

RIVEREAST

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Bears for Cancer Patients...The "Bear Ladies" of the Portland Senior Center made its first of the year Sojourn Bears delivery to the Helen and Harry Gray Cancer Center in Hartford. Acting as chaperones for the 70-plus bears were Fran Schoell, Nella Bartalotta, Marian Koliias (row one); Irene Negrelli, Myra Finklestein, Phyllis Clark (row two) and Joan Strom, Carolyn St. Paul, Joyce Gould (row three). The Sojourn Bears and Ladies were chauffeured from Portland to Hartford by David Finklestein. The Portland Senior Center maintains a supply for Portland residents; if anyone knows of a cancer patient who would appreciate receiving a bear made by the Sojourn Bear Ladies, call 860-342-6760.

Marlborough Budget Passes Easily, Quietly

by Melissa Roberto

Controversy did not strike twice at Marlborough's town meeting Monday on the budget for the upcoming 2013-14 fiscal year. Taxpayers, by a 123-25 vote and without any debate, approved the \$21.61 million spending package put forth by the Board of Finance Monday night.

Take two – following the first budget town meeting on May 13 – started out like the last, with voters electing First Selectwoman Cathi Gaudinski as moderator, who highlighted the new proposal to the crowd. The environment seemed calm and voters remained hush this time around, that is until the votes were counted, and then a majority of the nearly 150 taxpayers that filled the Marlborough Elementary School cafeteria burst into applause, as the results confirmed all three votes – on the town budget, capital items and closed projects – for the next fiscal year had ultimately been approved and supported by almost everyone in the room.

The meeting followed the controversial May 13 town meeting, where finance member Beth Petroni pitched her own budget to voters just minutes before they were supposed to vote on the original \$21.67 million budget that had previously been approved by the Board of Finance. By a slim margin of 61-56, Petroni's \$21.45 million budget – that reduced the town operations by \$215,093 – passed, but not without

residents throwing their arms up in fury and referring to Petroni's last-minute actions as a "stunt" and a showing of "disrespect."

The June 3 meeting was scheduled back on May 16 at a Board of Finance special meeting, when Gaudinski announced that the town's legal counsel deemed Petroni's budget invalid for including increases, which by town charter, are not permissible if proposed at a town meeting. That same night, Petroni's budget was nixed and the finance board, with Petroni, crafted the third – and now approved – \$21.61 million budget, which is a readjustment of the original \$21.67 million proposal.

The spending package approved Monday is a decrease of nearly \$55,000 from the original budget and an increase of nearly \$160,000 from Petroni's budget.

It also represents a .28 percent increase in spending overall from the current year, but a decrease in taxes of .86 percent. The mill rate – which was set by the Board of Finance immediately following the town meeting Monday night – will be 30.76 for the 2013-14 fiscal year, meaning a property owner with assets valued at \$200,000 would be charged \$6,152 in taxes – a drop of \$54 from the \$6,206 they're charged under the current 31.03 mill rate.

On Monday, Gaudinski briefly highlighted
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Voters Pass EHHS Renovation Project

by Elizabeth Bowling

Taxpayers approved the \$51.7 million East Hampton High School renovation project Tuesday with a final tally of 1,536 votes for and 1,258 votes against.

When the results were announced in the EHHS gymnasium Tuesday night, those in support of the approval erupted in celebration, like they had just counted down to midnight on New Year's Eve.

Board of Education Chairman Mark Laraia said, "It's time this town moved forward and it's moving forward now."

Laraia called the voter turnout "unbelievable" and added he was excited at the possibility of East Hampton turning over a new leaf, as both this project and the town budget last month passed on their first trips before the voters.

Town Council Chairwoman Sue Weintraub said, "I'm thrilled that the community turned out and voted for what we needed. I was anticipating a win. ... It's great for our community on so many levels."

The push to renovate the high school stemmed from a 2007 report from the New England Association of School and Colleges, or NEASC, which puts schools through an accreditation process over a 10-year period.

Voters approved "Concept 5," which addresses the improvements emphasized in the NEASC report. Those improvements are in the areas of science and technology to make for a more effective learning environment for the school's students. The report also noted safety concerns regarding inoperable windows, outdated infrastructure and ventilation issues throughout the building.

With the project approved, the next step is for the High School Building Committee to apply for a state grant by June 28 in order to receive reimbursement from the state for 52.5 percent of the project.

Upon receiving the grant application, the state will have one year to review the grant and ultimately accept or reject it, Weintraub said.

In that 12-month period, the team, which consists of Downes Construction, the building committee, SLAM of Glastonbury and Capital Region Education Council (CREC), will continue to design and engineer the project, according to Cindy Abraham, a member of the High School Building Committee.

According to the design team and construction manager Downes Construction, the total cost of the project is \$51.7 million but under a

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The 'yes' signs reigned supreme Tuesday, as East Hampton taxpayers voted 1,536-1,258 to renovate East Hampton High School.

Marlborough Budget cont. from Front Page

the reductions that lowered the new budget from the original by nearly \$55,000 – all reductions found in the town operations spending package. The town operations budget was lowered from the initial \$4,491,748 to \$4,437,315 due to a \$20,000 cut to both the snow removal and legal fees accounts, as well as a \$4,888 decrease in the drivers for the Senior Van account, \$3,925 cut to election supplies, and minor reductions to salary board clerks, advertising and legal notices, personal mileage reimbursement, the Landuse Department, the Resident Trooper grant, and Board of Finance account.

The budget vote also passed the remaining figures that make up the town's overall spending package: the RHAM budget at \$7,312,439; the local Board of Education budget at \$7,181,605; \$20,000 for contingency, as well as debt at \$2,659,873.

Then, by a vote of 128-21, the bottom line total of \$350,500 for capital items was approved – another large gap separating taxpayers for and against the figure. The capital purchases for the 2013-14 fiscal year include \$35,000 to replace the Richmond Memorial Library roof; \$40,000 for the 2015-16 revaluation; \$45,000 for the future capital expenditure reserve, \$55,500 for a Town Hall generator; and \$175,000 for a Public Works seven-yard dump truck that will be used to plow roads.

The aforementioned capital items will be paid for through cash for the upcoming fiscal year – a method that town officials have announced over the last month will save the town money instead of bonding items.

In her presentation Monday night, Gaudinski explained why there was a request of \$45,000 to go towards the future capital expenditure reserve. The first selectwoman stated that the Board of Selectmen is not able to spend money from the reserve at their discretion – an argument Petroni originally made at the May 13 town meeting.

Instead, Gaudinski said capital items will still follow the current procedures in place of going to the Board of Finance for approval. Also, she

said the request “does not increase taxes and does not increase debt level.”

Lastly, 139 voters supported and only 10 voted against returning leftover money from closed out projects back to the capital and non-recurring fund. The total that will go back to the fund is \$15,130.44, which includes \$11,338.31 for the Public Works dump trucks; \$1,920.31 for the Public Works Ford 4 x 4; and \$1,871.82 for the Public Works lawn mower.

After all was said and done, many residents left the room relieved, and one resident was even heard saying, “The drama’s over!”

On Tuesday, Gaudinski said she felt a “sense of relief” now that the town has a budget in place for the upcoming fiscal year.

“I was pleased the town came together and overwhelmingly supported the recommended budget by the Board of Finance and Board of Selectmen.”

She also seemed pleased that the turnout was greater than the first town meeting.

“It was a good night last night,” Gaudinski said.

While the budget is now set in place for 2013-14, finance member Beth Petroni said she's still weary of the legal opinion Gaudinski received that rendered her budget null and void – an opinion that Gaudinski announced but had not submitted to the finance board in writing.

“I still believe that there are legal issues,” said Petroni, “but that’s not my fight. My fight was making sure the taxpayers get the most value for their money.”

Petroni added that she's just happy the town operations budget has been reduced – not as large of a cut as her proposal had, she pointed out, but at least the \$55,000 cut is a “good start,” she said.

Board of Finance Chairwoman Evelyn Godbout said Tuesday that she, too, was “pleased” that the budget ultimately passed.

The three bottom line totals that were approved will go into effect at the start of the 2013-14 fiscal year on July 1.

Renovation cont. from Front Page

“renovate-as-new” project, the state will reimburse the town 52.5 percent, leaving the town to cover the remaining \$28.3 million.

Because the project passed the vote, the town is now expected to bond over 20 years, starting in 2018. Taxpayers will see an approximately \$300 increase in annual taxes to go toward the renovation.

Weintraub noted the “shameful, false rumors” that spread through town in the days leading up to the referendum. She said misinformation, like that taxes would increase by \$500 per person annually, was written in to “Letters to the Editor” at the *Rivereast News Bulletin* and spread orally.

Luckily, Weintraub said, social media outlets like Facebook helped to quickly correct the misinformation and squash the rumors.

Another concern among some East Hampton residents was Superintendent of Schools Mark Winzler's use of the East Hampton Schools Emergency Alert System to remind East Hampton parents, but no other residents, about the referendum vote via a voice-recorded phone call.

The recording did not attempt to influence voters one way or the other, but because it only targeted a certain demographic, one with a probable vested interest in the approval of the referendum, some residents took issue.

One concerned citizen, George Gallo, filed a State Elections Enforcement Commission (SEEC) complaint against Winzler before the final vote was tallied, he said. The alert system is a telephone system paid for by the taxpayers of East Hampton, Gallo said in his complaint.

“I contend this robo-call is an illegal use of

taxpayer funds because of the dissemination of this targeted Get-Out-the-Vote Message to a select few,” Gallo said in an email. “If this call is done, it should be done for *everyone*, not just a targeted, select few like the parents of schools who have an obvious special interest to see this referendum pass.”

In response to all the controversy surrounding the renovation project, Abraham said, “Controversy can create great things.”

East Hampton resident Vernon Lanou said he voted ‘no’ because he thinks the project is too expensive.

“It’s an overbid on the job,” the retiree said. “They could have just done what’s necessary.”

But EHHS Principal John Fidler disagrees. “We’re not trying to build a Taj Mahal,” he said.

Rather, Fidler said, he wants his students to have the quality education that students in East Hampton deserve. He noted the importance of something as simple as the benefits of learning in a room that is a comfortable temperature, a luxury that EHHS students don’t currently enjoy.

Voters like Russell Oakes and Jennifer Flood agree with Fidler and voted ‘yes.’

Oakes said other schools, like RHAM, Tolland and Moodus, offer more to their students than East Hampton does.

“East Hampton [students] should have the same opportunities as other kids,” Oakes said.

Flood, a mother of two children enrolled in the East Hampton public school system, said, “My mother went to this school and it hasn’t changed since. East Hampton needs a change, a good one, for our kids.”

RHAM Senior Trip Starts with Bus Fire

by Geeta Schrayter

The adventure started a bit early for some RHAM High School seniors on their trip to Lake Compounce last Friday, May 31, as the bus they were taking to Lake Compounce caught fire.

After the bus left Interstate 84 in Southington on its way to the Bristol amusement park, Superintendent of Schools Bob Siminski said a motorist motioned to the driver that there was smoke coming from the hood of the bus.

“The driver pulled over to the side of the road, all the kids got off and the firemen came, the medics came and the fire was obviously put out,” he said.

According to the incident report from the Southington Fire Department, the call on the bus fire came in at 10 a.m. and crews arrived five minutes later. The bus driver said smoke started from the engine compartment and she pulled over and evacuated the bus, which, in addition to the driver, contained 41 students and three chaperones.

“Passersby and others used multiple dry chemical extinguishers and one partly opened the hood of the bus to gain access burning his fingers in the process,” the report stated. The fire department then used an extinguisher and tank water to put out the rest of the fire. According to the report, a trail of diesel fuel and an oil spill was noticed leading up to the bus, which was consequently reported to the state Department of Energy and Environmental Protection and sanded by the state Department of Transportation.

High school principal Scott Leslie and assistant principal Tom Mueller were accompanying students on the outing and left school not

long after the buses. As a result, they arrived at the scene five to 10 minutes after the incident occurred. When he got there, Leslie explained, students were already off the bus, the fire had been put out and police had separated students into those that were 18 years old and those that were younger.

Both Leslie and Siminski explained while the medics found no one was injured, anyone under 18 needed a parent or school official to sign off saying they didn’t need to go to the hospital.

“There’s a lot of protocols that need to be followed here,” said Siminski.

“Each of the kids called home on their own, then we worked with the emergency medical personnel and they confirmed there were no injuries, and no concerns about any injuries from the accident,” Leslie added.

According to the report, Leslie also signed a blanket medical refusal for all students under 18.

After that process was completed, one of the buses that had already dropped students off at the park returned to bring the stranded busload to their destination.

Back at the school, Leslie said staff then called each parent to confirm everything was fine.

“Everything was good” after that, said Leslie, and students were then able to experience adventure on their senior trip the preferred way: by riding the roller coasters at Lake Compounce.

The school’s bus company, First Student, did not return calls to comment for this story as to what may have caused the fire.



On the way to their senior outing at Lake Compounce last Friday, around 70 RHAM seniors had a slight delay when the bus they were riding caught fire a few miles from the amusement park.

Hebron Resident Hospitalized After Bicycle Crash

by Geeta Schrayter

Hebron resident Ross Dapsis, owner of the local business Something Simple Café, is currently in critical condition at Hartford Hospital after sustaining injuries in a bicycle crash over the weekend.

Fire Chief Frederick L. Speno, who was in charge at the scene, said a report came in at 3:37 p.m. Saturday, June 1, of an unconscious person on the side of Old Andover Road.

“He was on the side of the road,” Speno stated. “We don’t know what he hit or how the accident happened.”

Speno said LifeStar was immediately called in because Dapsis was unconscious, apparently due to a bicycle accident.

Deputy Fire Chief Nick Wallick was in charge of the landing zone for LifeStar and Speno explained Dapsis was transported to the landing zone within five or six minutes and the helicopter had him to Hartford Hospital in half an hour.

“Half the time of the ‘golden hour’” Speno said, which the Merriam-Webster dictionary defines as “the hour immediately following traumatic injury in which medical treatment to prevent irreversible internal damage and optimize the chance of survival is most effective.”

Speno added one of the first technicians on the scene is a full-time paramedic, so Dapsis “got very good care very quickly.”

On Wednesday, Speno said Dapsis was still in critical condition, but the hope is he’ll soon recover.

“It’s a nice family,” he said of the Dapsises, which includes Ross’s wife Jessica and their children Tristin and Evan. “It’s a tragic thing so we’re all just hoping and praying that everything turns out well.”

Town Manager Andy Tierney added onto that.

“Our thoughts and prayers are with him and his family at this time,” he said.

Tierney explained he found out over the weekend a local businessman had been in a serious bicycle accident and was taken by LifeStar to the hospital. He said he’d met the family several times, and helped them through the process of opening their café, which made its debut last October.

“He’s been a big part of the community, having a café right in the center of town,” he said.

(Due to what happened, the café was closed Monday, but opened again the next day.)

“If there’s anything that we [the town] can do we’re here for them,” said Tierney, and he’s not the only one in the community with those sentiments.

In a letter sent out by “Friends of the Dapsis Family” and forwarded by members of the Hebron school system – where Tristin and Evan are students – the seriousness of the situation and how to help the family was shared.

“The Dapsis family is currently facing a very challenging time,” read the letter. While the family is “truly touched” by the love and support of the Hebron community, residents were asked to respect the family’s privacy during this physically- and emotionally-overwhelming time.

In addition, Jessica Dapsis’ wish to be the sole person who relays information to the children about their father’s condition was expressed.

“She is also trying to create some ‘normalcy’ for [the kids] with regular activities and school,” the letter furthered, asking that the children be allowed to “go about their normal routine, enjoy their typical childhood distractions and the task of just being kids.”

While the family has plenty of meals and “the children and pets are being lovingly cared for by family,” the letter explained a fund had been set up as a way to help.

“Both Ross, Jessica and the entire Dapsis family work [at their café] tirelessly and have



Resident Ross Dapsis (right), co-owner of Something Simple Café, is currently in critical condition after a bike accident over the weekend. He is shown here with his wife Jessica, daughter Tristin, son Evan and his mother Kathy, shortly after the opening of the café last year.

put their heart and soul into this family business. The little café on our Main Street is enjoyed by many and has added so much to our community,” read the letter. “We felt strongly however, that no one should have to worry about paying the bills or business while facing this trauma and the greatest gift we could give them was peace of mind and the ability for Jessica to focus on her children and Ross.”

The letter furthered contributions to the fam-

ily would be “the greatest support at this point in time,” and added that “when the time is appropriate the family will provide an update.” At present, however, they’re unable to answer questions, the letter said.

Donations for the Dapsis family can be taken directly to the Savings Institute Bank and Trust in Hebron at 115 Main St., or mailed there to the attention of Valerie Short. Checks should be made payable to the “Dapsis Family Fund.”

Puppy Takes Top Spot in Hebron

by Geeta Schrayter

A golden retriever puppy is definitely starting life out on the right paw. Along with being smart and sassy, 14-week-old Gracie will soon start puppy kindergarten, and last week, she learned she’d been named the Top Dog in town.

Each year, the town clerk’s office puts on a Top Dog competition as a way to remind residents it’s time to renew their dog licenses. As the winner, Gracie will get to wear the number one dog tag – at no cost to her family – for the upcoming fiscal year.

Residents who wanted their four-legged friends to participate submitted photos to the Town Clerk’s office throughout April and part of May. Then, during the last two weeks of May, votes were cast at the Russell Mercier Senior Center.

Town Clerk Carla Pomprowicz explained the success of each dog often depends upon how hard their families campaign.

“If someone had a dog submitted they could tell their neighbors and friends to vote,” she said, “and some people obviously campaigned very hard.”

Pomprowicz added along with reminding residents about dog licenses, the competition also gave people the opportunity to check out

the senior center.

“One owner said he’d never visited the senior center and he was so pleased with the beautiful facilities and how well maintained it is,” she said. “So it’s another way to get people to these facilities they may not go to otherwise.”

And as far as the winning pooch, Pomprowicz was all praise.

“The dog is adorable,” she said. “When people looked at the picture they just smiled. The dog is just *so* cute.”

Owner Andrea Boardman, who’s lived in town with her husband Bob since 1999, agreed.

“She’s just so darn cute,” she said, adding her dog was also intelligent.

“Gracie came to us at seven weeks old house-broken because she’s just so smart,” she explained. But that intelligence comes with a side of mischief.

“We keep her in the kitchen [when we’re out]” Boardman said. “She did break out one night and did get into some mischief. She went upstairs in a bathroom and pulled down my flat iron and a towel, pulled apart the back of the bath mat then went into the bedroom, pulled my husband’s sweatpants off the dresser and fell asleep on them.”

Boardman said she didn’t know how Gracie

got out, noting her husband had closed off the kitchen with wooden gates he’d made.

“She’s extremely intelligent,” Boardman said. “That’s obvious.”

Gracie is the third golden retriever to make her home with Boardman and her husband. Boardman said “we just came to the time where we wanted another” – a decision that made her nieces happy as well.

Boardman explained her nieces Amelia and Caroline help out with the puppy and even came up with the name. Boardman said the girls brainstormed a number of names to choose from and Gracie “just felt right.” In addition, the two decorated a “welcome box” for the puppy that Gracie now uses to sleep in.

But just because Gracie is Top Dog doesn’t mean she gets to live a life of total leisure, napping the day away in her box; her puppy kindergarten classes, where she’ll learn basic training and obedience, are sure to keep her busy.

And while she’s learning canine etiquette – and in a scene reminiscent of the classic film *Lady and the Tramp* when area dogs “ooh” and “ahh” over Lady’s gleaming new dog tag – Gracie’s classmates are sure to notice her own tag, which proudly shows she’s number one in Hebron.



Gracie, a 14-week-old golden retriever puppy, was recently named the Top Dog in Hebron and awarded the number one dog tag for fiscal year 2013-14.

Introducing Duffy: Colchester's Top Dog

by **Melissa Roberto**

One dog in town has a reason to wag his tail all year long.

Duffy, a four-year-old West Highland White Terrier, now proudly wears a shiny, new dog license with an engraved "No. 1" around his neck to signify his winning title of Colchester's Top Dog.

Owners Barbara and Edward Caffegan submitted a picture of their friendly pooch last month, which was featured on the town website alongside 26 others. Thanks to a whopping 48 votes, out of a total of 139 that were cast, Duffy took home the title along with a free license renewal for the 2013-14 year. Runner-up Sophie – a puppy whose information has not yet been filed in the town clerk's office – also received much support from the public, with a total of 29 votes.

The top dog contest has been held in Colchester for the last 22 years during the last two weeks of May, right in time for the month of June, which is dog licensing month.

This year's voting was open to the public from May 15-29, giving anyone in or outside of town a chance to view pictures of this year's canine contestants online and cast a vote for which pet they fancied the most.

The 139 votes that were cast this year surpassed last year's total number of votes by 28 – a "wonderful" turnout, Town Clerk Nancy Bray said.

On Friday, May 31, Bray contacted the Caffegans, who admitted they were quite surprised yet "very excited" that Duffy won. The couple said Duffy's high number of votes probably came from the many family members they

recruited – but they suspected his recently-groomed fluffy white coat may have persuaded other voters this year.

"We entered our other dogs in the past but they just never came out to be number one," Barbara Caffegan recalled. "It just happened that way this year."

Duffy is the third "Westie" and fourth dog the Caffegans have owned. The only dog the couple currently has, they say Duffy came from a breeder in Rhode Island, and was brought home four years ago not long after their previous Westie, Corrie, passed away. Before Corrie, the couple owned another Westie named Christie, and before her, a black poodle named Midnight.

"We weren't sure if we wanted another dog after we lost Corrie," Barbara explained, while adding that after giving the idea some thought they decided to go through with it. "We've just been very happy that we did it. We've enjoyed every moment with him."

Westies are native to Scotland, Edward explained, which prompted the couple to research names online. Edward said Duffy seemed to be a fitting name for their furry Scottish male.

On any given day, Duffy is a spunky and energetic dog that is often seen carrying around his favorite stuffed animal, a bat (the animal, not the piece of baseball equipment, Barbara pointed out), or is energetically playing in his backyard.

Duffy also enjoys watching television "in order to find a commercial with a dog or a cat in it," Barbara said, and when he does, he starts barking excitedly.

But just as Duffy enjoys his Colchester

home, his owners are quite happy having him around as well.

"He does bring a lot of joy to us, that's for sure," Barbara said. "He's very loving and cuddly and just a great little dog."

Edward took Duffy's winning picture on a sunny day in April while the 19-pound pup sat atop a large rock in their backyard. Though the couple said they believed the picture to be a good one, they admitted they entered just for fun.

"In our hearts Duffy is number one, so we just thought we'd give it a shot," Barbara added.

And after taking the Top Dog crown – which also saved his owners from paying the \$8 licensing fee for neutered male dogs – the Caffegans gave Duffy a reward he no doubt loved – extra doggy treats.

"We probably gave him a few more than we should have," Edward said on Monday with a chuckle. "We felt he was deserving of it. It was okay to spoil him for the day."

June is dog licensing month so if you own a dog in town, stop into the town clerk's office to purchase a license. If you prefer to license by mail, include a stamped, self-addressed envelope, proper documentation, and a check made payable to "Town of Colchester." A rabies certificate as well as validation of being spayed or neutered is required at the time of initial licensing. If you are renewing a license, be sure a current rabies certificate is on file with the town clerk's office.

By state law, penalty charges are added if licenses are not renewed by June 30. The penalty is \$1 per month, starting July 1.

For more information, contact the town clerk



Colchester's top dog, Duffy, a 4-year-old West Highland White Terrier, sits atop a large rock in his backyard on a sunny April afternoon. His owners, Edward and Barbara Caffegan, submitted the winning photo, which received 48 of the 139 votes that were cast in the 2013 top dog contest. The Caffegans describe Duffy as an energetic pup who loves to play outdoors and watch television.

at townclerk@colchesterct.gov or call 860-537-7215.

Colchester Couple Charged With Using Bad Check for Home

by **Shawn R. Dagle**

A Colchester couple is facing numerous forgery- and larceny-related charges after Glastonbury Police say they gave their lawyer a counterfeit check valued at more than \$472,000 for the purchase of a home earlier this year.

According to Glastonbury Police, Kimberly and Scott Gross, both 41 years old and both of 559 Old Hartford Rd., were arrested Thursday after a Glastonbury attorney reported that he had been given a counterfeit check for the purchase of a home earlier this winter by the couple.

In an affidavit on file at Manchester Superior Court, police said they were contacted Feb. 22 by attorney Thomas Kane reporting that one of his clients had given him a fraudulent cashier's check valued at \$472,204.59.

According to the affidavit, Kane said he had been retained by the Grosses to represent them in the purchase of a home on Jolin Lane in Colchester. Kane told police he was given a

Bank of America cashier's check for the \$472,204 by the couple. Normally, he said, he would deposit the check in the firm's banking account and then issue checks for payments stemming from the purchase of the home.

Something, however, did not look quite right with the check. According to the affidavit, Kane noticed that the check appeared to be peeling apart. When the check was further peeled back it became apparent that another check had been pasted on top of an original check. The original check had been issued to Kimberly Gross for \$704.59, the affidavit said. It appeared to have been scanned and altered to read \$472,204.59 and then pasted on to the original check.

According to the affidavit, Kane called Kimberly Gross and she agreed to meet him on Feb. 22 at the bank to make good on the check. However, he told police, Kane later received a call from her sister saying Kimberly would not be coming to meet him at the bank.

On Feb. 27, according to the affidavit, police interviewed Kimberly Gross at her attorney's office and she admitted to altering the check. According to a sworn statement provided by police in the affidavit, Gross said she made a deposit on the home in January.

"I had intended on having the rest of the purchase price at the time of closing," she wrote in her statement. "I was trying to come up with the cash but was not able to. The sellers had moved out and when I could not come up with the needed funds I panicked. My husband had no idea what was going on. ... We never went to the new house."

Police allege that the Grosses provided their real estate agent with false proof of funds as well. According to investigators, Kimberly and Scott Gross gave their real estate agent savings account information showing that they had \$492,181.49 in their account. In reality, the affidavit said, they only had \$81.49 in their account.

The real estate agent told police she used her \$6,000 commission to pay her home mortgage. When the fraud was discovered, the real estate agent said she had to pay back that commission.

According to the affidavit, the Grosses owe the real estate agency \$12,875.

The owners of the Jolin Lane home also suffered losses in the incident, police said. According to the affidavit, the homeowners said they have lost approximately \$20,000, including a lease for another residence, rental of storage units and other moving costs.

Kimberly and Scott Gross were each charged with first-degree criminal attempt to commit larceny, conspiracy to commit first-degree larceny, second-degree forgery, conspiracy to commit second-degree forgery, third-degree forgery and conspiracy to commit third-degree forgery, Glastonbury Police said.

Their bonds have been set at \$25,000 and both are due in court on June 19.

Colchester Police News

5/28: Colchester Police said sometime between May 23 and May 28 numerous rolls of copper pipe were taken from the AmeriGas facility at 275 South Main Street. Colchester Police are currently investigating the case.

5/28: Colchester Police said a resident of Norwich Avenue reported the possible tampering of a tire/rim of his vehicle after it fell off while traveling on Mill Street. Police Officer Robert Labonte said all of the lug nuts on the tire fell off at the same time, giving police reason to believe the car had possibly then tampered with. Labonte is still investigating the case.

5/28: Colchester Police said a resident of Heatherwood Drive reported that he found what he suspected to be narcotics in a room of his house, which is rented by another tenant. Colchester Police are currently investigating the case.

5/28: State Police said Nicole M. Klusek, 21, of 67 Park Ave., was charged with posses-

sion of heroin and possession of drug paraphernalia.

5/29: Colchester Police said Samuel Kranc, 53, of 59 Carli Blvd., was charged with DUI and following too close.

5/31: State Police said Gary E. Tutt, 41, of 303 Mohegan Park Rd., Apt. 112, Norwich, was charged with second-degree failure to appear.

5/31: State Police said David W. Fisher IV, 24, of 12 Spruce Ln., South Windsor, was charged with possession of narcotics.

6/2: State Police said David Rowland, 42, of 11 Meadow Dr., Apt. 4, was charged with DUI, possession of marijuana and failure to wear seat belt.

6/2: State Police said David Gazdzicki, 25, of 773 Middletown Rd., was charged with violation of probation.

6/2: Colchester Police said Alex Jennes, 20, of 60 Balaban Rd., was charged with possession of heroin.

Marlborough Police News

5/29: State Police said Keith Cooper, 61, of 10 Lafayette Rd., was charged with DUI and making an improper turn.

6/1: State Police said Ethan Francks, 19, of 86 Jones Hollow Rd., was charged with DUI, failure to secure child with a seat belt and traveling unreasonably fast for conditions.

6/2: State Police said Eric Michael Wallace Treece, 40, of 93 North Main St., was charged with third-degree assault, interfering with an emergency call and disorderly conduct.

Hebron Police News

6/1: State Police said William Andrychowski, 38, of 69 Crouch Rd., Amston, was charged with disorderly conduct and interfering.

\$1.01 Million Sewer Project Heads to Town Meeting in Marlborough

by Melissa Roberto

Following Wednesday night's public hearing on Phase II of the sewer project, the Marlborough Board of Finance sent the \$1.01 million project to a town meeting scheduled for later this month.

The action taken by the finance board came after about 15 residents attended the public hearing to receive information about the project delivered by the board, Water Pollution Control Authority Commission (WPCA) and Town Planner Peter Hughes.

The hearing was similar in fashion to the several hearings that have occurred since the fall of 2012, when the Phase II process began. Wednesday's hearing started with a presentation given by finance board chairwoman Evelyn Godbout who highlighted just what Phase II consists of.

Phase II is proposed to pick up where Phase I left off, at the intersection of Lakeridge and Cheney roads. The construction will continue down Cheney Road to the intersection of Park Road, and then up Beverly Lane. It would also hook up five houses on North Main Street to the sewer line that already exists from Phase I.

The project also includes a portion that the town is not responsible for paying: a sewer line extension to hook up the Marlborough Health Care Center (MHCC). Hughes explained to the crowd that the center is in need of a system due to its "failing septic system," which has caused the MHCC to pay hundreds of thousands of dollars each year to hire a company that manually pumps its effluent.

Officials then explained how much Phase II would cost. The finance board sent the project to a town meeting with a price tag of "up to" \$1,010,000 based on the one bid received by Hubble Construction, which covers the planning, acquisition and construction costs. The construction of the project came to \$721,000 – a cost that was actually \$200,000 less than what the engineers originally anticipated, Hughes said.

While the town would enter into a short-term note when the project begins, – for an amount of years that would be decided after approved

and if the town receives state funding – the town would then enter into a 20-year repayment period with a 3.75 percent interest rate.

The 20-year repayment period is made up of an annual cost of \$74,300, which is paid for by two separate entities: an annual payment of \$50,200, or 67.6 percent, would be paid for by the users for their benefit assessments, and the other is a cost of \$24,100, or 32.4 percent, would be paid for by general taxes.

Hughes explained that the annual user benefit assessment payment of \$50,200 would actually be paid for by the users who hook up to the sewer system – partially by the 23 households hooking up to the system at a cost of \$603 each year, and the remaining would be covered by the MHCC, who is also hooking up to the system.

However, project costs could be lowered if the town receives Clean Water funding from the state level. Godbout assured attendees Wednesday that the town would be applying for state funding if the project goes forward, which would lower the total annual payment for the users from \$50,200 to \$46,651, and which would actually eliminate the annual town contribution altogether, down to zero, which Godbout admitted would be "great."

In terms of state funding, Hughes reminded the crowd that it's not a guarantee, but that the state informed the town that they're looking for "shovel-ready projects," which Phase II is since its design and bid are already set in stone.

Godbout shared just what Phase II will accomplish. For starters, she said it would reduce pollution in the lake, as the project will hook up the entire east side of Lake Terramuggus to sewers. Also, she said the project would help MHCC – a "viable taxpayer," – dispose of their waste properly and still remain in town.

Additionally, Godbout said the sewer line extension is a component of future growth for the town of Marlborough because it would expand the tax base.

The chairwoman pointed out that the approval of Phase II in the near future would come at a good time, as she said the current economic

climate "provides us with the best contract prices and lowest interest rates" – rates that are only anticipated to "go up," she added.

Other details officials stressed revolved around the value of the MHCC. Hughes pointed out that the center currently employs 24 Marlborough residents, and a remaining 125 employees from other towns that use Marlborough businesses. Godbout explained that the MHCC pays about \$90,000 annually in taxes, and if the project does not move forward and the entity can no longer afford to manually pump its effluent, the short-term and long-term care for Marlborough residents and others would most likely vanish.

With the basic information complete, WPCA Chairman Jack Murray took the floor to stress what would happen if the project does not move forward, and the MHCC – an entity he described as a "40,000-square-foot all-electric building built in 1970" – is left without a sewer system.

"That's an old building," Murray said to the crowd. "It would be very difficult for a future user to use it without some significant modifications. And if it did not have sewers available... it would indeed be very difficult [to occupy]."

One resident spoke to the argument that the MHCC is an important asset to the community and without it, the town would lose jobs and \$90,000 annually in taxes.

"If they leave it's their responsibility to continue to pay taxes on it and sell it," the resident stated. "It's not our responsibility."

"That is true," said Murray. "However, in the real world what people do is just walk away from things."

Murray added that, for him, the project is important because Phase II continues a project the town started years ago, while stressing that if the town receives clean water funding, it would be of no additional cost to taxpayers.

While many Marlborough residents often associate the town's sewer project with Phase I – a phase that included a series of delays and

lawsuits – officials also spoke of how Phase II would differ from Phase I, thanks to the contractor of the project, Hubble Construction of Burlington.

Unlike Phase I, Godbout and Hughes highlighted a piece of equipment that will be used to crush up the rock and ledge in the construction area. "It's a big dig, rock-eating machine," Godbout liked to call it, and Hughes explained to the crowd that it's an eight-by-20-foot machine that grinds up the rock it encounters and processes it, which would then be used in the rest of the project.

Due to the machine, Hughes said there would be "no blasting" during construction. Construction would also include a 20-inch trench instead of the 36-inch trench made in Phase I, which Hughes said would lessen the costs of paving the roads. Speaking of paving the roads, Hughes added that unlike Phase I, the contractor would be responsible for paving instead of the town.

At the end of the hearing, a handful of residents asked questions and made comments to the speakers. One resident asked how Phase II could affect the cost of Phase I users who are currently still paying for their systems. Murray explained that it has a chance of lowering users' annual operation and maintenance fees, which are currently around \$400 each year.

"The addition of more customers drives down those fixed costs of the operation and maintenance fee," Murray explained.

Another asked how long it would take to receive a response from the state on whether or not the town would receive funding, and Hughes informed the crowd that the state has 60 days to respond.

After the hearing, finance members admitted they wished more people came out to the hearing to hear about the project specifications. However, they hope more residents will come out to vote at the town meeting, where the fate of the project will be left up to voters.

The town meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, June 19, at 7 p.m., at the Marlborough Elementary School cafeteria.

Marlborough Teen Dies After Fall Near Granby Waterfall

by Melissa Roberto

A Marlborough teen passed away Sunday, June 2, as a result of injuries she sustained from a fall near a waterfall at Enders State Forest in Granby, police said.

The girl, Amanda Monington, 15, of 105 Hebron Rd., appeared to have fallen 15-20 feet off of rocks nearby the waterfall on Saturday, June 1, around 5:30 p.m., a Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) press release states.

As a result of the fall, Monington sustained a head injury and was transported to Hartford Hospital via LifeStar, DEEP spokesman Dennis Schain said, while adding that he did not know if Monington sustained any other injuries.

DEEP Environmental Conservation (EnCon) police officers and fire departments from surrounding towns including Granby, East Granby, Simsbury and East Hartland reported to the scene for assistance, Schain said. Emergency rescue personnel used ropes and a rescue basket to lift Monington out of the water.

On Sunday, Monington was pronounced dead at Hartford Hospital, the release states.

The Enders State Forest is home to a series of waterfalls, Schain explained, and people often go there to look at the waterfalls and the river that runs through the forest, and to hike. Schain said there is not a sign in the area where Monington fell that forbids people from entering into the water. Asked if Monington was preparing to jump off of the rocks into the water, Schain said EnCon officers are still investigat-

ing that.

Schain added that there have been occasions where people have been injured at the Granby forest but could not recall if anyone had ever died from an incident there.

The area where Monington fell has remained open throughout the week but Schain confirmed EnCon officers will be investigating the case, and doesn't expect a report to come out for "several weeks."

Monington was a freshman at RHAM High School in Hebron. There, the community continues to mourn her loss.

RHAM High School Principal Scott Leslie described Monington as "just a delightful, young woman," who several staff members enjoyed.

"She was just a likeable and genuinely nice kid," Leslie added, while pointing out that she was "very smart" and a student that held "so much promise."

Both the RHAM middle and high schools utilized the many counselors they have in place for additional support to students and faculty, Leslie said. On Sunday afternoon, he said, the district's crisis team met to discuss how the RHAM community would cope with her loss. On Monday morning, at the start of school, both schools held a moment of silence in remembrance and to honor the 15-year-old, who Leslie added had "very close friends" and was liked within the community.

An obituary for Amanda Monington can be found in this week's issue of the *Rivereast*.

East Hampton Man Charged with Assault of Pregnant Woman

A Walnut Street man appeared in court this week on charges he assaulted a 33-year-old pregnant woman late last year.

John Foran, 38, of Walnut Street, was charged May 22 with two misdemeanors and two felonies, including third-degree assault of a pregnant woman, second-degree threatening, second-degree strangulation and risk of injury to a minor, East Hampton Police said.

The assault occurred in East Hampton on Thanksgiving of last year, police said, but the alleged victim said she was too afraid to file a complaint to the East Hampton Police Department until Feb. 27 of this year.

Officer Hardie Burgin of the East Hampton Police Department conducted the investigation, police said, which began Feb. 27 and ultimately led to Foran's arrest.

East Hampton Police News

5/18: Stephen Rose, 42, of 392 Hampton Rd., Chaplin, was issued a ticket for operating with an illegal plate and possession of marijuana, East Hampton Police said.

5/23: Robert Norris, 64, of 2141 Chapel St., New Haven, turned himself in pursuant to an active arrest warrant, police said, and was charged with third-degree larceny.

5/23: Gail Distefano, 71, of 45 Forest St., was issued a summons for operating an unregistered motor vehicle, failure to comply with emissions testing requirements and failure to maintain minimum insurance requirements, police said.

5/24: a 17-year-old juvenile of East Hamp-

ton was issued a juvenile summons for possession of cannabis, possession of paraphernalia, intent to sell and possession of a hallucinogenic, police said.

5/25: Kristen Karpuska, 26, of 4 Hyde Farm Ter., was charged with DUI and failure to drive right, traveling unreasonably fast.

5/25: Police responded to a shoplifting complaint at the Rite-Aid on East High Street and charged Brooke Tegge Jr., 19, of 5 Niles St., with sixth-degree larceny.

5/29: Sara Stratoti, 31, of 2 Aarons Way, was issued a ticket for possession of less than half an ounce of marijuana and possession of drug paraphernalia, police said.

Portland Middle and High Schools Hold Evacuation Drill

by Elizabeth Bowling

The Portland secondary schools' emergency evacuation drill Tuesday afternoon was a success, according to Superintendent Sally Doyen.

All 600-plus students were accounted for during and after the 45 minute drill, after which classes resumed.

Students, faculty and staff throughout the entire building, which includes both the high and middle school, evacuated in 10 minutes and walked to the Valley View School down the street where they relocated.

"It was very quick," Doyen said. "The students were well-behaved. It was well worth the practice."

The drill simulated a real necessity for off-site evacuation, like if a bomb scare was called in to the secondary school building, Andrea Lavery, the principal of Portland High School, said.

The drill was recommended by a district-wide Safety Committee that was put together after the shootings at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown last December, Doyen said. The committee focuses on all types of emergency drills within the town's schools.

The Safety Committee, which addresses the concerns of the Board of Education and the Town of Portland, is made up of representatives from both the public schools and the town with 21 members total.

"We've always had a safety plan," Doyen said, "but not one that took everybody off the

site."

But now, Portland's public school buildings all have off-site evacuation plans. The three elementary schools will each have an evacuation drill before this school year is over, too, Doyen said.

Valley View Elementary School will conduct an off-site evacuation drill on June 12, Gildersleeve Elementary School on June 14 and Brownstone Intermediate School on June 17.

Starting in the next school year, each of the town's schools will have two to three evacuation drills on an annual basis, Portland Middle School Principal Scott Giegerich said, and the students, faculty and staff will not be told about the drills ahead of time, which they were for this one.

On Monday, the high school and middle school faculty practiced the drill after school to ensure that the actual one would run smoothly the next day.

Giegerich said he hopes he'll never have to really use the evacuation plan, but he was very proud of his students during the drill.

"The kids were very responsive," he said.

Lavery added, "We were very pleased. The kids were great."

Giegerich said the schools' coordination with the police department was excellent, too. At one point during the exodus, a car backed out of a driveway on Butler Lane where the students were walking. It could have been an issue, but



Students from Portland High School and Middle School retreat back to class during a successful building evacuation drill. The entire building relocated down the street to Valley View School and walked back within 45 minutes Tuesday. Every school in town will practice their emergency evacuation plans this month before the school year is over.

with the help of two teachers and a police officer, Giegerich said he was able to handle the situation.

Giegerich said the school building performs a minimum of 10 drills each school year, which averages out to about one drill, of any kind, each month.

Melilli's Has it All, Under One Roof in Portland

by Elizabeth Bowling

Melilli Caffè & Grill Pizzeria is bringing the tastes of Italy to Portland.

Owner Seby Milardo was born in Sicily and moved to the United States when he was 9. Now the family-oriented 52-year-old has been in the restaurant business for 19 years after being influenced by his grandmother's and mother's cooking.

After working as a carpenter, Milardo started his restaurants. He's owned restaurants in Waterbury and Southington, then Middletown and Cromwell. Some were bakeries, some were cafes and some pizzerias. He's never been able to combine the three under one roof until moving to Portland, as his prior locations were just too small.

"I couldn't grow out of there," he said of his Cromwell location, where he was unable to include a bakery or pizza options on the menu. "I'm able to do a lot more here [in Portland]. Every other place I [had] was limited. Here I can combine all three places."

Milardo also owns Melilli's By the River in Rocky Hill, which opened about a week before the Portland restaurant. But the two eateries have very different menus. Rocky Hill's offers foods like hamburgers, hot dogs, lobster rolls and whole belly clams, Milardo said.

Since opening in Portland May 9, he's been able to incorporate every aspect from all of his previous restaurants under one roof. That is, he can serve deli foods, hot lunches, breakfast sandwiches, bakery goods, pizza and grinders in one place.

"I plan on being here for a long time," Milardo said. "But hopefully some day my

daughter can take over and I can sit back."

Milardo hopes his daughter Nicole, 25, who attended culinary school and now works for him full-time, will keep the family business running for years to come. His other daughter, Josephine, 29, is a schoolteacher but works at Melilli part-time, along with her mother, Milardo's wife, Teresa.

"We are successful because I have my family working together for 19 years," Milardo said.

He also credited Melilli's great customer service and great food for bringing success to Milardo's restaurants over the years.

Some of that great food includes the Portland restaurant's signature arancina, a deep-fried rice ball stuffed with meat sauce, mozzarella cheese, hard-boiled eggs and peas. Another specialty is the Olive Stampede, which features Sicilian olives with carrots, celery, spices and fresh mint.

Milardo also raved about the Italian ices, the "grab and go" options at the deli and the signature sandwiches, one called the "Sicilian Bomber" and another called "Seby's Favorite."

However, don't let the name of the latter confuse you; "Everything is my favorite," Milardo quipped.

Milardo said catering for every occasion will begin soon. Everything is done in-house.

"We have access to halls to rent out in Middletown and Cromwell," Milardo said regarding his catering services.

Melilli Caffè & Grill Pizzeria is located at 264 Main St. Its hours are Sunday through Wednesday, 6 a.m. to 8 p.m., and Thursday through Saturday, 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. It can be reached at 860-342-4035.



Portland welcomed Italian-styled Melilli Caffè & Grill Pizzeria to Main Street last month. Owner Seby Milardo is shown here with his daughter, Nicole, inside his newest restaurant. Milardo has been in the business for 19 years and said his restaurants have been successful because his family works together.

Plan for Yellow Ribbon Tree Sign Withdrawn in East Hampton

by Elizabeth Bowling

For two years, a tree in the Village Center has served as home to yellow ribbons tied in honor of East Hampton soldiers serving overseas. The ribbons are then removed by the soldiers upon their return home to Belltown, in what are often moving ceremonies held in the Center.

It's a tree that means a lot to a lot of people, and, as an outpouring of people at last week's Town Council meeting would indicate, there's no need to distract from it with a large sign.

There used to be a small sign that read "Wel-

come to East Hampton" in front of the tree, but the sign was destroyed during a snowstorm this past winter, Ann McLaughlin, who helps maintain the ceremonial area, said.

The original sign was often the victim of graffiti and theft, Town Council Chairwoman Sue Weintraub said. That's why when the Town Manager asked her to design a new one to replace it, she designed it to be "huge, like a beacon with a bell on top, so people would know where the yellow ribbon tree is," she said.

But McLaughlin said she and many local

veterans were opposed to Weintraub's new sign design because it would be disrespectful to the veterans. Many veterans showed up to the May 28 Town Council meeting to voice their objections to the plan. As a result, the council voted unanimously against installing the new sign.

"There will be no sign as of now," Weintraub confirmed.

Town Manager Mike Maniscalco said his staff brought the destroyed sign to his attention, so he asked Weintraub to design a new sign, knowing she had design experience and

had been involved in other signage issues.

Maniscalco said the vote against his proposal "isn't a big deal."

The safety pedestrian island, on which the yellow ribbon tree is planted, is not a town green, Weintraub said. The land is state-owned; therefore any installation of a sign requires a state permit.

The original sign was never permitted by the state, Weintraub said. Had she been able to go forward with her replacement sign, she would have gotten installation permission, she said.

Hitch in Farmers Market Plan in Andover

by Geeta Schrayter

A hitch has recently come up in the plan to start a farmers market in town.

Selectwoman Elaine Buchardt told her fellow selectmen Wednesday that those preparing for the market had been “quite active” and there were 10 vendors lined up to participate. But there was also a major issue.

“There was a suggestion made to us by the State of Connecticut that all of the vendors have a million-dollar liability policy and not a single one of [the vendors] has a million dollar insurance policy,” Buchardt explained.

She added it would cost the vendors close to \$500 to put one in place, and considering the farmers market is only expected to run for nine weeks its initial year, if the vendors had to pay that amount they wouldn’t make a profit.

“We may not have a farmers market this year if we can’t resolve this,” she said.

Buchardt noted the vendors at the Coventry Farmers Market had such policies but that particular market is larger and runs for a longer period of time. Conversely, the vendors at the Ellington Farmers Market, which Andover’s

was supposed to be based on, did not.

“Her 30 vendors [in Ellington] – none of them have a million-dollar insurance policy so the question is if we really need to require that,” Buchardt furthered.

However, First Selectman Bob Burbank said if the vendors didn’t have policies, the town would have to pick up the liability.

“This sounds like a lot of red tape,” said selectwoman Cathy Desrosiers.

“We’re getting close to the start date and [vendors] are now saying they probably can’t do it,” added Buchardt.

“Well, that’s a shame and very disappointing,” Desrosiers continued.

The farmers market was supposed to start up July 12 and run every Friday for nine weeks by the ball fields on Long Hill Road. The Economic Development Commission, of which Buchardt is also a member, had hoped the market would provide a variety of local produce, maple syrup, soaps, cheeses, meats, herbs and more.

“We’ll still look into this and see if we can resolve it,” Buchardt concluded.

Also at Wednesday’s Board of Selectmen meeting, Vice First Selectman Jay Linddy shared the town was looking to purchase a defibrillator for the town office building. He explained this was something that had been discussed and approved a few years ago and money had been placed in the budget for its purchase however the defibrillator had yet to be bought.

“We already voted on this, it’s in the budget,” said Burbank, but the actual purchase “fell through the cracks.”

“So we’re restating our feeling that yes, we want to buy it and we’re going to buy it this month,” Burbank said.

The cost of the defibrillator will come to around \$2,400. Linddy added some employees will be able to take part in training on the defibrillator’s use in the fall.

Burbank also shared the town had finally re-

ceived a monthly report from the Connecticut State Police. He explained he had been asking for such reports for some time and now that the police were finally complying, residents could see the services they’re getting.

During the month of April, the report stated the Andover resident trooper and officers from Troop K responded to 225 calls for services. Out of these, the most notable were listed as; three for accidents, one for a burglary, two for other criminal matters and one for other non-criminal matters while 122 calls were listed as “non-reportable matters.”

Non-reportable matters were explained as possibly being informational calls or requests for house checks while a family is on vacation.

In addition to the above, the report said troopers also conducted 83 traffic citations, gave out 39 written warnings and one on-sight DWI.

The next Board of Selectmen meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, July 10, at 7 p.m., at the Town Office Building, 17 School Rd.

Andover Selectmen Recognize New Top Dog

by Geeta Schrayter

At the Board of Selectmen meeting Wednesday, the new Top Dog for the 2013-14 fiscal year was recognized. The 9-year-old boxer named Roxy was present at the meeting and wriggled around excitedly as she was given her Top Dog bandana and a certificate to go along with her “number one” dog tag – the perks of the title.

The Top Dog Contest is an annual event put on by the Town Clerk’s office as a way to remind residents it’s time to renew their dog licenses and raise money for a local charity. Now in its third year, any dogs in town could have entered the contest, vying for the title and bragging – that is, barking – rights.

Residents voted on their favorite canine throughout May, paying \$1 per vote. This year, the contest raised \$77 for the Recreation Commission Scholarship Fund – the majority of which came from votes for Roxy.

Assistant Town Clerk Mikki Busch explained this week Roxy’s companions, 10-year-old Jakub and 8-year-old Konrad Jandzinski came into the office one day eager to cast votes for their dog.

“One time they came into the office and they were so cute,” she said, sharing one of the boys came in with a \$5 bill to vote for Roxy. The other ran in afterwards and said the same thing. Then, a third boy came in and said, “I’m their best friend and I live across the street and I want to vote for Roxy too,” said Busch.

It’s no surprise the boys were so determined to help their canine companion. After all, Roxy has been a part of the Jandzinski family since Jakub was 1 year old. His father Janusz Jandzinski said the two have been best friends.

“When my boy [Jakub] was growing up both of them were inseparable – two best friends,” he said, adding Roxy was a “good dog,” who had no problems in the house, and wouldn’t touch food if it was left out on the table.

But Jandzinski shared at one point, Jakub and Roxy were separated; in fact, the family thought Roxy was gone for good. Jandzinski explained Roxy is afraid of thunder. One day about three years ago the family went to the beach and while they were away, there was a thunderstorm. Roxy got scared, got out of the house – “she probably just went looking for us”

Jandzinski speculated – and was hit by a car on Route 6.

“So when we came back she wasn’t anywhere around,” Jandzinski said. “We started looking for her, went to animal control and they told us that there was an accident on Route 6 with a dog.”

The family contacted the officer who responded and were told the dog was in fact a boxer that matched Roxy’s description. However, when the officer had attempted to get her, Roxy ran away.

“She was gone for almost two weeks,” Jandzinski stated. The family looked for her every day, finally coming to the conclusion she was gone. But then, one day, Jandzinski came across Roxy on the Hop River State Park Trail.

“I found her walking along, skinny like she didn’t eat for two weeks,” he said, explaining he brought her home then to the veterinarian, where it was discovered that, while she was bruised and hungry and had a scar on her head, there were no broken bones.

“The vet couldn’t find anything wrong with her other than her being a little bit bruised,” he said, adding the only change as a result of the incident is how much she eats. Prior to her disappearance, Jandzinski said Roxy’s bowl could be left filled and she would only take a little at a time unlike most dogs that will eat themselves sick. But since her return, “every feeding, every dish, she cleans it off,” Jandzinski stated.

And now Roxy’s safe and sound with her family, enjoying quite the dog’s life. The boys said they like to play fetch with their dog, adding she’s “playful” and “really nice.” And since she’s the official Top Dog, that means along with being well-cared for she gets to strut around town in her “number one” dog tag and bandana, and ride in next year’s Memorial Day parade.

Regarding her win, both boys said they were happy she was the Top Dog, and Jandzinski added when someone asks about Roxy’s title he likes to joke she’s on the Board of Selectmen.

“She’s in government” now, Jandzinski laughed – so be on the lookout for new ordinances regarding dog treats and cat-chasing by Andover’s new premier pooch.



Andover residents Konrad (left) and Jakub Jandzinski stand with their boxer Roxy shortly after she was recognized as this year’s Top Dog.

Obituaries

Colchester

John Stula

John Stula, 93, of Cape Coral, Fla, formerly of Columbia and Colchester, passed away early Saturday morning, June 1. Born Jan. 12, 1920, in Colchester, he was a son of the late Ferdinand and Irene (Melnyk) Stula.

John married Mary Elizabeth Harrington on April 24, 1948. The couple shared 63 years of marriage before she predeceased him on June 1, 2011. John built three nursing homes in eastern Connecticut. He operated the facilities with his wife, Mary until their retirement several years ago, when they moved to Cape Coral, Fla.

John enjoyed building and working on the farm with his son and grandsons. He lived for his family and will be remembered by them for all he did for them.

Survivors include a son, Karl Stula of Colchester; a daughter, Karleen Cicchiello of Columbia; a brother, Kenneth Stula of Athens, Ga.; three sisters, Frances Zawacki of Alaska, Alice Hardy of Phoenix, Ariz., and Sr. Helen Stula of Ronkonkoma, N.Y.; four grandchildren, John and Shawn Stula, both of Colchester, Kara (and her daughter, Isabella) and Eve Cicchiello, all of Columbia; and numerous extended family and friends.

In addition to his wife and parents, he was predeceased by five brothers, Fred, Mike, Bruno, Edwin, George and a granddaughter, Maria Cicchiello.

Friends and family attended calling hours Monday, June 3, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. The funeral liturgy was celebrated Tuesday directly at St. Columba Church, 87 Route 66, Columbia.

Burial will follow in New St. Andrew Cemetery in Colchester.

East Hampton

Gordon Stark Dalton

Gordon Stark Dalton, 92, of East Hampton, beloved husband of Jann M. Dalton, went peacefully to be with the Lord on Thursday, May 30, at Middlesex Hospital.

Gordon was born on July 8, 1920, to Charles Gerald and Ethel Stark Dalton in Northampton, Mass. While growing up, he developed a love of farming, fishing, nature, and telling stories. He learned how to fix watches and make clocks, completely of wood. He became a lifeguard at Look Park and swam competitively in high school, graduating Northampton High in 1939. He attended Rhode Island School of Design, originally in jewelry design, until WWII started. He enlisted in the Army and served in North Africa, Italy, and France. After the war, he completed his degree at RISD in industrial design and was employed at National Steel, Ethan Allen Corporation and other companies using his engineering skills.

Gordon's artistic spirit, youthful essence and sense of humor captivated all who encountered him. He possessed profound wisdom with eyes that saw beyond the obvious - deep into the heart of our very existence. He was a communicant at St. Patrick Church, which he joined in 2009 at the age of 88 and enjoyed singing fully at Mass. Genuine friendship is very rare, very precious, very blessed - and we give thanks for the joy of knowing him.

Survivors include his son Lee, wife Carrie and grandchildren Nicolas Dalton, Katie Arrington, her husband Luke and great-granddaughter Caroline, all of Boulder, Colo.; grandsons John Roper of Sammamish, Wash., and his wife Zandra; Ward Roper of London, England, his wife Hoi-Yee and their children Zen and Theodore; and granddaughter Pheydra Schworm of Austin, Texas.

He was predeceased by sisters Geraldine Fieg and Carol Thornton and his daughter Ann Dalton Mello.

As faithful best friend, companion and husband to his adoring wife, Jann, Gordon became surrogate father, grandfather and uncle to her large family and will be deeply missed by all. He memorialized their wonderful life full of travel and the richness of family gatherings with 35 years of photos. He had many passions, including marine biology, the Civil War, motorcycles, and flying airplanes and enthralled all who met him with his war stories. At the time of his passing, he was writing his World War II memoirs and leaves the final edit to his son Lee and nephew Jake Whitney.

A Mass of Resurrection will be held today, June 7, at 11 a.m., at St. Patrick Church, 47 West High St., East Hampton. There are no calling hours.

The family would like to thank his many caregivers - especially those at Hartford Hospital Cardiology and the Drs. and staff at Middlesex Hospital Cancer Center and Hospice Unit.

In lieu of flowers, memorials donations in his name may be made to: Weiss Hospice and Palliative Care Unit, Middlesex Hospital, Crescent Street, Middletown, CT. or St. Patrick Church, 47 High Street, East Hampton, CT 06424.

To leave online condolences, visit spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

Hebron

Douglas M. Braman

Douglas M. Braman, of Old Saybrook, formerly of Hebron and Lebanon, died Wednesday, May 22. He was born June 11, 1947, to Arlene E. and Robert V. Braman.

He is survived by his two daughters, Rebecca Quinn (husband Brian) of Debary, Fla., and Nicole Hansraj (husband Jason) of Kissimmee, Fla., and granddaughter Kaylin Hansraj. He also leaves behind his brothers and sisters, Barbara L. Kelly, Lois E. Albert, Richard J. Braman, David W. Braman, Janice D. Smith, all of Hebron, Lilliane M. Boyd of East Hartford, Lisa A. Braman of New Britain, and many nieces and nephews.

Doug was a U.S. Marine Corps Veteran (September 1965-June 1969) who served in Vietnam. A gunsmith and "jack of all trades", he will be sorely missed by his friends and family.

A military tribute and service will be held Sunday, June 9, at 2 p.m., at the VFW/American Legion at 18 Main St. in Hebron.

In lieu of flowers, a memorial donation can be made in Doug's name to the VFW (vfw.org/Contribute/).

For online condolences, visit swanfuneralhomeoldsaybrook.com.

East Hampton

William H. Royce

William H. Royce, 72, a lifelong resident of East Hampton, died Tuesday, June 4, at the Hospital for Special Care in New Britain. Born July 18, 1940, in Putnam, he was the son of the late Sarah Morassini.

Bill was employed as an iron worker for Union Local 15 of Hartford before his retirement. He was a member of the East Hampton VFW Post 5095.

He is survived by his longtime companion, Cindy LeBoeuf of Jewett City; his five sons, William Langmaid of Middletown, Raymond Langmaid of Watertown, Mark Royce of Portland, Keith Royce of Cromwell, Todd Royce of Hebron; a daughter, Karen Royce of Hebron; a brother, Linden Morassini and his wife Brenda of Connecticut; three sisters, Charlene Cushman of East Hampton, Bonnie Hazard of Michigan, Linda Scaper and her husband Byron of Iowa; many grandchildren, great-grandchildren, nieces and nephews.

Funeral services will be held Saturday, June 8, at 11 a.m. in the Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton. Burial will follow in Lake View Cemetery in East Hampton. Friends may call at the Spencer Funeral Home on Saturday morning from 9 a.m. until the time of the service.

To leave online condolences, visit spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

Amston

Joseph F. Pane

Joseph F. Pane, 74, of Amston, died peacefully Sunday, June 2, at Windham Memorial Hospital. Born in Hartford, he was the son of the late Ernest and Irene (Viveros) Pane.

Joe was employed by UPS as a tractor trailer driver for 36 years, retiring 16 years ago. He was also a former business agent, vice president and president of Teamsters Local 671. He was a U.S. Marine Corps veteran. Joe enjoyed traveling, fishing, boating, cooking, spending time with his grandchildren and vacationing in the Florida Keys.

He is survived by his best friend and constant companion for 34 years, Justine "Jesse" Rearick; his children, Debi, Joe and Christine and their mother, Jean; his second family that he lovingly guided to adulthood, Gina, Dan and Rachel, as well as 15 special grandchildren, among them his "little peanut" Chelsea; and one great-grandchild.

The funeral service will be today, June 7, at noon, at the D'Esopo Funeral Chapel, 277 Folly Brook Blvd., Wethersfield. Calling hour will be prior to the service, from 11 a.m.-noon.

In lieu of flowers, donations in Joe's memory may be made to the Hebron Fire Department, 44 Main St., Hebron, CT 06248 or to the Disabled American Veterans, 35 Cold Spring Rd., Suite 315, Rocky Hill, CT 06067.

For online expressions of sympathy, visit desopo.com.

Colchester

Wanda T. Glemboski

Wanda T. Suroviak Glemboski, 78, beloved wife of Thomas Glemboski of Colchester, passed away Thursday, May 30, at Hartford Hospital. She was born on March 11, 1935, in Colchester. She was the daughter of the late John and Mary Sczerba Suroviak.

She was treasurer and secretary of Glem Oil Company Inc. of Colchester, which Tom and her ran together for many years. Wanda was very active with tag sales for St. Andrew Church and Colchester Senior Center for many years, her last eight years she became very active with St. Mary's Church. During her lifetime, Wanda was always there helping families in their time of need plus Wanda was a pet lover, saving many pets.

Surviving besides her husband Tom, she leaves a special niece Beverly; also numerous nieces and nephews.

She was predeceased by three brothers William, Frank, and Edward Suroviak; four sisters Mildred Josiewicz, Agnes Brown, Stella Berthiaume and Ann Korosewicz.

Visitation, including a Panahyda Prayer service, was held Sunday, June 2, at the Belmont Sabrowski Funeral Home, 144 South Main St., Colchester. The funeral Mass will be held Monday, June 3, at the St. Mary's Ukrainian Church, Linwood Ave., Colchester. Burial followed in St. Joseph cemetery.

Memorial donation may be made to St. Mary's Church, Colchester, Hayward Fire Co., or to the donor's choice.

East Hampton

Marta Sullivan

On Thursday, May 30, Marta Sullivan of East Hampton rejoined the loving embrace of God and her father, Jose Ivan Hincapie.

Marta was born in Medellin, Colombia, in 1975. She moved to Connecticut in 1992, and graduated from Wilbur Cross High School. In 2010, she became a C.N.A. to follow her love of helping people. Marta worked in home health care, Apple Rehabilitation and Clinton's C.H.C., as well as an administrative assistant prior to that. Marta bravely fought cancer with her characteristic smile to the end; a smile which could only be outshined by her love for children. Marta will be missed by many loving friends and family members.

She leaves behind her 9-year-old daughter, Katherine; her husband of 17 years, Keith; her loving sister and mother, Astrid Thompson and Belermina Lopez, both of whom sat at her side to her final moment; her brother, Ivan Dario Hincapie Lopez; her nieces, Valerie, AnnLise, Jennifer, Crysta, and Grace; and her nephews, Sabastian and Tony. Marta will also be missed by her brother, Jair and sisters, Cecilia, Piedad, and Stella Hincapie-Lopez in Colombia, South America.

Calling hours will take place from 6-9 p.m. today, June 7, at Swan Funeral Home, 1224 Boston Post Rd., Old Saybrook. A funeral Mass will take place at 10 a.m. Saturday, June 8, at St. George Roman Catholic Church in Guilford.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to The American Cancer Society, cancer.org, or to Middlesex Hospice, 27 Crescent St., Middletown, CT 06457.

swanfuneralhomeoldsaybrook.com.

Marlborough

Amanda Lynn Monington

Amanda Lynn Monington, 15, of Marlborough, beloved daughter of Todd Monington and Louise Gagne, died Sunday, June 2. She was a freshman at RHAM High School in Hebron.

Amanda will always be remembered for her creativity and her wonderful sense of humor.

Besides her parents, Amanda is survived by her sister, Emily Monington; grandparents, Rowan Monington and Charelene Lavoie; also several aunts, uncles and cousins.

A funeral service will be held today, June 7, at 10 a.m., at Haddam Congregational Church, 905 Saybrook Rd, Haddam. Burial will be at the convenience of her family. Friends called Thursday, June 6, at Biega Funeral Home, 3 Silver St., Middletown.

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

Marlborough

Albert Charette

Memorial Gathering

There will be a memorial gathering for Albert "Al" Evan Charette of Lee, Maine, formerly of Marlborough, on Friday, June 7, from 5-8 p.m., at the American Legion Hall on Route 66 in Marlborough.

Charette passed away May 7 at the age of 85, with his family and friends by his side. His obituary ran in the May 17 *Rivereast*.

Marlborough

Harold Conrad Griesing

Harold Conrad Griesing, 81, of South Glastonbury, passed away Monday, June 3, at Marlborough Health Center, after a long battle with cancer. He leaves behind his loving wife of 53 years, Cynthia. Born in Hazleton, Pa., he lived in Glastonbury for 60 years.

Hal graduated from Lehigh University in 1953 with a degree in Mechanical Engineering, where he was a member of the Sigma Phi Epsilon fraternity and the Tau Beta Pi honor society. He was employed at Pratt & Whitney Aircraft/United Technologies in South Windsor for 35 years, with his final position as a senior project manager. While at Pratt & Whitney, Hal completed a master's degree in engineering management from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. He loved sports, especially skiing and golf; he served as President of the Hartford Ski Club and he was a member of the Captains Golf Club in Brewster, MA, where he had a summer home.

Hal enjoyed serving the Glastonbury community as a member of the Glastonbury Historical Society, past president of the Exchange Club of Glastonbury, and board member of the Chestnut Hill Condominium Association. As a member of the First Church of Christ Congregational, Hal enjoyed volunteering on the transportation team where he drove church members to medical appointments.

In addition to his wife, he leaves behind his loving daughters, Jill (Griesing) Brown and her husband Michael of Augusta, Ga., Holly (Griesing) Murray and her husband, Thomas, of Glastonbury. He also leaves his sister, Joan Held and her husband, Ralph, of Orange; grandchildren Elizabeth, Steven and Eric Brown and Anna, Maryellen, Erin and Caroline Murray; several nieces and nephews; and a very special pet, Maggie, who slept by his side during his illness.

The family would like to thank Dr. Kevin Schauer and his staff at the Helen and Harry Gray Center, and a special thank you to the kind nurses and staff at the Marlborough Health Center and the Greater Hartford VNA Healthcare.

The funeral service will be today, June 7, at 10 a.m., in the First Church of Christ, Congregational, 2183 Main St., Glastonbury. Burial will follow in Green Cemetery, Glastonbury. Friends called at the Mulryan Funeral Home, 725 Hebron Ave., Glastonbury, Thursday, June 6.

In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made in memory of Harold to the American Cancer Society, 825 Brook St., Rocky Hill, CT. 06067 or the Glastonbury Exchange Club, P.O. Box 641, Glastonbury, CT. 06033.

For online condolences, visit mulryanfh.com.

