller, a project manager with Solar City, was on hand Tuesday to present the mock-ups of the project, adding that the solar arrays at the WPCA would not be visible from the road, a concern in the past.

Maniscalco added that he was recently in contact with Gregg Schuster, first selectman of Colchester, which also utilizes the WPCA through a Joint Facilities agreement, and that Schuster was “on board” with the idea.

Satisfied with the proposal, the council voted 6-0 in favor of the motion. Chairwoman Sue Weintraub was not present.

* * *

In other housekeeping news, the council okayed a date for a town meeting to approve the purchase of a new fire engine for the East Hampton Volunteer Fire Department.

According to Maniscalco, the town meeting would be held for residents to approve a \$645,000 bonding agreement to purchase the engine, which was found through a bid process headed by a truck committee within the fire department. In past months, the committee has gone back and forth with the council on purchasing an engine, which the department has said it is sorely in need of.

Mike Rich, the chairman of the truck committee, said the engine would be custom-made to the specifications of the town. “The department and the fire commission feel that this is a better quality truck and meets the needs of the department and the town,” said Rich.

The committee had originally proposed purchasing a “demo” model fire engine that would have cost less, but would have needed upgrades to meet the department’s specifications, Rich said. Rich added that the department “felt better overall” that the decision was made to go through the bid process and choose the custom-made engine in the end.

The council voted 6-0 to approve the town meeting. The town meeting will be held on Monday, April 29, at 7 p.m. at East Hampton High School, 15 N. Maple St.

* * *

The next regular meeting of the Town Council is scheduled for Tuesday, April 9, at 6:30 p.m. at East Hampton High School.

Hebron Selectmen OK \$8.37 Million Town Govt. Budget

by Geeta Schrayter

The Board of Selectmen Tuesday voted unanimously to send a proposed 2013-14 general government budget of \$8,363,390 to the Board of Finance. The proposal is a 2.26 percent increase over current year spending.

The number is \$103,393 less than what Town Manager Andy Tierney proposed on March 15, due mostly to a lower insurance increase. When Tierney first presented the budget, insurance was calculated using a 24.95 percent increase. However, after going out to bid, that number dropped to 11.33 percent, which translated to a \$62,093 reduction. Further decreases are also expected once the RHAM Board of Education finalizes its budget (which will also show an insurance savings).

Tierney added there are also potential savings from the Hebron Board of Education if it decides to use the insurance savings to lower its bottom line – something resident Henry Sawicki said Tuesday he hoped would be the case. The Board of Education should “hold their feet to the fire,” he said, and use the savings to decrease their budget.

“If they could live with the budget [before the lower insurance rate came in] why not live with it now and reduce the budget?” Sawicki asked rhetorically, and implored the Board of Finance to “watch” the school board to make sure the insurance savings does indeed come out of the budget.

At it stands, along with the proposed town government budget, the overall proposed budget for 2013-14 includes \$12,168,256 for the Hebron Board of Education and \$14,800,636 for Hebron’s portion of the RHAM education budget, bringing the total proposed budget to \$35,322,282.

The budget the selectmen approved Tuesday includes \$6,574,625 for the town government; a \$558,325 contribution to Capital Improvement (CIP) for projects over \$25,000; a \$100,000 contribution to Open Space; a \$10,687 contribution for non-recurring capital projects; a \$69,445 contribution to capital projects costing between \$5-\$25,000; a \$50,000 contribution to revaluation; and \$990,308 for debt service.

The board also recommended a total proposed CIP budget of \$846,641 to the Board of Finance, which includes the above \$558,325 along with a remaining balance of \$153,047 from previous appropriations; \$103,269 in Local Capital Improvement Program (LoCIP) funding; and \$32,000 in reimbursement from the Historic Restoration Fund. If the CIP budget passes, the money will be used to fund a number of projects including, for the Public Works Department, road resurfacing and road improvements costing \$238,811 and partial funding for a new dump with a plow at \$84,000. Funds would also be used for renovations to bathrooms at Gilead Hill School, totaling \$50,000, and another \$50,000 would be set aside for engineering and design to the parking lot at Hebron Elementary School. Capital Improvement Program funding would also allow for a police vehicle, an upgrade to the mechanical system at Douglas Library and thermal imaging cameras for the fire department.

At Tuesday’s meeting, Board of Selectmen Chairman Jeff Watt explained a majority of the 2.26 percent increase to the town budget was due to restoring services that had been cut at the end of last year’s budget process: the library,

transfer station, Open Space and some of the CIP items. Apart from that, he explained the remaining increase could be attributed to insurance and said after last year, “the feeling is that we cut too much” from the town.

Selectwoman Gayle Mulligan added “there are only so many things we can cut.”

“I thought last year’s cuts were too deep,” she said. “The first budget I thought was acceptable.”

Mulligan explained the town had no say over the Board of Education budgets which constitute 76 percent of the overall budget and are usually a topic of contention. She urged residents to attend the Board of Education meetings and voice their opinions if they were unhappy with the numbers. In addition, she said residents should attend the Board of Finance meetings, since they’re the ones who control the bottom line.

“I think it’s a great budget,” she added. “There are some other things I’d like to see in it, but the 2 percent [increase] is basically zero because we’re bringing things back to where it should be.”

Mulligan went on to say she supported the budget and asked that the public do so too.

“We really need more than 20 percent [of voters] to come out and vote.”

Selectman Brian O’Connell said he supported the numbers as well, and said that, as an individual who’s been involved in various capacities throughout town over the years, he understands the public’s pain.

“You feel the pain when you hear from people how hard it is,” he said, adding “you bite the bullet, tighten your belts and make due

with what you’ve got. That being said, the budget we’ve got is a good budget.”

He said the town “cut where we could cut” and there were some areas – such as health insurance – where the town could go out to bid “to make the best of the situation” but not much else.

“That system is broken,” he said. “We’re not going to fix it here in this room so we have to suck it up.”

That being said, O’Connell added there was also a population shift at RHAM which meant the town had to shoulder a larger levy and the town’s debt management fund was now depleted. But he said things were turning around, and he supported the budget.

“I do support the budget. The numbers aren’t where I want to see them in the bigger picture but I think it’s a prudent budget,” he said.

Selectmen Dan Larson and Mark Stuart were absent at Tuesday’s meeting, but those present voted unanimously to send the \$8.37 million town government budget on to the Board of Finance. At the meeting, Tierney also noted the overall budget was still “fluid,” and numbers would continue to decrease once the education budgets were finalized. The RHAM Board of Education is scheduled to meet on Monday, April 1, to discuss the budget, while the Hebron Board of Education has a meeting planned for Tuesday, April 2.

The Board of Finance is scheduled to conduct a budget hearing Thursday, April 11, at 7 p.m. in the RHAM High School Auditorium where the final numbers will be presented. That will then lead up to a referendum vote on Tuesday, May 7.

Marlborough Finance Board Looks at Local, Regional School Budgets

by Melissa Roberto

At its budget workshop Wednesday night, the Marlborough Board of Education listened to presentations on the proposed local and regional school budgets – both of which feature increases over current year spending.

Marlborough Superintendent of Schools David Sklarz started things off with a presentation on the school board’s proposed \$7.37 million budget for the 2013-14 fiscal year – an increase of \$172,924, or 2.40 percent, over the current year.

Sklarz shared with the finance board what items are driving this proposed increase, including increases in the number of Marlborough students attending magnet schools, the number of students receiving special education services at MES, the capital outlay account and a large increase in health insurance.

Health insurance, however, which was proposed at a 26.93 percent increase over the current fiscal year, is expected to drop, Sklarz said. The town’s insurance company, Anthem, is still calculating what that decrease will be.

The initial health insurance jump was primarily caused by a “unique” situation of employees on long-term medical leave, the superintendent added.

Another increase that Sklarz communicated is a 100 percent increase in the capital outlay account, which was funded at \$0 in the current fiscal year. The capital account was proposed at \$33,697, with \$20,000 proposed for security at Marlborough Elementary School; the rest is to go toward replacing and purchasing instructional equipment.

Board of Finance member Susan Leser balked at the capital spending proposed for replacing desks and furniture, saying they didn’t need to be replaced. She also had difficulty with the 13.43 percent increase proposed for supplies and materials, which Sklarz said would primarily be used to buy supplies for the implementation of the new Common Core State Standards.

“It sounded like that was mostly textbooks and library books,” she said. “We don’t need to do that right now. It can wait another year or two.”

Finance board chairwoman Evelyn Godbout said the board did a “very good” job at this year with teacher contract negotiations. The certified personnel accounts which covers contractual salaries for administrators, teachers and other support activities is proposed at a 2.98 percent decrease. Leser, however, didn’t agree.

Another aspect highlighted by Sklarz – and later by finance members and even the public – was the per pupil expenditure (PPE) for MES students. This is a calculation of how much the district spends on each student. The figure is calculated by taking the budget and dividing it by the number of students in the district. Marlborough’s PPE is \$11,014, which Sklarz shared is the second to lowest amount the district spends on the school in the state.

Sklarz enthusiastically relayed information about the students’ Connecticut Mastery Test scores, which he said prove that MES teachers do their job well – despite the low PPE.

“I’m not saying these numbers are nice; they are amazing!” the superintendent told the finance board.

He shared that each grade had “remarkable” math and reading scores, which ranged from 60.8 to 96 percent of students at or above the CMT goal in the school.

Also, according to the Benchmark Education Company calculations, Marlborough Elementary School sixth-grade students had a 100 percent proficiency in math in 2012, which outscored a number of larger districts including Columbia, Farmington, Glastonbury, Hebron and New Canaan.

But finance board member Cliff Denniss said he finds PPE to be “quite bogus” – not, however, because it’s low but because it is a calculation that does not do the Marlborough district justice.

Denniss’ argument was that the PPE calculation ranks all districts in the state, which he said consists of large and small districts which, by necessity, pay for different things. The finance member then read off a long list of items he gathered from researching the Middletown and Greenwich districts. He shared that the two budgets include several expenses that drive their

PPE up that the Marlborough district isn’t even responsible for covering. He added this difference can be found in several other districts in the state compared to Marlborough.

“All of these things are different in school districts,” he stressed. “It’s misleading.”

He then said if the town’s debt – and several other expenses – were factored into the Marlborough budget as they are in other districts, the district’s PPE would skyrocket.

On the subject, Sklarz pointed out that he always keeps in mind that Marlborough is a one-school district, which is “rare.”

Finance members Lesser and Godbout, as well as First Selectwoman Cathi Gaudinski, selectman Dick Shea and Board of Education member Carole Shea all spoke in support of Denniss’ argument.

Shea, in particular, said the public often complains about the low per pupil expenditure ranking to the Board of Education. He said the ranking is one that often gets “muddled” because school board members aren’t given the opportunity to explain why it is low in comparison to other districts in the state.

* * *

Following Sklarz’s presentation, RHAM Superintendent of Schools Bob Siminski presented the proposed RHAM middle and high school budget, a \$26.17 million spending plan. Due to the makeup of students that attend the two schools, Marlborough is only responsible for 28.19 percent of that amount, with Hebron and Andover residents paying for the less. (This is a slight drop from the 29.16 percent Marlborough is responsible for in the current year, due to a slight drop in enrollment of Marlborough students expected to attend the schools next year.)

Major increases in the RHAM budget are seen in negotiated salaries, health insurance, magnet school tuition and transportation, Siminski said.

The health insurance increase was actually lowered since Siminski finalized the first draft of the budget to the RHAM school board last month, he said. Originally, the health insurance account totaled \$608,029. The account was

since lowered to \$324,672 which reflects an increase of \$324,672, or 13.43 percent, over the current fiscal year.

The 13.43 percent increase in health insurance was due to the cost of benefits, national health care and increased staff enrollment, Siminski explained.

Also, the number of students in the district attending magnet schools is anticipated to rise from 56 students in the current school year to 79 students next year.

In his presentation, Siminski also highlighted costly technology upgrades/replacements the district needs. Those included an estimated \$330,000 Voice Over IP telephone system, as well as 140 laptops for students to be able to take the new federally-mandated Smarter Balanced test, which is required to be taken on a computer and will replace the CMT.

Godbout was hesitant about the costly technology upgrades. She said the district could potentially find cheaper technology to purchase.

Overall, though, the finance board members seemed pleased with both school budgets but didn’t have too much to say, as they said they felt it was a lot of information to digest in one night.

“I think so far most of the information we’ve received from people have been fiscally responsible,” said Leser.

Godbout said “like always,” the RHAM budget was “lean.”

Leser admitted she found approximately \$314,000 she could cut from the local school budget.

At the end of the meeting during public comments, selectwoman Cathi Gaudinski said she found both presentations to be “beneficial and helpful.” Her only concern was the low public turnout.

“I wish more people were here for the discussion,” she said.

Discussion on the local Board of Education budget will continue at the next Board of Finance meeting on April 2, 7 p.m. at the MES library. The RHAM Board of Education will hold a meeting on its budget next Monday, 6:30 p.m. at RHAM High School.

Colchester Residents Bring Back Community Garden

by Melissa Roberto

The farm-friendly town of Colchester just got a little farm-friendlier, thanks to a small group of residents and the Social Services Department who have joined forces to bring back the use of a garden in town that has been fallow for the last year.

The “Colchester Giving Garden” is located behind the Colchester Senior Center. It was formerly known to many in town as the “Green Team Intergenerational Garden” – but its new name will be quite fitting to its purpose.

The garden will now be used for volunteers to plant and grow vegetables that will be given to the Colchester Food Bank each week. The food bank – located just 200 yards from the garden – is run by Colchester’s Youth and Social Services Department, and serves local individuals and families who may need assistance in purchasing food.

Currently, the food bank buys some of its produce from local grocers in town. Social Services Coordinator Amy McClafferty said using produce from the garden instead would potentially save the food bank \$100 each week.

Individuals in charge of the garden are also in talks with the Senior Center and local churches in town to possibly donate any extra produce the garden has to senior citizens or churches that participate in Colchester’s Free Weekday Lunch program – a program that addresses homelessness in town.

The giving garden was spearheaded by Colchester resident Marycia Malloy, who came up with the idea while working at the Provider Farm in Salem last July. At the time, Malloy said the farm was looking for places to bring its excess produce, so she began to deliver some of it to Colchester’s food bank and thought it would be a great concept to start in Colchester.

“To be able to provide food for our town right in our town is self-sustaining and we can take a little bit more responsibility for that,” she said of the idea.

While dropping off extra produce to the food bank, Malloy shared her idea with McClafferty, who helped communicate the idea to Colchester Garden Club President Katherine Kosiba. Malloy and Kosiba then reached out to two other residents they knew were interested in restoring life to the former garden: Peggy Filloramo and Sumner Beal – who is a 15-year-old agricultural student at Lyman Memorial High School.

The four residents are just a handful of the volunteers who will have the opportunity to dedicate their time at the giving garden. Kosiba explained that once it kicks off, the garden will be run by a volunteer governing group made

up of volunteers responsible for overseeing the guidelines for the garden in addition to planting, growing, picking and delivering the crops.

The volunteer-run garden will also promote educational opportunities to volunteers that are similar to the former Green Team program in town. The program connected children and senior citizens through gardening by educating them about gardening procedures coupled with the preparation and serving of a healthy snack. The Green Team was in operation for 13 years before ending in 2012 due to the retirement of a Youth Services employee that was never replaced.

While the program still has not been replaced, Kosiba said the giving garden will offer several opportunities for individuals interested in becoming educated about gardening. In addition to being available for local individuals interested in volunteering, the garden will also be a site that students working towards a career in horticulture can use to complete community service hours or even an internship, Kosiba said.

During the development of the garden proposal, the four residents researched other farms in the state that had similar methods, such as the Common Good Garden in Old Saybrook and the UConn Cooperative Extension Model Community Garden in Haddam, which both deliver produce to soup kitchens.

The research helped the residents’ determine that the garden will follow gardening practices from the UConn School of Agriculture, which is associated with the services of the community garden in Haddam.

“It’s important for us to do it as organically and naturally as possible,” Kosiba explained.

The garden will grow harvest without the use of pesticides, and will also enforce the washing of volunteers’ hands before and after handling the produce.

Also, Kosiba stressed that the garden will be run on a “zero dollar budget” of no cost to the town or to individuals receiving the produce. This will be made possible due to existing gardening tools and a new wheelbarrow that were bought with the help of a Connecticut Master Gardener Association grant during the operation of the Green Team. Other donations to the garden in past years included six raised beds, manure to enhance the soil, and even a fence and gate that was installed by the town’s Park and Recreation maintenance team.

“It’s making use of something that is there,” she added. “[The garden] had everything we needed to go forward with it.”

If a problem arises in the future and money



The new Colchester Giving Garden, located behind the senior center, will boast veggies to be given to the town’s food bank.

is needed, however, Kosiba said additional grants could be applied for or volunteers would look for donations.

In order to repurpose the old garden located behind the senior center, residents behind the plan had to seek approval from the owners of the senior center property, the Bacon Academy Board of Trustees. The board gave its blessing on March 18, and on Wednesday, board chairwoman Diana Giles had only positive things to say about the proposal.

“It’s such a wonderful concept,” she said. “The proposal they gave to us was so well-prepared. ... They obviously thought carefully about how they could make it work to provide for people in town who maybe don’t have access to fresh produce the way most of us do.”

Following the property owners’ approval, Kosiba, Malloy and Beal then presented their proposal to the Board of Selectmen in order to be able to work with Social Services to run the garden, and the entire board enthusiastically approved.

“This is just wonderful,” Coyle told the three.

Work in the garden will begin in April and is expected to continue until October, Malloy said. She added that the residents’ aim is to have volunteers in the garden on Tuesday and Thursday nights, and Saturday mornings. The volun-

teers will pick and deliver produce to the food bank each Tuesday.

Kosiba said crops that will be planted at the garden will be staggered depending on the season. Some of the crops to be planted are tomatoes, peppers, beans, squash, zucchini, cucumbers, lettuce, Swiss chard, other greens, and herbs.

Individuals interested in getting involved in the Colchester Giving Garden are welcome to experience the first day of its reopening on Colchester’s annual Spring Clean-Up Day which is being held this year on Saturday, April 6, from 8:30 a.m.-noon. Volunteers will be given the opportunity to help plant early crops in the garden and to assist in weeding to get the garden ready for its return.

Registration on Spring Clean-Up day will take place on the Town Green, and the rain date is scheduled for April 13.

Malloy, who has watched the committee’s year-long research all come together in the last two weeks, said all of the residents involved in the planning of the garden are “super excited” for its return.

“We’ve all worked so hard together to bring it together and get it off the ground,” she said. “We think this is going to be a really popular thing in our community.”

Colchester Selectmen Vote Time Sheets for All

by Melissa Roberto

After a lengthy discussion among board members at its March 21 meeting, the Board of Selectmen approved a motion that requires all employees that work for the Town of Colchester to fill out all of their hours worked on time sheets.

The approval came from a majority vote of Republicans First Selectman Gregg Schuster and selectmen Greg Cordova and Stan Soby who voted in favor of it, while Democrats Rosemary Coyle and Jim Ford abstained from the vote.

The new approval requires all employees to submit the total number of hours worked in a day.

Currently, by federal law, non-exempt employees – who receive hourly compensation – are required to submit their start and end times, while exempt employees – who are paid a salary – are neither required nor prohibited to record their hours worked.

In Colchester, however, it has been past practice that exempt employees submit bi-weekly time sheets recording days they were out of the office or writing “no exceptions” if their schedule for the two weeks had not changed. With the approved motion, exempt employees are now required to record all hours they work in a day.

The proposal for approval was originally

proposed by Cordova in the board’s March 7 meeting but was tabled to March 21 because Coyle and Ford requested further information about how the practice of filling out time sheets would affect the employees.

The process of town employees submitting time sheets has been a topic discussed among the board since January, when Town Clerk Nancy Bray explained to the selectmen that her health benefits were put in jeopardy after failing to fill out bi-weekly time sheets.

When Cordova originally proposed the policy, however, he told the board it was something he felt would bring resolution to the topic.

Before the vote – and because federal law only requires non-exempt employees to submit hours – Coyle made a motion to split the motion into two votes: one to vote on non-exempt employees submitting time sheets and another to vote on exempt employees submitting time sheets.

However, by a party-line vote, Coyle’s motion was defeated by Republicans Schuster, Cordova and Soby voting against it, and Democrat Ford voting along with Coyle in favor of it.

The board then voted to approve Cordova’s motion, which also resulted in another party-line vote – this time with the Republicans supporting it, and the Democrats choosing to ab-

stain.

After the meeting, Coyle and Ford explained that their decisions to abstain from the vote on the policy were not because they disagree with employees having to fill out time sheets. Instead, the two said they abstained because they felt they could not make a reasonable decision without more information.

“I don’t have any objection to people being held accountable for their time,” Coyle explained. “I voted to abstain because I felt there were questions that were not answered.”

The questions Coyle said she did not receive answers to included what the impact would be on exempt employees, how it would change from their past practice and whether all exempt employees meet exempt employee criteria.

Ford’s decision to abstain was quite similar to Coyle’s.

“I didn’t want to say ‘no’ outright,” he said, “but I didn’t think we had looked into how to deal with the exempt employees efficiently.”

At the meeting, Ford told his fellow selectmen exempt employees are professionals, and he’d like to continue treating them that way.

Cordova, however, responded to Ford’s statement about professionalism.

“Well, for the record, I’m not doing this to diminish anybody’s professionalism,” he stated.

Before the vote, Schuster said he did not feel

any employees would be offended by the requirement to record all their hours worked on time sheets. He added that he has received advice from town counsel to go forward with the approval.

Since the approval, Schuster has communicated the approved motion to all employees. The process is to start immediately for the next pay period, which begins on March 31.

Also at the meeting, the board approved the town’s emergency plan for Election Day. Last fall, the secretary of state requested all towns in Connecticut develop a plan so that voters could continue to participate in the election process in case of an emergency. Towns were told to submit their own plans by March 28, or they could use one created by the state.

Colchester’s plan includes procedures that would be used if various issues arise in town during an election. The plan includes resolutions to various issues such as the loss of power, voting machine malfunctions, shortage or absence of poll workers, the need to remove a poll worker, as well as natural disasters and disorder in or around the polling place.

The next Board of Selectmen meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 4, at 7 p.m., at Town Hall.

New Resident Trooper Comes to Marlborough

by Melissa Roberto

Benjamin Dodge has covered 25 Connecticut towns throughout his career as a state trooper, and he said Marlborough has always been one of the more peaceful and quaint towns he's had the pleasure of patrolling. Fortunately for him, then, Marlborough is now the only town Dodge is focused on.

Dodge is the town's new daytime resident state trooper, starting in the position last month. And while this may be considered a small town with rustic charm, the duties of a Marlborough resident trooper are quite large – and of course the first is to make sure Marlborough residents are safe.

"I'm here to serve the town," he said.

The trooper has already become acquainted with many in town. Since his hiring in mid-February, Dodge has met with First Selectwoman Cathi Gaudinski, the Senior Center staff, Superintendent of Schools David Sklarz, Marlborough Elementary School Principal Scott Nierendorf, as well as several business owners in town to see what the constituents' needs are.

"I think he's doing well getting to know our town," said Gaudinski. "He seemed very qualified."

Dodge brings with him more than 11 years of experience as a state trooper in Connecticut. He started his career in June 2001 at the Troop K barracks in Colchester; the communities Dodge patrolled varied each day, and since Troop K counts Marlborough among its 14 municipalities, Dodge got to know the town.

He then moved to Troop E in Montville, and also became a part of the aggressive driving team at the state police headquarters in Middletown conducting speed enforcement and commercial motor vehicle inspections.

Two years ago, Dodge returned to Troop K, and landed the position in Marlborough last month. When his predecessor, Craig Fox, became promoted as a sergeant at another state police barracks in Connecticut, Dodge said he jumped at the opportunity because it opened the doors to "small-town policing."

Instead of past responsibilities of covering multiple towns and highways, Dodge said Marlborough is now his primary focus.

"Being in town you get to know the community, the business owners, the people, the kids...so I wanted to get into the small-town policing," he explained.

Dodge said his days on the job always begin at Troop K in Colchester before making his way to town. There, he attends roll call and gets an update on the surrounding towns in the area and is also given the opportunity to update troopers on what's happening in Marlborough.

The trooper then travels to his office (located below the Fire House on West Road) by 7 a.m. and carries out administrative duties, patrols the town, responds to calls, conducts road enforcement when needed and responds to any crime that may arise.

But Dodge said he already views Marlborough as a town of much lesser crime than what he's seen in the past.

"I think it has a lot to do with the fact that

there's three full-time guys working out of the office," said Dodge. "We're always out on the road and doing patrol checks."

Dodge shares an office with his counterpart, Resident State Trooper Jeff Dunshee, who is responsible for covering evening shifts, and full-time Marlborough Police Officer Randy Ransom.

A little over a month into his duties, Dodge confirmed his new position has been a great fit so far.

"All around it seems like a really great town to live in and raise a family," he said of Marlborough.

The trooper added his expertise in speed enforcement and commercial inspections may come in handy since Marlborough has Route 2 – a major state highway – and Route 66 traveling through the center of town.

Also, an aspect of the job he enjoys is being able to drop into Marlborough businesses and facilities to check up on workers and residents.

"You see a lot of people at their worst times and to be able to help them and get through it is worth it," he added.

The new resident trooper signed a two-year commitment to serve the town. He welcomes residents to stop by his office to say hello or to voice their concerns, and he promises to keep in good communication.

Dodge can be reached at 860-295-9098 and works from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. on weekdays. For now, Dodge said he will continue to become a familiar face around town and to keep



Benjamin Dodge is the new daytime resident state trooper for Marlborough.

Marlborough as safe as possible.

Dodge has an initial two-year commitment to the town, at the end of which he may have the opportunity to stay in town or to relocate – but he said Marlborough is his first choice.

"I'd like to stay here for as long as they'll have me," he said.

World Language Proponents Again State Their Case in Marlborough

by Melissa Roberto

The Board of Education held its regular meeting last Thursday, March 21, and although it was not included on the agenda, a good amount of time was spent discussing the addition of a world language program within the Marlborough Elementary School (MES) day, and it was several disappointed residents that sparked the discussion.

The argument to place a language program back into the school day has been made by residents at just about every meeting so far this year, but that did not stop nearly 25 residents from showing up at the meeting to again plea for the program.

At least 12 of the residents spoke in favor of a world language program being brought back to MES. Others discussed the importance of children learning a foreign language program at a young age, while another complaint made was that the Board of Education was not carrying out its duty of putting the students' educa-

tion first.

The former Spanish program the school had for several years was cut last year from the budget. In the development of the 2013-14 fiscal year budget, the program was once again left out. The former Spanish program included one hour of Spanish lessons each week to students split up by one 40-minute session and one 20-minute session in two days.

Resident David Porteous, who attended the meeting, spoke this week about the large turnout of residents in support of a world language program.

"It was amazing," Porteous said. "That interest is not going to disappear in the minds of residents."

After citizens voiced their concerns, board member Robert Clarke made a motion to add an item to the meeting's agenda to set a policy for the elementary school to be funded by the

current fiscal year's budget surplus funds but it failed by a vote of 5-4, which did not meet the requirement of six members of the board (or two-thirds of the board) voting in favor of it.

The vote was split between Clarke, Judith Kaplan, Mimi Lapoint, Shannon Bielaczyc and Karen Tyler, while members Ruth Kelly, Betty O'Brien, Louise Concodello and Carole Shea opposed it.

O'Brien, the vice chairwoman of the board, said she voted against Clarke's motion because the fiscal year has not ended yet – and thus, the board doesn't know for sure what any surplus would be.

"You can't have a discussion on something you don't know yet," she said.

Board of Finance members confirmed Wednesday that although Superintendent of Schools David Sklarz anticipates a \$155,000 surplus of funds at the end of the fiscal year, it

will not be definite until after the fiscal year wraps on June 30.

O'Brien added that board members are aware of what the residents who attend the meetings are looking for.

"We have listened to the people who are there and we understand their concerns," she said.

O'Brien said she believes the entire board would like to see a world language program back into the school day but it has not yet happened because it is an effort that requires extensive research and planning by the school's administration.

Board members added that the board may start to discuss a timeline for administration to start research on a language program at its next meeting.

The next Board of Education meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 25, at 7 p.m., in the MES library.

Daniel Greenwood at 860-537-7555 ext. 4022.

East Hampton Police News

3/11: Ralph Stone, 56, of 15 Barbara Ave., was issued a summons for second-degree harassment, East Hampton Police said.

3/18: Patrick A. Lachappelle, 25, of 48 Railroad Ave., Chester, was arrested for second-degree threatening and breach of peace, stemming from a Jan. 26 incident.

Marlborough Police News

3/20: Scudder Evans, 19, of 17 Fairview Rd., was charged with drug paraphernalia and possession of narcotics, State Police said.

3/23: Gregory E. Bader, 18, of 64 Jerry Daniels Rd., was charged with third-degree criminal mischief and disorderly conduct, State Police said.

3/23: Maurice R. Girardin, 40, of 101 South Main St., was charged with failure to drive right and DUI, State Police said.

Hebron Police News

3/20: Brian Mund, 48, of 500 Wall St., was charged with disorderly conduct and criminal mischief, State Police said.

3/21: The Hebron resident state trooper's Office is currently investigating a burglary that took place between the hours of 3:50 p.m. and 8 p.m. at a residence on Old Slocum Road. Police said the victim came home to find the basement window broken and several items of jewelry taken from the residence. Anyone with information regarding this investigation is asked to contact Hebron Resident State Trooper

Portland Police News

3/24: Lisa Keleher, 52, of 206 Main St., was charged with sixth-degree larceny, Portland Police said.

Colchester Police News

3/18: Colchester Police said an employee at Apple Rehab, located at 36 Broadway, reported that the business' Ariens snowblower was stolen from a storage shed sometime between March 15 and 18. Police described the snowblower as black and orange with model number 921005 and serial number 001755. Colchester Police are currently investigating the case. Anyone with more information should call Colchester Police at 860-537-7500.

3/18: Michael Fraulino, 26, of 140 Rose Hill Rd., Portland, was charged with evading, operating an uninsured motor vehicle and improper passing, Colchester Police said.

3/19: David Lee, 19, of 4 Summer Ln., Marlborough, was charged with second-degree harassment, State Police said.

3/20: Matthew Brown, 20, of 12 Highwood

Cir., was traveling on Route 2 east, approximately nine-tenths of a mile west of Exit 17 in Colchester, when his vehicle left the roadway and struck the right embankment causing the vehicle to roll onto its side. Brown was transported to Marlborough Clinic by the Colchester Hayward Fire Department for minor injuries, State Police said.

3/22: Michael Tancredi, 37, of 35 David Dr., was charged with possession of narcotics and restricted turn, State Police said.

3/24: James Gerent Jr., 22, of 101 Mill Hill Rd., was charged with DUI and failure to drive right, Colchester Police said.

3/25: Gilberto Dejesus, 18, of 215 North St., Willimantic, was charged with third-degree burglary and fourth-degree larceny, State Police said.

New RHAM School Board Member Ready for Action

by Geeta Schrayter

The RHAM Board of Education has a full house once more, with the arrival of Marlborough's Manny Catarino.

The make-up of the board has been altered since members were elected in November 2011; Hebron's Brenda Milhomme and Marlborough's Jim Cherry moved out of the district last year, while Marlborough's Sandra Sudduth resigned. Sudduth and Milhomme's spots were filled by Judy Benson-Clarke and Kevin Williams in September and October, respectively. However, Cherry's seat remained vacant. That is, until Catarino was appointed to the board on Feb. 5.

Last week Catarino, who has lived in Marlborough with his family for 14 years, explained he was interested in joining the board since he has two daughters in the school system: Nicole, a student at RHAM Middle School, and Cristina, who attends Marlborough Elementary School.

"The education of our children is an extremely important concern for any parent," he said, adding he wanted to be an "active participant in reviewing, developing, and implementing the school's short and long-term goals."

Catarino has held different middle and executive management positions throughout his career, which he feels qualify him for the board. He explained he's dealt with the same type of issues the school system faces, "including budgets, contracts, human resources,



Manny Catarino

and company policies. Currently, he works as a manager at a private hedge fund.

As he begins his work with the board, Catarino said there are a number of challenges facing the board – including the budget, which he called the "foremost issue."

"With cutbacks at the state and federal levels, along with increases in medical insurance and other mandatory costs, difficult decisions have to be made to present a reasonable budget that will continue to provide core services, prepare for the future and enrich the learning experience of our students," he said.

In addition, Catarino called safety a "hot topic" due to the school shooting in Newtown in December.

"The board will have the difficult job of considering the various options and their associated costs, while ensuring our schools are sufficiently secured," Catarino stated.

Along with the above challenges, Catarino said one of his "major concerns" is communication between parents and the school. He said his family, as well as some of their friends, have experienced "lapses" in the information that's sent home as well as difficulty finding information on the school website and, in general, "not being aware of what is going on at the school."

"Finding ways to improve the flow of information between the school and parents should be a high priority for the board," he said.

As a new member, Catarino said his primary focus will be to learn as much as possible while simultaneously being an active contributor.

"Ultimately," he said, "it is all about being an advocate for our students and community, as we focus on improving our public school system, while maintaining a fiduciary responsibility to the community."

From the Editor's Desk

Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

As I sat in the *Rivereast's* Glastonbury offices last Tuesday afternoon and listened to sleet pelt the roof, I wondered: is this winter ever going to go away? The official start of spring was imminent, but this year, it was sure looking like that would just be a meaningless date on the calendar. We hadn't gotten an overwhelming number of snowfall incidents this winter, but what we did get was, well, massive: three feet Feb. 8, then another foot and a half a month later. To make matters worse, despite occasional fits of warmth, the cold clench of old man winter didn't seem to be loosening all that much.

When would it all end? I wondered. Well, I'm still wondering that – and bracing myself to not put away those sweaters anytime soon. Monday I read the altogether discouraging prediction from AccuWeather.com expert senior meteorologist Alex Sosnowski that chilly weather will remain with us for a while.

"While April will not be as cold as March, thanks to the strengthening sun, pockets of cold air will continue their invasion from the northern plains to the midwest and northeast into the first half of the month," Sosnowski wrote.

Sosnowski said, "March behaved like a typical February" – no arguments here – and, depressingly, added that "it appears the first half of April will be what March should have been like."

Which means, basically, that we'll be dealing with the mid-40s when we should be dealing with the upper-50s and around 60.

When will the weather ship finally right itself? Sosnowski quoted AccuWeather's long range weather expert Paul Pastelok as saying, "The number of episodes of cold air should gradually fade away during week three and four of April with temperatures and the weather pattern finally trending toward normal."

"Normal" for that time of year, by the way, is mid-60s.

So yes, folks, it looks like warmer weather is on the way. We just may have to wait a little longer than normal to get it.

The way this winter has gone, that should come as no shock at all.

As editor, one of my duties is to edit the obituaries that get emailed in to the paper each week. That obviously entails reading them over and, as a result, I've seen some interesting life stories float across my desk over the years. And one of the most fascinating ones I've ever received arrived Monday. It was the obituary for Walter Krozel, a former Andover resident who passed away in Buffalo, N.Y., at the age of 97.

As was the case with many people who are now in their 80s and 90s, Walt enlisted in the Army Air Corps not long after the Dec. 7, 1941, attack on Pearl Harbor. He was sent to Florida for flight training, where he met local schoolteacher Margaret Cato. The two quickly fell in love and, in July 1942, eloped to Dotan, Ala.

The couple then moved to Virginia, where Walt was assigned to a B-24 Liberator Squadron. In November 1942, Walt's squadron was among the first Liberator squadrons to fly the Atlantic for duty at St. Eval Field, Cornwall, England. He wound up flying several anti-

submarine missions over the Bay of Biscay.

Impressive stuff, most definitely, but what really made Walt's story stand out was this: On Jan. 10, 1943, while waiting to take off for a mission, and fully loaded with fuel and depth charges, a British Whitley bomber collided with Walt's Liberator, causing a fire and explosion. Six airmen were killed and 10 were severely injured – including Walt.

Margaret, at home and pregnant with their first child, received a War Department telegram telling her Walt had been killed in action. Several weeks passed before this report's error was corrected.

But Walt – though badly burned – wasn't dead. Heavily bandaged, he managed to return to Margaret's side for the birth of Alexandra Gail Krozel – whom the couple called their "little pilot."

The thing read like a twist you'd see in a movie script, or a period soap opera. But it happened. And how wonderful for Walt, and Margaret, and their "little pilot," that it did.

I'm not a huge fan of the National Rifle Association – and have vented here about their particularly tone-deaf (okay, okay; stupid) response to Sandy Hook. But the news that broke over the weekend just managed to lower my opinion of them even more.

It seems the NRA has been placing "robocalls" to various homes throughout the state, encouraging residents to call their state legislators to voice opposition to bills that would "disarm and punish law-abiding gun owners and sportsmen."

Okay, fine. That's not personally the interpretation I would give to some of the gun control legislation that's been talked about, but I get the NRA doesn't share my opinion. So, whatever. But, in what's an incredible show of stupidity, insensitivity, arrogance, or all three, the NRA apparently didn't put Newtown on its "do not call" list.

Yes, that's right: people in the very community that suffered so much loss that dark December day are being encouraged to call their local legislator to protest stiffer gun control measures.

Senators Richard Blumenthal and Chris Murphy have blasted the calls, and rightfully so. The NRA, meanwhile, is being predictably unapologetic. Its director of public affairs, Andrew Arulanandam, told the *Courant* the association, wasn't specifically targeting Newtown, but rather has been "mailing and phoning our members and supporters all over Connecticut for the past two months" to keep them "abreast of the latest developments regarding their rights in the state legislature." (Of course, whether the NRA is just targeting its supporters and members seems to be up for debate; one Newtown recipient of the calls told the *Courant* he's never supported the NRA and never will.)

"We're just doing our jobs," Arulanadam added.

Okay, fine. Do your jobs, if you must. But there are 168 other cities and towns in Connecticut. Can't you do your jobs there, and leave Newtown out of it? Really, they've been through enough without being told how terrible gun legislation is.

See you next week.

Obituaries

Middle Haddam

Mary DiStefano

Mary (Capsalis) DiStefano, 94 of Middle Haddam, formerly of Portland, wife of the late Anthony J. DiStefano died Thursday, March 21, at Marlborough Health Care. Born Feb 4, 1919, in Middletown, she was the daughter of the late James and Catherine Capsalis. She retired from Travelers Insurance as an executive assistant in March 1976.



She is survived by a sister, Ruth C. Steffman, with whom she lived; three nephews and four nieces, Joe Lastrina Sr, Ann "Lou" Young, Sandi Mintzer, Marie Bordonaro, Katie Zampini, Bill and Jim Steffman; and many great-nephews and great-nieces.

She was predeceased by two sisters, Helen and Margaret Lastrina. Mary was a very loving and quiet lady and will be sadly missed by her family and friends.

Funeral services were held Monday, March 25, with a Mass of Christian Burial at the Church of St. Mary, 51 Freestone Ave., Portland. Burial was in Pine Grove Cemetery, Middletown. Relatives and friends called Monday morning at Portland Memorial Funeral Home, 231 Main St.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions in her memory may be made to the Church of St. Mary, 51 Freestone Ave., Portland, CT 06480.

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

East Hampton

Agnes Carmella DiStefano

Agnes Carmella (Fiorillo) DiStefano of East Hampton, beloved wife of Thomas L. DiStefano Jr., passed away Thursday, March 21, at her home, in the arms of her loving husband, after suffering a long illness due to a subdural hematoma in 2005. She was born in Bristol April 18, 1933, daughter of the late Louis and Maxine (Gray) Fiorillo.



She is predeceased by her beloved son Michael DiStefano, brothers Louis and Kenneth Fiorillo, and dearly-loved aunt Nancy Fiorillo.

She is survived by her two brothers, John Fiorillo and Harry (Buster) Fiorillo, from Bristol.

In 1951, she graduated from Bristol Central High School and then went on to graduate from Goodwin Tech in 1955 from the nursing program in New Britain, CT. She worked at the Bristol Hospital in the pediatric ward, and then the family moved to East Hampton in 1961, when her husband became a teacher in the school system. She worked at many convalescent homes in the area and retired from Cobalt Lodge Rehabilitation Center.

Agnes loved to travel before she became ill. She and her husband traveled all of Europe, Italy, Spain and Sicily. She became a snow bird and vacationed in her Florida home for many years. Agnes was an excellent cook and family dinners were always a treat. She loved roses and her vegetable garden. She was the loving heart of the family and raised eight children.

She leaves behind Thomas III and Rebecca DiStefano of Boca Raton, Fla., David and Mari DiStefano of Cumberland City, Tenn., Randall and Mona DiStefano of Grafton, Vt., Steven and Sherri DiStefano of Roanoke, Va., Kevin DiStefano and Jerry of Hartford, Karen (DiStefano) and Frank Mott of Moodus, Daniel and Sharon DiStefano of East Hampton. She had 19 grandchildren, six great-grandchildren and many nieces and nephews, including Carol Fiorillo McDermott, a cherished niece.

The memories we all have of Agnes will forever remain in our hearts.

Friends called at Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton, Monday, March 25. A funeral procession left Spencer Funeral Home Tuesday, March 26, followed by the funeral liturgy that morning in St. Patrick Church. Burial followed in St. Patrick Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers memorial contributions may be made to Autism Speaks at www.autismspeaks.org, or to the East Hampton Ambulance Association, P.O. Box 144 East Hampton, CT 06424.

To leave online condolences, visit spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

Colchester

Patricia A. DiBartolo

Patricia A. (Fredette) DiBartolo, 58, of Colchester and formerly of Franklin, N.H., beloved wife of Anthony "Dave" DiBartolo, passed away Thursday, March 21, at the Wm. W. Backus Hospital in Norwich. Born June 7, 1954 in Kittery, ME, she was a daughter of the late Richard and Evelyn (Downes) Fredette.



Pat was a registered certified nurses' aide, working at Marlborough Health Care Center, and prior to that for 30-plus years at Merrimack County Nursing Home in New Hampshire.

She loved children and in her spare time, enjoyed walking outdoors.

In addition to her loving husband of 14 years, she is survived by two daughters, Pennie Vigue and Erica Savage, both of Franklin, N.H.; two stepdaughters, Jennifer Rodegher and Kristin Hustus, both of Colchester; six grandchildren, Lucas Carpenter, Caleb and Braden Vigue, Bria and Devin Savage and Aiden Randall; three step-grandchildren, Dante and Julian Rodegher and Sophie Hustus; three brothers, Robert, Richard and Gary Fredette, all of New Hampshire; and numerous extended family members and friends.

In addition to her parents, she was predeceased by an infant son, Richard Barney; and a sister, Jackie Pease.

A memorial service was held Wednesday, March 27, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. The family will receive guests starting at 5:30 PM. Burial will be in New Hampshire.

In lieu of flowers, donations in her memory may be made to the American Lung Assn., 45 Ash St., East Hartford, CT 06108-3272.

Marlborough

Yvette Monroe

Yvette (Gaudette) Monroe, 82, of Marlborough and formerly of Bradenton, Fla., widow of the late John E. Monroe, passed away Friday, March 22, at Middlesex Hospital. Born April 17, 1930, in Hartford, she was a daughter of the late Joseph and Doria (St. Pierre) Gaudette.



She was a devoted wife and mother who in her spare time enjoyed quilting. She was a member of St. John Fisher Church in Marlborough as well as Marlborough Senior Center.

She leaves a daughter, Denise Martin of Dade City, Fla.; three sons, Dennis DeBonne of Marlborough, Ronald DeBonne of Lytle, Texas, and Joseph Monroe of Wolcott; two sisters, Gloria Mecteau of Hebron and Laurette Carpenter of Manchester; two brothers, Rodger Gaudette of East Hartford and Joseph Gaudette of Columbia; eight grandchildren; five great grandchildren; and numerous extended family members and friends.

A memorial liturgy will be celebrated at 10:30 a.m. Saturday, April 6, at St. John Fisher Church, Jones Hollow Road, Marlborough. There are no calling hours and burial will be private.

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

Care of arrangements has been entrusted to the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home of Colchester.

East Hampton

Kathleen Torgan

Kathleen Torgan (nee: Murray), 95, passed away at her son's home in Conroe, Texas, Sunday, March 17. She divided her time between Conroe and her daughter's home in East Hampton. She was born in Derby Line, Vt., June 8, 1917.

She is survived by her three children, Patricia Dufour of East Hampton, Bob Torgan and his wife Brenda of Willis, Texas, and Bill Torgan of Conroe, Texas. She also is survived by five grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.

She was predeceased by her husband David Torgan and again by her second husband, Julian LaPietra, as well as her three brothers, Douglas Murray of Maine, Phillip Murray and Calvin Murray of Florida.

She enjoyed baking, cake decorating, crossword puzzles and watching karaoke.

Andover

Walter Alexander Krozel

Walter Alexander Krozel, formerly of Andover, passed away at Buffalo General Hospital in Buffalo, N.Y., Dec. 18, 2012, following a severe stroke he suffered while a resident at the VA hospital in Batavia, N.Y. He was 97.

Walt was born March 27, 1915, in Columbia, the youngest of Walente and Catherine Krozel's nine children. Not long after Walt's birth, his parents moved the family to neighboring Andover. Walt grew to adulthood in Andover, completing the course of study at the local grammar school and then graduating from Willimantic High School in 1933. He then attended Connecticut State College (now UConn), where he played varsity football.

Walt's business career started when he ran a "trap line" on his walk to grammar school. He helped with the family farm and held numerous odd jobs to earn spending money while attending public school until he graduated at the height of the Great Depression. He drove various delivery trucks, held construction jobs and worked as a night watchman, attempting to fund his college courses when it was possible. He secured a job with SOCONY Vacuum and moved to Syracuse, N.Y. While working full time, he earned his private pilot's license, and became a member of the Civil Air Patrol.

When the United States entered World War II Dec. 7, 1941, Walt enlisted in the Army Air Corps. He was sent to Arcadia, Fla., for flight training. While in training, Walt met Margaret Cato, an Arcadia school teacher. After a short courtship they eloped to Dothan, Ala., becoming husband and wife on July 25, 1942. Walt soon earned his pilot's wings and a commission as 2nd lieutenant.

Walt and Margaret moved to Langley, Virginia where he was assigned to a B-24 Liberator Squadron. In November 1942, Walt's squadron was among the first Liberator squadrons to fly the Atlantic for duty at St. Eval Field, Cornwall, England. He flew several anti-submarine missions over the Bay of Biscay.

On Jan. 10, 1943, while waiting to take off for a mission, fully loaded with fuel and depth charges, a British Whitley bomber collided with Walt's Liberator, causing a fire and explosion. Six airmen were killed and 10 were severely injured, including Walt. Margaret, at home and pregnant with their first child, received a War Department telegram stating that Walt had been killed in action. Several weeks passed before the error of this report was corrected. Though badly burned, Walt, heavily bandaged, managed to return to Margaret's side for the birth of their "little pilot," Alexandra Gail Krozel. During his recuperation, Walt made radio and other public appearances to help sell war bonds.

After the war, Walt returned to his job with Mobil Oil. Walt and Margaret moved to Rochester, N.Y. In 1952, Walt, ever the entrepreneur, moved Margaret and his three small children to Kendall, N.Y., to operate a small hardware store he had purchased. Dissatisfied with the pace, a year later Walt purchased a movie theater in Holley, N.Y., and converted it to a warehouse. This established the plumbing and heating wholesale business, Territory Wholesale Supply, Inc. TWS, a successful business, grew over the years to have multiple branches operating throughout western New York, employing as many as 60 people. In 1975, Walt and Margaret moved to Medina, N.Y., the TWS headquarters.

Walt's community service included coaching junior league baseball and being a volunteer fireman in Holley, active membership and past president of both Holley and Medina Rotary Clubs, American Legion, and membership in and elder of Presbyterian churches in Holley and Medina.

Walt, preceded in death by his beloved Margaret, is survived by his three children, Gail Younker of Rochester N.Y., Amy Herbert of Montgomery, N.Y., and Kenneth M. Krozel of New Harmony, Ind.; nine grandchildren; and 10 great-grandchildren.

Colchester

Edward Joseph Taggart

Edward Joseph Taggart, 70, of Colchester, beloved husband of Evelyn (Standish) Taggart, passed away Tuesday, March 26, at Middlesex Hospital, surrounded by his entire immediate family after a very courageous 17-year battle with M.S. Born Nov. 23, 1942, in Hartford, he was the son of the late Joseph and Josephine (Houra) Taggart.

Mr. Taggart was a 50-year member of the International Union of Operating Engineers Local 478, having worked as a heavy equipment operator and mechanic.

He enjoyed working with his hands, whether it be woodworking or restoring cars (his most proud accomplishment was the restoration of his father's 1937 Sprint Car, which is on display at the International Sprint Car Hall of Fame in Knoxville, Iowa), and was an avid fan of racing and UConn basketball. His greatest joy was found in his family, especially following his children's and grandchildren's many activities.

He leaves his loving wife of 49 years, Evelyn; four children, Darrel of Colchester, Ronald and his companion, Lorry Rutland of East Haddam, Shelby and husband, Bryan Dowd of Colchester and Erin and husband, Tim Roberts of East Haddam; six grandchildren, Nick Taggart, Travis, Will and Brendan Dowd and Kelsey and Joey Roberts; two sisters, Gertrude and Marion; and numerous nieces, nephews, cousins and extended family members and friends.

A Celebration of his Life will be held 2-5 p.m. Saturday, April 6, at Westchester Congregational Church, 449 Westchester Road, Colchester. There are no calling hours and burial will be private.

In lieu of flowers, donations in his memory may be made to the Colchester-Hayward Vol. Fire Co., 18-54 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester, CT 06415; the Middlesex Hospital Hospice, 28 Crescent St., Middletown, CT 06457 or to the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, CT Chapter, 659 Tower Ave., 1st Fl., Hartford, CT 06112.

Care of arrangements has been entrusted to the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home of Colchester.

Hebron

Maria L. Clark

Maria L. (Parente) Clark, 89, of Hebron and formerly of East Hartford, passed away and entered into eternal life on Thursday, March 21, at the Marlborough Health Care Center. Maria was the loving wife of the late Richard N. Clark.

Born in Hartford on June 20, 1923, a daughter of the late Nunzio and Rose Parente, she resided in East Hartford for 32 years prior to moving to Hebron 30 years ago.

Prior to her retirement, she was employed for over 20 years by the former Finest Bakery Company, East Hartford. Maria was an avid gardener of flowers who also liked to knit, crochet, and sew. She was also a talented artist who specialized in "sketching." She also enjoyed dancing and watching her favorite soap operas.

Besides her beloved husband and parents, she was predeceased by a daughter, Debra M. Clark of Key West, Fla.; two brothers, Fiore Parente and Armondo Parente; and two sisters, Gilda Miele and Vera DiCandio.

Maria is survived by a son, Gary R. Clark of East Windsor; a daughter, Rosanna Veilleux and her husband, Lawrence, of Hebron; four special grandchildren, Richard Veilleux and his wife, Julie, of Hebron, Danielle Batchelder and her husband, Andrew, of Farmington, Sean Clark and Ashley of Enfield, Brandon Clark of Enfield; and seven adored great-grandchildren, Mattingly, Max, Ryan, Brynley, Sam, Olivia and Noah. She also leaves a sister, Josephine Ficaro of Newington; a sister-in-law, Carla Parente of East Hartford; several nieces, nephews and friends.

Funeral services were held Monday, March 25, at the D'ESOPPO-East Hartford Memorial Chapel, 30 Carter St., East Hartford. Burial followed at Hillside Cemetery, East Hartford. Relatives and friends called at the funeral home chapel Monday morning, before the service.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions in Maria's name may be made to the Alzheimer's Association, 2075 Silas Deane Hwy, Suite 100, Rocky Hill, CT 06067.

For online expressions of sympathy to the family, visit desopo.com.

Colchester

Mary Johannah Hathaway

Mary Johannah Hathaway, 76, of Colchester and formerly of Lebanon, widow of the late Carlton T. Hathaway, passed away Tuesday, March 26, at Apple Rehab in Cromwell. Born Dec. 8, 1936, she was the daughter of the late George and Alice (Burnham) Powell.

Along with her husband, Mary owned and operated a canvas shop for boats known as The Ship's Locker, for many years before her retirement. She was a member of the Westchester Congregational Church and the Friends of Cragin Library.

She leaves a son and daughter-in-law, Christopher and Marjorie Hathaway of Vermont; her sister, Alice Heiler of East Hartford; a brother and sister-in-law, Robert and Betty Hathaway of Vernon; four grandchildren, Chelsea, Anya, Morgan and Michael; her former daughter-in-law, Kerry McRae; a nephew, Robert Hathaway; and her dear friend, Marion Knight of Coventry.

Friends may call at 10 a.m. Tuesday, April 2, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. A chapel service will be observed at 11 AM. Burial will follow in the New Lebanon Cemetery.

Donations in her memory may be made to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital

262 Danny Thomas Place, Memphis, TN 38105 or to the Wounded Warriors Project, P.O. Box 758517, Topeka, KS 66675.

Colchester

Lois G. Zawacki

Lois G. Zawacki, 87, of Newington, wife of the late Anthony (Tony) T. Zawacki, died Saturday, March 23. Born in Colchester on June 30, 1925, the daughter of the late Felix and Josephine (Dziordzik) Wilenski, Lois had been a longtime resident of Meriden after her marriage to Tony in 1950.

Lois was a graduate of Bacon Academy and had been an employee of the Colchester post office. Lois and her husband both received numerous Certificates of Appreciation for their volunteer work at the Newington Veterans Hospital.

Lois is survived by her son, Frank, and his wife Ingrid, of Newington; her daughter, Alice Zawacki, of Alexandria, Va.; her granddaughter, Kristin Salone, and her husband Andrew, of Wethersfield; and her grandson, Roy Teves; sisters-in-law, Helen Zawacki of Old Saybrook, Barbara Zawacki of Wallingford; and many nieces and nephews.

She was predeceased by her daughter, Geraldine Teves; her two brothers, Alexander and Walter; and her two sisters, Josephine and Nora.

Her family received relatives and friends in The Wallingford Funeral Home, 809 N. Main Street, Ext., Wallingford, Tuesday, March 26. Funeral services were held Wednesday, March 27, from The Wallingford Funeral Home, when the funeral cortege will proceed to St. Rose Church in Meriden, where a Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated that morning. Interment was in St. Stanislaus Cemetery in Meriden.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the American Cancer Society, P.O. Box 22718, Oklahoma City, OK 73123-1718, or online at cancer.org.

To sign an online guestbook, visit wallingfordfh.com.

East Hampton

Helen Smithwick

Helen Smithwick, 88, formerly of East Hampton, wife of the late John Smithwick, Sr., died Wednesday, March 13, in Aurora, Colo. She was born in Portland, the daughter of the late Bertrand and Katherine (O'Reilly) France.

She is survived by her daughters, Kathleen Mazzotta of Aurora, Colo., Eileen Janicke of Aurora, Colo., and Patricia Hill and her husband Thomas of East Hampton; her son, Michael Smithwick and his wife Gail of East Hampton; nine grandchildren and nine great grandchildren. She is also survived by her brother, Henry France of Milford.

She was predeceased by her son, John Smithwick Jr.

Graveside services were held Tuesday, March 26, in Pine Grove Cemetery, South Main St., Middletown. There were no calling hours.

Those who wish may send memorial contributions to the American Cancer Society.

Biega Funeral Home has care of the arrangements. To share memories or express condolences online, visit biegafuneralhome.com.

Portland

Druscilla Goodell

Druscilla "Tootie" Belle (Stack) Goodell, 94, of Middletown, formerly of Portland, wife of the late George W. Goodell, passed away Saturday, March 23, at Hughes Health and Rehabilitation in West Hartford.

Born in New Britain, she was the daughter of the late Joseph and Ethel (Slocum) Stack. Tootie lived in Portland moving to Middletown in 1965, was a member of First United Methodist Church and a member of the Middletown AARP.

Tootie is survived by her daughter, Jane Goodell (Donald Broderick) of West Hartford; five grandchildren, David Brock (Beth), Travis Brock (Miles Everett), Kevin Goodell (Cheryl), Jacob Goodell and Sarah Orlich (Henry); and three great-grandchildren, Sophie Brock, Natalie Orlich and Derek Orlich.

Along with her parents and husband, Tootie was predeceased by her son, Richard J. Goodell.

The family would like to thank the staff of Hughes Health and Rehabilitation for their compassionate care of Tootie.

A graveside service will be held in Pine Grove Cemetery at the convenience of the family.

In lieu of flowers, friends may make donations in Druscilla's memory to YMCA Camp Hazen Campership Fund, 204 West Main St., Chester, CT 06412.

Doolittle Funeral Home, 14 Old Church St., Middletown, is handling the arrangements. Messages of condolence may be sent to the family at doolittlefuneralservice.com.

Colchester

William E. Anderson

William E. Anderson, 72, of No. Franklin and formerly of Colchester, passed away unexpectedly Friday, March 22, at the Wm. W. Backus Hospital in Norwich. Born Sept. 27, 1940, in New Britain, he was a son of the late Chester and Olive (Hubbard) Anderson, Sr.

Mr. Anderson was a proud veteran of the U.S. Army. He was a member of the Native American Mohegans Inc., where he was an Elder Council member; his tribal name was Talking Oak. He loved animals. Throughout his life, he was a porter at Mohegan Sun, and worked for Whittmore Poultry and Webster Poultry.

He leaves his wife, Patricia Anderson; five children, Lorraine Friend and Crystal, Robert, Steven and Michael Devost; many grandchildren and great grandchildren; longtime friend, Tom Yorz; housemates, John Pauch and Donald Yorz; siblings, Chester and Alberta Anderson, Roy and Pat Anderson, Harry Anderson, Roni Anderson, Ralph Anderson, Thomas Anderson, Terry Anderson, Edith Cornish and Ollie Davis; and many loved nieces, nephews and extended family members and friends.

In addition to his parents, he was predeceased by two brothers, Dickie and Lester Anderson.

A memorial service was held Tuesday, March 26, at the Colchester Federated Church, located at 60 Main St. (on the green). Rendering of military honors was observed. Burial was in Maplewood Cemetery, Norwich. There were no calling hours.

Donations in his memory may be made to the church.

Care of arrangements has been entrusted to the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home of Colchester.