



RIVEREAST

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Teachers at Gildersleeve Elementary School in Portland help “Put the Brakes on Bullying” presenter Kevin Robinson demonstrate the value of trust as fellow event presenter Ian Bradley jumps over on his bike. Robinson used this and other several volunteer situations to help drive home anti-bullying lessons, character traits and life lessons for third- and fourth-graders last Friday morning.

Anti-Bullying Preached Through BMX Tricks

by John Tyczkowski

What do fancy BMX tricks and X Games competitions have to do with bullying at school?

Surprisingly, a lot, according to “Putting the Brakes on Bullying” speaker Kevin Robison, who presented at a third- and fourth-grade assembly last Friday morning, Oct. 17, at Gildersleeve Elementary School in Portland.

Robison, a 10-time X Games BMX medalist, a world record holder, Taekwondo black belt, founder of Grindz skate and bike apparel, and Rhode Island native, said his presentations use entertainment to help inform.

“It’s hard delivering the anti-bullying message, a teacher or someone can come in and just talk, but the information may not get through,” he said. “Doing it this way, with the bikes and the videos, I can keep the kids’ interest.”

This is Robison’s second time visiting Gildersleeve; he also stopped by this past June.

“I’m so thankful that they brought me back to continue to spread this message,” he said. “I love what they’re doing with all of their anti-bullying efforts and teaching the kids to be kind to others, it’s refreshing to see.”

Eileen Katz, Gildersleeve’s principal, said students felt much the same way.

“The kids loved it, they were so into it,” Katz said of Robison’s first visit. “They’ve been begging for him to come back.”

Several other schools in Portland have featured his presentations before. Robison had previously presented at Brownstone and the middle school, and Katz said the principals there let her know how successful the events had been. Consequently, she decided to bring

“Putting the Brakes on Bullying” to Gildersleeve.

Katz said that this second assembly was timed specifically for October, which is Bullying Awareness Month.

“We specifically wanted something like a lot of ‘wow’ factor,” she said. “We’ve done the anti-bullying pledges, the T-shirts and the banners, so we wanted a presentation that was really going to have an effect on the kids.”

The event itself began with Samuel Starr, the school’s social worker, leading the assembled students in a recitation of their anti-bullying pledge, and presented students who unveiled a massive anti-bullying banner.

“At Gildersleeve School, we pledge to stand up to bullying and all mean spirited behavior,” Starr said. “And we will.”

Katz also took time before the presentation to recognize students from both grades present who had demonstrated the trait of respect – which is October’s character trait focus at Gildersleeve.

Katz said that each month, the school focuses on a different character trait, and the school plans to have assemblies nearly every month to reinforce those traits to students.

Robison’s presentation wove together a message of related topics including anti-bullying topics, personal character, perseverance and hard work with video clips, PowerPoint slides and a series of BMX tricks, both on the ground and in the air.

However, the emphasis was always on the content and message, as Robison was careful

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Political Candidates Discuss the Issues

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

Residents of Marlborough met a number of candidates last Thursday during the Marlborough Business Association’s Meet the Candidates forum.

State Senate incumbent Cathy Osten, a Democrat serving the 19th District, spoke along with her opponent, Republican Steven Everett. Candidates Joe La Bella, a Democrat, and Gayle Mulligan, a Republican, battling for state representative for the 55th District, attended along with Kie Westby, a Republican vying for attorney general.

Enza Dondeneau of the MBA moderated and the debate included pre-submitted questions along with questions by the audience in attendance. Topics included the budget deficit, gas prices, drones, health insurance for small businesses, and plans for the increasing cost of higher education. The candidates were also asked to give an example regarding their accountability and responsiveness to a situation.

Before the questions began, each candidate introduced themselves and some of their background in town government.

Osten, a U.S. Army veteran, spoke of her family’s restaurant business in the Norwich area which she began working at in her teens along with her work in the Department of Corrections. Osten is also the first selectwoman of Sprague and has been the 19th District state senator for the past two years. The district counts among its communities the *Rivereast* towns of Hebron and Marlborough.

Everett, who lives in Columbia, was formerly in the U.S. Navy for 33 years and served on the Board of Selectmen for Columbia. He spoke of his vision for the eastern part of the state that is “often forgotten by the capital.”

La Bella is a Marlborough lawyer who has been practicing law for 27 years and has his own firm on North Main Street. He is a past member of the town’s Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance. La Bella coaches soccer and baseball along with running the Future Problem Solvers program at RHAM Middle and High Schools.

Mulligan lives in Hebron and said she’s running “because I care.” She has served on the Hebron Zoning Board of Appeals before being

elected to the Board of Selectmen, of which she is currently chairwoman.

Westby graduated from Wesleyan University in Middletown and said he remembers visiting the Marlborough Tavern as a college student. Westby served in the U.S. Marines where he received a JAG (judge advocate general) certification and retired as a major. Since then, he has been a lawyer dealing with civil litigation and said he feels “totally prepared” for the attorney general position. The attorney general gives legal counsel to state boards and commission.

The debate began with a question regarding how gas prices can differ from town to town.

Osten explained small towns pay more for their gas because of the gas company’s delivery fees, along with the cost being more if the station sells less.

“Our gas tax is higher than most northeastern states,” Osten said. “We do not collect tolls and the gas tax is an ineffective way to distribute the cost of gas.” Osten went on later to state how we need to look at how the gas tax is being used.

La Bella seconded Osten with how the volume of gas and the cost of transportation increase the prices from town to town, stating “that’s not going to change.” However, La Bella said, “We have an infrastructure problem and the money charged for the gas tax really needs to go to the roads and bridges.”

Mulligan said that drivers going from New Jersey to Massachusetts often bypass Connecticut for gas because it is too expensive with the gas tax.

“Business is business for the gas company,” Everett said. “We need to buy cheaper and work with other gas stations.” Everett went on to say the state spends too much in the budget and often take from the transportation fund to cover holes in the general fund.

The question of whether small business should be able to buy into larger state insurance pools was directed at Mulligan and La Bella – and both were favorable.

“Everyone has the right for affordable health insurance,” Mulligan said.

“Insurance is a factor of risk pools,” La Bella

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“Putting the Brakes on Bullying” event presenter Kevin Robinson stands on the handlebars of his bike as part of performing several flatland BMX tricks. Robinson tied these tricks into personal stories that he used to teach students anti-bullying lessons.

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to connect the tricks and videos back to character concepts.

As he performed flatland tricks, Robinson related the story of how he was bullied as a child for riding his bike.

He demonstrated a specific bike trick, and then recalled how one time after school he practiced and continually failed at the trick, while being laughed at. However, he said, once he pulled it off, his success sent the bully away.

Robinson said that while he was persistent and didn't give up, many people change their behaviors to escape bullying.

“It is never okay to bully someone, to treat them so mean, that you change their personality, you change who they are,” he said. “Everyone deserves to be treated with respect.”

The presentation also involved a heavy emphasis on volunteer participation from the audience on the part of both the students and the teachers, with several role-playing exercises.

For example, to illustrate the importance of diffusing bullying by not supporting it, Robinson had several student volunteers stand with him at one end of the gym, staring at a single student at the other side.

“When everyone's even just staring at you like that, you feel awkward,” he said. “Now imagine how it feels if everyone is making fun of you, picking on you. It's going to make you feel awful.”

He then had the student volunteers walk over to the single student, and then all look back at the lone ‘bully.’

“The bully may still be over there making fun and calling the person names, but it doesn't matter,” Robinson said. “You cannot support who the bully is; you cannot be into it too.”

And later, to demonstrate the importance of trust, Robinson gathered several teachers from

the audience and stood with them in the gap between the ramps while Ian Bradley, a flatland and ramp rider, fellow presentation participant and a Grindz-sponsored athlete, jumped over them Evel Knievel-style on a BMX bike.

After the presentation, Robinson said he offers similar ones to people of all ages.

“I deliver the same message to everyone, but I dress it up differently depending on age and setting,” he said. “There's bullying from elementary school all the way up to businesses, it happens across the board.”

He also said that since he retired from competitions, giving these types of presentations is his new passion.

According to his website, krobevents.com, Robinson also presents on drug awareness and abuse, bike safety and offers customized presentations as well.

Katz said that the school will “definitely” be inviting Robinson back.

“It's the combination of the message and of the idea of finding something that you're passionate about and that makes you happy, and how that can give you direction in terms of leading you away from making poor choices,” she said. “(Robinson) is phenomenally passionate about what he does and the kids get that feeling from him, and that's very important.”

“It definitely all sticks in their heads,” she said.

Those interested in learning more about Robinson and the presentations he offers can visit krobevents.com for more details.

Visit the *Rivereast News Bulletin's* Facebook page, [facebook.com/RivereastNewsBulletin](https://www.facebook.com/RivereastNewsBulletin), for a gallery of photos from the Gildersleeve assembly.

Candidates cont. from Front Page

said. “If you spread the risk out, the prices go down.”

Everett and Osten were asked about the budget deficit and how they would deal with that.

“We pay enough taxes,” Everett said. “We have to cut spending. Not all programs are good programs.”

Osten mentioned her work with results-based accountability as a way to judge programs.

“We cut programs and made changes,” Osten said. “I'm not willing to cut municipal aid and put the debt onto the towns. It directly increases property taxes.” Osten suggested a way to cut town budgets was to have the state take over special education costs, which can cost approximately \$250,000 per student to the town.

Dondeneau asked La Bella and Mulligan a question from the MBA about the cumbersomeness of state mandates and paperwork on small business owners.

“The regulations area is one in which we can easily improve the climate,” La Bella said. “We streamlined the permit process in Marlborough. We need to simplify the processes.”

La Bella went on to mention some of the programs available for small businesses to help them especially the DECD Small Business Express Program. Mulligan, however, said not all these programs do well.

“A number of businesses are given millions of dollars and they haven't kept up to the bargain such as hiring the amount of people they claim they will,” Mulligan said.

All of the candidates were asked to discuss the rising costs of higher education.

“We have way too many college loans, and they're not even mine,” Everett said, lightly referencing his children's loans. “College costs have increased and colleges know money is easily gotten. There are wonderful schools that don't cost \$50,000. We need to utilize community colleges and force colleges to bring [the cost] down by not choosing them.”

Everett mentioned that some college loans

have a 6 to 12 percent interest rate.

As a result of all the loans, the younger generation “can't afford a house or get a good job,” Mulligan said. “It's troublesome. We need to utilize local schools.”

Osten also agreed there needs to be more funding for education; however, La Bella said encouraging potential college students to look at strictly local schools is not really the answer.

“I don't want to have to say [to my children] that you can't go to school X because we can't afford it,” La Bella said.

On a different note, Westby was asked about drones and their legal uses.

“I'm skeptical of using drones for any purpose,” Westby said. “I oppose them.”

All the candidates also spoke about prevailing wage in regards to public projects for towns. Dick Shea, a Marlborough selectman, asked how prevailing wage is supposed to help towns, since he said it forces towns to hire union contractors and shuts out the local workforce.

“Local towns should be able to hire local,” Mulligan said. “Prevailing wage is not a good idea. It ties your hands.”

“States around here have it,” Osten said.

“I'm in favor of prevailing wage,” La Bella said. “It gives you a properly-trained workforce.”

La Bella also mentioned the 5 percent bid law, which allows towns to hire local if the local contractor is within 5 percent of the lowest bid.

“Everyone with a license from the state are not all properly trained?” Everett asked. “I don't agree with prevailing wage.”

Meanwhile, Westby said he's in favor of freedom of choice and for towns to have the ability to shop around for projects.

Elections are Nov. 4 and residents can register to vote until Oct. 28 with the Registrar of Voters.



A pedestrian was struck and killed by a car on North Main Street last Friday morning, Oct. 17. Photo by Mo Spuhler.

East Hampton Pedestrian Struck and Killed on North Main

by John Tyczkowski

An East Hampton man was struck and killed in a motor vehicle accident last Friday morning, East Hampton Police said.

John J. “Jim” Morris, 79, of 3 Marshall Rd., was walking along a sidewalk on North Main Street at around 8:30 a.m. Oct. 17 when a vehicle traveling southbound veered across the northbound lane and up onto the sidewalk “for no apparent reason,” according to police.

The vehicle, a 2000 Honda CRV driven by Jennifer Vanwycke, 34, of 14 Myrtle Rd., then continued along the sidewalk, striking several objects including a stonewall, a newspaper box and a tree.

Finally, police said, the car moved back into

the southbound lane and came to a “controlled resting position” a few hundred feet from where the vehicle hit Morris.

Morris died after being transported to Hartford Hospital by LifeStar from injuries sustained in the collision.

The investigation is ongoing, police said, and a Norwich Police officer certified as a drug recognition expert is aiding in the investigation.

Morris had been president of the East Hampton Volunteer Ambulance Association, and most recently had served as a member of the town's Facilities Evaluation Committee. His full obituary appears in this week's *Rivereast*.

Earl Holmes: A Man Way Ahead of His Time in Colchester

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

Although Earl Holmes lived decades ago, his work cataloging the history of Colchester is still very much alive in his photographs and movies.

In a special exhibit by the Colchester Historical Society, Holmes' work is being displayed for a limited time. The exhibit includes features on Holmes' Drug Store and the paving of South Main Street around 1915, among others.

The Colchester Historical Society received a collection of the photos from Holmes' great-niece, Laura McIntyre, two years ago, along



Earl Holmes, former owner of Holmes' Drug Store in Colchester, was known as a man ahead of his time. Here he is shown outside of his store.

with some of the movie pictures. The society took the movies and transformed them and put them on discs. Those movies are still shown sporadically, in screenings presented by the Colchester Fire Department.

"The objection of the historical society is to make citizens aware of the historical and architectural legacy of Colchester," Arthur Liverant of the Colchester Historical Society said. "We wanted to share these photos with people."

"He was a very advanced guy in science and technology," Liverant continued about Holmes. "He was also an amateur Ham radio man."

Born July 12, 1894, to parents Frank and Louise (Wagner) Holmes, Holmes was a lifelong Colchester resident, with one of his homes still standing on Halls Hill Road. Throughout his lifetime, Holmes took photographs and movie pictures and, in 1918, became assistant pharmacist to Harvey Buell. He married librarian Alma Odin and took over the drug store in 1923, retiring in 1960.

"He was way ahead of his time," Liverant said of Holmes. "He was a druggist and a mailman. Everyone knew him in town."

Liverant said he remembers growing up in Colchester as a child and going by the drug store, especially during the holidays. One of Holmes' unique innovations, Liverant said, was one of the first touch screens. He had a holiday light display that lit up whenever a passing person walked by and touched the window anywhere.

The chronicles of Holmes' photos shows a transforming Colchester community.

One of the largest sets of the collection details the work paving South Main Street, a process that took a lot longer than today's modern paving.

"It was a long process with horse-drawn machinery," Liverant explained. "Main Street was the first street [in town] to be paved."

Paving back then was done with cement,



Holmes recorded the paving of South Main Street in a series of detailed photographs from on top of his store. The paving was a long process that took up much of the town green as well.

rather than asphalt, and the team of pavers would be set up on the town green. Included in the process were a horse-drawn grater and a large ramp the pavers would build to drive the trucks up and drop the cement down from it. Holmes managed to capture a bird's eye view of the process from the top of his drug store and Bacon Academy.

"He knew in a way that he was cataloging history," Liverant said. "There was nobody that did anything like this but him."

With his radio, Holmes' drug store was a center of lively activity.

"Any time world news happened, they would go to Holmes' drug store," Liverant said. "World War I, World War II, the World Series. [At] World Series time the men would sit around and listen to the radio."

Liverant described Holmes as someone with an innate desire for knowledge in the changing world. Along with his touch screen innovation, Holmes also rode one of the first motorbikes and may have attempted to create his own car.

The line of pharmacists in Colchester began in 1853 with Charles Rogers while Buell assisted him. The drug store then became Buell's and then Holmes'. The drug store burned down twice, and was rebuilt each time. Through its three owners, the store served Colchester for over 100 years, prescribing medical drugs and solutions to pains and ills. During Holmes' time owning the drug store, he was known to also have cats all around the store since he had a deep love for the animals.

Holmes retired from the drug store business in 1960; however, he continued to work as a mailman around town. The store became Dino's Pizza before it closed and the building was demolished in the 1970s.

Holmes passed away Feb. 22, 1977.

The museum is open on Saturdays between 1 and 4 p.m.; admission is free. The exhibit on Holmes runs until Dec. 6.

Turning the Wheel Toward a Greener Future in Hebron

by Geeta Schrayter

A number of changes have been taking place in Hebron, all with the hopes of making the town a bit greener. Among them is an electric car-charging station installed at town hall in the spring, and, just last month, the arrival of an electric car to go with it.

The charging station was purchased with a \$5,000 grant from the state and the town's Capital Non-Recurring fund for a total project cost of \$11,000. The station is available for use by residents, commuters and employees and will show up on a charging station application drivers use to find nearby stations.

Also making use of the station will be the Russell Mercier Senior Center, who was the recipient of the Ford C-Max Energi Plug-In electric vehicle garnered by the town with \$14,900 received by the Connecticut Clean Fuel program.

Town Manager Andrew Tierney explained the town had gone for the charging station grant in hopes funds for an electric car would also be procured.

"We applied for the charging station in anticipation of being awarded the grant for the car," he explained. "Now that's come to fruition so we're very, very excited."

Tierney added getting both items put in place was "another big project completed."

"This started over a year ago," he said. "There are people who live in town who do use it, and now we have a car that will help seniors go to appointments and will save the town a lot of money in fuel usage."

Also happy with the electric car's arrival is Mike Harder, chairman of the Hebron Citizens Green Committee, which, according to its Facebook page, was commissioned by the selectmen "to study and make recommendations on alternative energy and energy conservation, solid waste, pesticide use and other matters."

Speaking on the charging station, Harder said, "I think it's great."

Like Tierney, he mentioned the car would save the town some money, and that residents would be able to utilize the station – something he said they've already been doing.

"I asked and a few people have already used it," he said. "We're hoping that some of the businesses in town will install a charging station a little closer to the business area or possibly the library but I think [the current station] will be good for the purpose of servicing the public."

Board of Selectmen Chairwoman Gayle Mulligan had similar praise for the new additions.

"I think we were very fortunate to be able to get the grant to get the car," she stated. "In our [Capital Improvement Plan] budget we had money in there—we were going to be looking at purchasing a new car anyway for the town."

But this way, she added, the town received a car that was more economical for less money, to be used by the senior center for appointment runs.

"The car goes out of district [for the appointments] so it will help save on costs and will help save the environment," Mulligan stated.

She added another plus to the charging station was that it could bring in people from out of town who would then visit some of the local businesses while their car is charging.

"I just really think it's a plus," she stated. "And getting grants to supplement that has been really helpful for us."

Donna Lanza, director of administrative services for the town, called the car and charging station "an exciting initiative."

"There was a big hole in the tri-town area with no charging stations so we're filling a perfect void that was there," she said, adding, "I think it's good PR too for the community, to let them know we are moving toward being more green and taking initiatives to do that."

And, along with the above, there have already been some other initiatives that further propel the town in that direction.

Smith shared the selectmen took the Clean Energy Communities Municipal Pledge with Connecticut Light & Power last month, which means "basically we're agreeing to take initiatives to make our buildings more energy effi-

cient and that we will purchase energy from clean renewable resources."

By taking the pledge, she furthered, the town will be able to earn points that can then be used for grants to put toward more energy efficiency projects—and \$5,000 has already been received.

"There's different ways to earn points and one is if residents are involved in energy efficiency programs in their house with CL&P, or if they have someone come in and review their home and do changes – for any resident that does that we can earn points."

* * *

But while the energy-friendly choices of some residents have resulted in the town's earning a grant, Harder said that, as a whole, residents need to improve their efforts – particularly related to recycling.

"The recycling rate in town is a little better than when we started but not much," he stated. "That's one area residents need to step up and do a better job. We've been trying to get that word out."

Harder said the residential recycling rate is only about 23-25 percent, and the state goal is 58 percent.

"There's a lot of towns that do a lot better than that; a lot of states and municipalities do a lot better than 58 percent also, so we're really hoping people pay attention to the message and start recycling a lot better than they have been."

To help in that regard, some other changes in town have included the purchase of a single-stream compactor at the transfer station for recyclable goods – and changing the name of the station to the "Recycling Center and Transfer Station."

The compactor, Harder said "should make the recycling process for people that use the transfer station a lot easier. Other towns implementing single-stream have seen a significant increase in the recycling rate; we're hoping that happens here."

Harder added the committee has been working with RHAM to help them improve their

recycling, too, and some changes were made towards the end of last year so that there is now a "pretty consistent program where each classroom has a recycling bin, a bin for deposit cans and bottles and then also a third for trash."

Before, he explained most classrooms had one bin for everything.

In addition, at the parks in town there's been a push to ensure a recycling bin is located next to each trash bin.

"They had mostly trash bins placed around the parks and you'd go to a ballgame and the trash would be filled with soda cans, drinks, etc., so little of that was being recycled," Harder said. "We can always improve that kind of thing, and it's a matter of getting the public to change their habits too."

Speaking on why changing said habits is important Harder mentioned both economical and environmental reasons. For starters, he said recycling saves the town money. For each ton of trash the town has hauled it costs \$60. Conversely, the town is paid \$15 for each ton of recycled materials.

In addition, recycling "is one of the most significant steps that can be taken to meet Connecticut's climate change goals."

Recycling, he said, means fewer emissions. "So it saves money and it's good for the environment," he stated.

Tierney had similar sentiments. He mentioned the economic savings to the town, but added being environmentally aware is "the right thing to do. And if all these communities and the country started doing it, it'd be a better place to live and a better planet to hand over to the next generation and the next generation."

Mulligan also felt similarly.

"Whatever we can do as a town, as citizens, to protect our environment, to be more cognoscente of the earth and our use of electricity is a good thing," she said. "Costs are just going up so anything we can do to be better stewards of that only helps the town and helps the environment. So we're going to continue that effort."

State Senate Candidates Discuss Economy, Education

by Shawn R. Dagle

State Sen. Steve Cassano (D-Fourth District) and Republican challenger Whit Osgood faced off in an hour-long televised debate Wednesday, Oct. 15, in Glastonbury.

The Fourth District represents Andover, Bolton, Glastonbury and Manchester.

The candidates fielded questions regarding education, state spending, health care and the environment in the debate, which was held at the Glastonbury Town Council Chambers. It was the first of two debates scheduled for this month (the second is to be held next week in Manchester).

Moderated by Glastonbury attorney and former town planner Mark Branse, the debate featured a panel of five questioners: Glastonbury Conservation Commission Chairwoman Judy Harper, financial advisor Brian Cahill, Glastonbury PTSO Co-President Kate Botelho, Glastonbury Commission on Aging Chairwoman Eva Bowden and Dr. Roy Zagieboylo, who specializes in geriatric medicine.

They asked both candidates questions regarding a number of issues facing the state including the use of pesticides at local schools, the state's lackluster business climate and the state budget.

The debate began with a three-minute opening statement by each candidate followed by a question and answer period where each candidate got two minutes to respond to each question and then a one minute rebuttal for the candidate who responded first.

While it was originally expected the candidates would only have time to deal with one question from each of the panelists, the pace of the debate moved briskly and allowed for another round of five questions.

The debate got off to a bumpy start, with Cassano taking issue during his opening statement with the make-up of the panel.

"I don't know if it is going to be a debate," remarked the Democrat, observing that the moderator and the panel were virtually all Republicans. Branse, Harper and Bowden are members of the Glastonbury Republican Town Committee. According to Cassano, Cahill is actually featured on Osgood's campaign literature.

Despite his initial concerns about the potential fairness of the debate, Cassano pressed ahead and explained why voters should elect him to serve in the state Senate.

"Glastonbury has an outstanding quality of life," he said. "I have worked hard to protect that."

Osgood followed, outlining some of the major challenges facing the state.

"Connecticut does have one of the largest unfunded pension liabilities in the country ... our unemployment rate is over the national average ... we have seen one of the largest tax

increases in history," Osgood said. "The State of Connecticut desperately needs to change the direction we're heading."

According to Osgood, that change starts in the senate where state spending can be controlled. "It is the state legislature that controls the state budget," he argued.

Among the issues discussed last Wednesday evening was the state's anemic business climate. "Connecticut is ranking at the bottom of the heap," argued Osgood. "Businesses are leaving the state."

The way to solve the problem, he argued, is to change the way the state financially does business – in particular, control state spending so businesses have confidence in the future.

Osgood in particular took issue with tax breaks for individual companies, arguing that tax breaks for select companies is not economic development but rather "crony capitalism."

Cassano argued that part of the solution to the poor business climate lies in strengthening educational opportunities to provide students with the know-how and expertise to take high skilled jobs upon graduation in industries such as aerospace. Success there will attract such business and encourage them to and stay in the state.

Cassano predicted the state will eventually see a turnaround. "We went through a recession," he reminded those gathered. "We are paying the price now. ... We are still in a hole ... We need to get together as one and fill those jobs."

Cassano – who, with his wife, owns a daycare operation – pointed out that he himself is a small business owner and said he knows the challenges and difficulties small business owners are facing across the state.

The senator said he has lost clients at his daycare as the direct result of state regulations and has to pay \$40,000 in workers compensation to the state each year, despite the fact his business rarely has to pay out on actual workers compensation claims. "It's outrageous," he remarked.

Cassano said he has visited some 80 small businesses since being elected and has been endorsed by the Connecticut Business and Industry Association.

The senator specifically pointed to his vote in support of a bill granting tax relief to Pratt and Whitney, an agreement he said will keep the company in the state on a permanent basis. This not only benefits Pratt workers, but also countless small businesses that supply Pratt and would have had to close their doors if Pratt had decided to relocate.

As the debate progressed, one clear line of demarcation between the candidates involved the budget and spending.

"We need to figure out how to control spending," argued Osgood. "We can't afford to keep

increasing our tax rates."

Cassano, on the other hand, argued in support of more spending, in particular for agencies such as the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, saying cuts in staff have hampered that agency's ability to perform its basic enforcement functions.

"It says in the notes [to] the questions that I am for budget increases. I am," Cassano proclaimed at one point in the debate. "We have been cutting staffing across the board ... there are a whole lot of things we could do better but you have to have people to do that."

State funding, according to Cassano, is also helping keep local tax increases to a minimum and it becomes a question of where do you cut spending. In particular, Cassano pointed to the millions in state funding that come to Glastonbury for education from the state, money which has helped keep local property taxes low, he argued.

"Cities and towns were let off lightly," he explained of last year's state budget. "[I'm] not sure that will continue. If we cut municipalities you will pay for it locally."

Osgood – who serves on Glastonbury's Town Council – challenged Cassano's assertion that taxes have been kept low in the town due to state funding Glastonbury receives. According to Osgood, Glastonbury has been able to keep its tax increases moderately low because it has been able to enlarge its tax base. "That is what the state needs to do," he asserted.

When it comes to the state budget, Cassano further argued that it's the governor with the power of the veto who largely sets the agenda, an assertion Osgood was quick to challenge. "The state legislature does the budget," he declared.

In addition to the local economy and state spending, education took up a large portion of last week's debate, including how to address the problem of under-performing inner-city schools.

"I don't know what the answer is," admitted Osgood, but he added that the solution doesn't likely include forcing local communities to follow state standards and rules when their students are already excelling. According to Osgood, money spent on requiring those communities to adhere to state-imposed standards would be better applied to communities where it would have more benefit.

"We have to have a greater focus on education in the inner cities," agreed Cassano. Among the greatest education issues he sees confronting the state is providing young students an equal opportunity for pre-school education at a young age so they can be on the same level as other students when they start kindergarten. Again and again he emphasized that education can be the solution to many of the state's prob-

lems.

While there were differences between the candidates, they did agree on a number of issues. Both agreed that local school districts generally know what is in the best interests of their students and should be allowed to make the decisions on issues regarding their districts, curriculum and other matters.

Both candidates expressed opposition to a tax on soft drinks or other unhealthy foods as a means of fighting the ongoing obesity epidemic in America.

"We are overtaxed as it is," remarked Osgood, who said he does not feel the state should be telling people what they can or cannot drink. "We have other problems."

Cassano agreed. "A tax is not the way," he stated.

Wrapping up shortly before 8:30 p.m., both candidates felt that the debate went well. Cassano was confident in his performance.

"I think I have a better grasp of the issues," he remarked. "I have a good working relationship with both sides of the aisles."

Despite his initial concerns regarding the make up of the debate panel Cassano said he felt Branse ran a good debate and that the questions asked were fair, though he said he would have preferred a more impartial panel made up of journalists or newspaper editors familiar with the issues facing the state – as is usual practice. "I thought I was going to a Republican town committee," he quipped after the debate.

Still Cassano said he was satisfied with the performance of the panel and the questions they asked. "It was a very good panel. That made it much easier," he explained.

Cassano said he is looking forward to the next debate, which will take place at 7 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 29, at Manchester Town Hall.

Osgood said he too felt the debate went well. "I hope we were able to differentiate ourselves on the issues," he said.

Osgood said he is looking forward to the upcoming debate as he continues to campaign running up to this November's election.

"I have been running at full speed," he said of his ongoing campaign. "It has been quite interesting talking to people in the district."

So far Osgood said he has been getting a lot of positive feedback from the residents throughout the district he has met.

Osgood's campaign manager Lorraine Marchetti – who helped organize the night's debate – said she tried to run a fair process. She pointed out that not all members of the panel were Republicans and that, due to time constraints, it was difficult to find a moderator for the night's event.

"I worked with his whole staff the whole time," she explained. "We tried to run a fair process."

Portland Police News

10/7: Fred Rossitto Jr., 30, of 9 Willow St., was charged with second-degree failure to appear, Portland Police said.

10/7: Jennifer Peacock, 44, of 265 East Haddam-Colchester Tpke., East Haddam, was charged with operating a motor vehicle under the influence, police said.

10/11: Kenneth Morey Jr., 30, of 41 Breezy Corners Rd., was charged with DUI and failure to drive right, police said.

10/18: Dylan Lanzi, 23, of 16 Dogwood Dr., East Hampton, was charged with DUI and failure to drive right, police said.

East Hampton Police News

9/27: Anna Martineau, 45, of 820 Mansfield City, Storrs, was issued a summons for speeding, East Hampton Police said.

10/10: Robert Maheu, 24, of 50 Old West High St., and Jessica Catalano, 31, of 28 Old Young St., were involved in a two-car motor vehicle accident at the intersection of routes 196 and 16. Maheu was arrested for DUI and following too close, police said.

10/14: William Depietro IV, 24, of 225 West High St., was arrested for violation of probation, police said.

Hebron Police News

10/15: State Police said they are investigating after a BMX-style 20" Kent green/black bike was stolen from 162 Wall St. between Oct. 14 at 6 p.m. and Oct. 15 at 4 p.m. The case is under investigation by Trooper Daniel Greenwood from the Hebron Resident Trooper's Office. Anyone with information should call Greenwood at 860-465-5455 x 4022.

10/16: State Police said Cheryl Dipietro-Orton, 62, of 20 Spice Hill Dr., East Hampton, and Stephanie Bastiani, 34, of 120 Gilead St., Hebron, were injured and transported to area hospitals after a two-car accident on Gilead Street. Bastiani was later arrested and charged with DUI and failure to obey a traffic signal.

10/19: State Police said Jordan Rosario, 42, of 89 Ashland Ave., Newington, was arrested and charged with DUI and improper U-turn.

Marlborough Police News

10/16: State Police said Joanna Blyler, 41, of 11 Star Place, East Hampton, was arrested and charged with DUI, operating on a cell phone and failure to drive right.

Colchester Police News

10/15: State Police said Craig Lemay, 56, of 129 Taftbrook Rd., East Dover, Vt., was arrested and charged with third-degree larceny.

10/16: State Police said Frank Scrivano, 55, of 122 Olenick Rd., Lebanon, was arrested and charged with two counts of failure to appear.

10/18: State Police said Zachary Brown, 21, of 246 McDonald Rd., Colchester, was transported to the Marlborough Clinic with minor injuries after his car hit a tree on McDonald Road.

10/19: State Police said Paul Schiowitz, 40, of 36 Beechwood Dr., Colchester, was arrested and charged with DUI, failure to drive right and failure to drive at a reasonable distance.

Portland Board of Education Discusses New School Calendar

by John Tyczkowski

The Board of Education on Tuesday evening discussed changes to the school calendar to better sync with other Middlesex County schools that are part of the same regional group.

Superintendent of Schools Philip O'Reilly also said that his personal preference for having only full days of school led to him making the recommendation to change the traditional half-day on the day before Thanksgiving vacation into a full day off, starting with the 2015-16 school year.

"I am not in favor of half-days at all," he said. "I would prefer to have no school rather than a half-day, especially on a heavy travel day with less-than-stellar attendance."

O'Reilly said that he had implemented this plan in his previous district, and that it "was well-received by both parents and staff."

Also, school would be slated to commence before Labor Day, on Aug. 26, with Aug. 24 and 25 serving as professional development days for staff.

Another change to the 2015-16 calendar includes having no school on Election Day and turning that into a professional development day, because of collaboration with other schools in the same regional group.

"That's what the relevant statute says, that each regional service center will offer calendar

guidelines for their schools," O'Reilly said. "And our calendar now meets that standard, which the regional superintendents have agreed upon."

Still, board secretary Andrea Alfano expressed her displeasure with having no school on Election Day – and several board members agreed.

"I think students are out way too much in November," Alfano said. "And now we have to take Election Day off."

"Students are out the same number of days in April," board chairwoman MaryAnne Rode said. "It's incredibly disruptive."

However, Rode also reminded board members they have plenty of time to discuss and debate changes to the school calendar.

"This is only the first reading of it," she said. "We can revisit this again."

Tentatively, the 2015-16 school year is set to have 181 student days.

O'Reilly – who began as the new schools superintendent in late August – also updated the board on his progress with regard to his transition plan, specifically his meetings with teachers and staff.

"My understanding and knowledge of the people behind the scenes and doing the work

here in each of our schools has increased," he said.

He also said even though he's nearing the end of the initial round of meetings, he wanted to continue them on a regular basis.

"We will continue these meetings, though maybe not as frequently as they are now," he said. "They're a very valuable source of communication."

O'Reilly said these initial meetings would be wrapping up next month, and that he would send a draft report to staff to confirm their common findings, which would follow in order to allow him to have his full report to the Board of Education in around Jan. 1, before budget season begins.

He also said he's launched his website, philiporeilly.weebly.com, which is also accessible from the Portland Public Schools' main website. It includes a blog and a link to his Twitter account, @PhilipBOReilly, accessible through twitter.com/PhilipBOReilly.

"I will be working on my blog and using it for a tool of communication with the greater community," O'Reilly said. "I'm hoping to get people using some of these ways to reach out to me to know about what we're doing here."

Also, O'Reilly informed the board that he made the decision to accept a request from the

Board of Selectmen to split the cost of championship rings for the high school baseball team. Both boards would contribute \$2,100.

"It's an act of unity with the Board of Selectmen and it's in celebration of a great achievement," he said. "I wanted to let this board know that I made that decision."

The board voted unanimously to approve and work toward implementing their stated goals for the coming school year.

These goals include creating an integrated K-12 curriculum plan to aid in the district-wide Common Core implementation, strengthening the town's special education services, successfully implementing Board of Education subcommittees that were discussed at earlier meetings and improving communication within and outside the Board of Education and public schools.

However, the board can revisit and amend these goals at any time, Rode said.

"I think that these goals actually reflect what we've been discussing," she said. "But these goals are always up for discussion."

The next Board of Education meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, Nov. 18, at 7 p.m., in the Portland High School media center.

Committee Advises on Elmcrest Hospital Campus in Portland

by John Tyczkowski

The perpetual development limbo the former Elmcrest Hospital campus has experienced for years will be soon ending, if the Elmcrest Campus Advisory Committee has anything to say about it.

Last month, the Elmcrest Campus Advisory Committee launched elmcrestportlandct.com to provide the town with updates and news on development of the Elmcrest Hospital campus, and to gain wider support.

The Elmcrest Campus Advisory Committee's objective, according to the website, "is to prove that adaptive reuse of the site's historic structure and landscape is essential for Portland's economic future."

"The site is the keystone for economic development in town, the opportunity to separate ourselves from the normal strip mall mentality, obvious in neighboring towns," Elwin Guild, ECAC member, said. "It's a unique setting, and capitalizing on the uniqueness of the landscape and structures is going to create an incredible economic benefit of Portland that can't be duplicated by conventional development."

The website also contains a comprehensive list of information about the terrain, trees and buildings present at the campus, as well as maps, planning documents and a history of both the campus itself and of planned developments since 2009.

According to the website, the Elmcrest Hospital Campus's development status has been in limbo for the past five years, after the country's recession stalled plans for the proposed Portland TownPlace mixed-use development residential and commercial space.

ECAC's plan focuses on saving the three historic homes at the site, which would have been demolished and replaced with replicas under the Portland TownPlace development plan, Guild said.

"We're pro-development first and foremost," he said.

However, Guild said ECAC is also a proponent of adaptive reuse of the historic buildings, which would involve keeping those buildings and repurposing them for commercial space.

Last month, the town received a \$50,000

grant from the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation under its Vibrant Communities Initiative to help the town develop a viable plan for adaptive reuse of existing historic structures.

"The VCI grant didn't happen by chance, our group has been working with the Connecticut Historic Preservation Trust. They're well aware we're interested in having this development focused on preserving historic buildings," Guild said.

The grant is also important for the town in that its terms specify there be a substantial amount of community involvement in planning the campus' development, which is where ECAC's role in rallying residents comes in handy.

"In our opinion it's a new day, it's a new playing field, and there's plenty of room for the public at large to come into play here," he said.

Three of the six historic buildings on the site include the Erastus Brainerd Jr. House, dating from 1852, the John H. Sage House, constructed from 1829-1830 and the Hart/Jarvis House, built in 1884.

The Brainerd Jr. House and the Hart/Jarvis House are notable for being built upon brownstone foundations. Also, the namesakes of each of those homes had strong ties to Portland's quarry industry.

Guild said the membership of ECAC includes a number of Portland Historical Society members, several people who were involved in preserving the old Central School, a few members of the Brownstone Quorum and Fred Knous, who serves on the Board of Selectmen.

"Something that began as a small group continues as a small group," he said. "I think we're rather proud of the fact that it isn't about how many are involved, but the quality of those who are involved. The people we have represent a wide range of important interests in town."

Guild said ECAC's origins as a citizen action group are reflected in its open meeting structure, which consists of no chair and no parliamentary procedure.

"That kind of structure really gets discussions going and gets ideas flowing," he said. "You'd be surprised how effective an open meeting can be."



The former Elmcrest Hospital campus, which includes six historical structures, lies near the Connecticut River at the cross between routes 17A and 66. The property's development future has been in limbo since 2009 after the national recession stalled Portland TownPlace plans.

At their October meeting, ECAC members discussed new initiatives such as creating a Facebook page for their organization to engage in more community outreach and setting up an informational booth near Waverly Center on Election Day to inform residents about the Elmcrest campus and what they can do to support its development.

They also discussed sending members to represent the group at Board of Selectmen, Planning and Zoning, and Economic Development Commission meetings.

The committee also went over the results of a survey held at the Portland Agricultural Fair, which was on how people would like to see the property developed.

Over half of the 18 responses specified a park or open public space of some sort. Other responses included returning the property to its

earlier state as a psychiatric hospital, as well as developing the area into a Blue Back Square-type venue with "small interesting shops and no big box stores," according to one response.

The full results can be viewed on the ECAC website.

Guild said anyone interested in helping with these efforts or learning more about the Committee can contact ECAC through their website, elmcrestportlandct.com, by leaving a comment there or by using the "contact" form.

Those interested in becoming involved with ECAC can attend monthly meetings on the third Monday of each month at 7 p.m. Meetings take place in the Buck-Foreman Community Room located on the second floor of the old town hall building on Main Street, next to the police station.

Phase III of Marlborough Sewer Project Ready for Referendum

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

And now, it's up to the voters.

Phase III of the town's sewer project is off to referendum on Nov. 4, as part of the Election Day ballot.

On Tuesday, the Board of Selectmen held the necessary town meeting to answer any outstanding questions regarding the project. The meeting was the final informational meeting and the explanatory text was distributed that will be at the Nov. 4 referendum.

Phase III includes Coleman Lane, North Main Street, Lafayette Road, Lake Road, Pettengill Road, Roberts Road and Walker Lane. The Board of Finance reported at their Oct. 2 meeting that with the Clean Water funding approved, the town may not get a chance to do this phase again at this cost. The phase affects 98 properties, which includes 105.25 Equivalent Dwelling Units (EDUs). For instance, a four bedroom home would have 1.25

First Selectwoman Cathi Gaudinski said the exact placement of the project area is dependent on contract pricing and how much they can get done with the projected cost. The \$3.5 million price tag was based on a design and numbers by Weston Samson to estimate what the town will need.

Some of the benefits of the project, the Board of Selectmen stressed, include stabilizing the operating and maintenance budget, helping businesses by not increasing operating and maintenance costs, and this is the only chance to get it done because of the grant and loan provided by the state.

The grant from the state covers \$848,750 out of the \$3.5 million project while the loan from the state with interest over a 20-year time span totals \$3,218,936. Included in the loan payment

is the user contribution to the yearly loan payment for residents living in the sewer district, which would total \$63,000 a year and add up to \$1,287,574 over the 20 years.

Concerning residents in the district, households would pay \$603 a year per EDU toward the loan payment and an operating cost around \$431 per EDU. The operating costs are flexible and could increase or decrease.

One of the biggest issues affecting the operating and maintenance cost is the end of the East Hampton credit. That credit dates back to the 1970s.

That credit is money that East Hampton had owed Marlborough, after Marlborough had designed part of East Hampton's pump station. At the time, East Hampton didn't have the cash to give to Marlborough, so they offered Marlborough a \$235,000 credit. That credit, which has been used to offset some of the operating and maintenance costs of the sewer project, is set to run out by 2016 – when Phase III would be finished.

That credit is set to run out by 2016, when Phase III would be finished.

"If Phase III doesn't pass, the increase [to residents affected by the initial two phases of the sewer project] goes higher," Gaudinski said. "If Phase III passes, it will increase, but stay lower."

"There will be some kind of increase, but not what would happen if this phase doesn't pass," Peter Hughes, director of planning and development, said.

Gaudinski said, concerning the debt the town would incur with the loan payment, that over the next six years, five general obligation bonds

will be paid off along with a taxable note, therefore town debt will actually still decrease.

Gaudinski also replied to citizens' requests to calculate how much Phase III would affect all of the taxpayers – whether they live in the sewer district or not. According to the 2013 Grand List, Gaudinski said, on an average house assessment of \$205,000, Phase III would add \$38 per town taxpayer.

Gaudinski also presented comparisons to other towns that have had sewer projects done. Over the course of the 20 years of the loan, Marlborough residents will have paid \$12,060 per EDU; Bolton residents affected by its sewer project, meanwhile, will pay \$10,000 over the 20 years of a sewer project began in 2005, while Lebanon will pay \$16,683 over the 20 years of a sewer project began in 2013.

Gaudinski said they also found Marlborough was in the middle for the comparison of its operating and maintenance fees. Hebron residents on its sewer system pay \$350 annually, with 744 accounts in town. In comparison, Marlborough residents pay \$432 annually for 231 accounts. These were both based on 2013 numbers.

"I want to make the point that sometimes, it's not clear that the operations and maintenance budget is fixed yearly by projecting cost and dividing it among users," selectman Dick Shea said. "It goes up and down. I'm concerned if people feel that if we pass Phase III, the O&M budget is set. That's not the case."

Shea went on to explain how costs for labor, energy and other factors constantly change and Phase III simply helps spread the fixed portion among more users and keeps increases down.

Hughes also cleared up that regarding mandating hook-ups, unless the septic system was built after Sept. 4, 2004, and is code compliant and there is a reserve area, people have to hook up. Vacant land is not assessed until it's developed.

During referendum, Gaudinski stated, the project only needs 15 percent of eligible voters in town to vote 'yes' for Phase III to pass.

The project would be projected to start May 1, 2015 and be completed by Oct. 31, 2016. Debt repayment would begin once the project is completed in January 2017.

During the following Board of Selectmen meeting, the board approved to go into contract with Hebron for a shared building official.

Currently Marlborough has in the budget for a full-time building official, but only has a temporary part-time person employed. With the shared services with Hebron, Marlborough would have 40 percent of that person's time and more hours than the current temporary part-time person.

With sharing a building official with Hebron, the official would be in Marlborough four days a week along with flexibility to be on call when needed. Out of the building official's \$120,000 yearly salary, Marlborough would pay \$48,000 and Hebron would pay the rest.

"To me, this is the best option for town," Hughes said. "He will be accessible by phone any day of the week. It's not a situation that's not seen all over the state."

The next Board of Selectmen meeting will be Nov. 4 at 7 p.m. at Town Hall.

Marlborough Massage Therapist to Help Cancer Patients and Survivors

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

For cancer patients, massage is a way to escape the world and enter an oasis of peace, helping both physically and emotionally.

Alexandra Smith of CenterPeace Therapeutic Massage at 33 North Main St., Marlborough, decided that, in remembrance of her mother, Nancy Mackenzie, she would celebrate breast cancer awareness month with a special discount for breast cancer patients and survivors and their caregivers.

"My mother had ovarian cancer," Smith said. "Ever since she was diagnosed, I volunteered for Relay for Life. I wanted to continue giving back with breast cancer awareness month."

Smith's mother lost her battle with cancer in 2010. Smith, along with one of her friends, has raised over \$5,000 for the American Cancer Society.

For Smith, however, massage has been the way to give back and offer people of various ailments a few minutes of relief along with helping to rebalance their bodies and lives.

Marion D. of East Hampton has been going to Smith for massage since 2008. Last year, she was diagnosed with breast cancer and chose to have a double mastectomy. (Marion asked not to be identified by her full name because of the desire to be private about her diagnosis.)

Marion said she was glad she did all of her preventative care because they caught the cancer early and it had not spread.

"It was all about the afterwards," Marion said. "After physical therapy, I was allowed to have massage done and needed to increase circulation. I wanted to have the muscles and underlying tissue be flexible and massage is important to keep the tissue that was left."

Marion said Smith has been on her total health care team since day one, helping her with the benefits of massage for not only cancer, but other medical issues.

"I also have underlying asthma," Marion said. "Alex would work with me on that. There

were ways massage would help with the other medical issues and get me to where I wanted to be post surgery."

Massage was also a way for Marion to gain a much-needed sense of control over her body.

"It's doing something you can have control over," Marion said. "Through breast cancer, you have no control. I found something I can do and feel good about myself. My body can feel like it feels good rather than assaulting it."

"I was shocked when Marion told me the news," Smith said. "She hasn't looked back. It's been really gratifying to work with her from start to finish."

Smith said in Marion's case, mastectomies are a huge surgery and it throws many of the muscles out of balance.

"If the person chooses reconstruction, it stretches the pec muscles," Smith said. "It's really uncomfortable and creates a lot of havoc on your body."

Smith said massage in that case helps regain balance and flexibility, helping the body adjust to the changes.

"I feel lucky that I'm able to help someone in that way," Smith said. "If I give someone five minutes of peace, that's wonderful."

Some of the general benefits of massage, according to Smith, include enhancing pain management, relieving muscle tension, increasing blood and lymph circulation, relieving tension headaches, reducing stress and anxiety, helping to boost the immune system, accelerates the healing of injuries, increasing energy and improving sleep.

Smith offers a variety of types of massages at CenterPeace. The newest style is Thai massage which was originally from India and popular in Thailand. Thai massage incorporates stretching and muscle work making you feel relaxed and elongated, according to Smith. Along with Thai, Smith offers a relaxation massage based on long, fluid strokes to put you at immediate ease along with releasing toxins,



Alexandra Smith of CenterPeace Therapeutic Massage on North Main Street is offering discounts through Nov. 8 for breast cancer patients and/or survivors, as well as one of their caregivers. Smith is aiming to help patients get some much-needed relief for their bodies – as well as minds. "They get on the table and it's 60 minutes of not thinking about what they're going through," she said.

a deep tissue massage to really work the muscles and pressure points, a sports massage which is aimed at helping athletes and those who are physically demanding on their bodies, and prenatal massages for pregnant women to relieve discomfort from sciatica, lower back pains, headaches or other muscle-related problems.

Until Nov. 8, Smith is offering half off an hour-long massage for breast cancer patients and/or survivors, female or male – as well as

one of their caregivers.

"I know from first-hand experience what it's like helping out; it's exhausting," Smith said. "You're on 24/7."

Smith does ask that patients currently going through chemotherapy get permission from their doctor to have massage done.

For more information on the discount, interested people can call Smith at 860-614-9899 or visit her website at centerpeacemassage.com.

Obituaries

Portland

Alex B. Wiezbicki

Alex B. Wiezbicki, 17, of Portland, loving son of Bryan and Suzanne (Phelan) Wiezbicki passed away at home Thursday, Oct. 16.

He was born Oct. 18, 1996 in Middletown. Alex was a kind and caring person who will be remembered by his many loving family and friends. He was a selfless young man who always had a smile on his face and put other's well-being above his own.

Alex attended Portland schools for the majority of his life. Despite all the obstacles life threw at him, he always had an optimistic view on life and he tried to spread it to all those around him. He graduated from Portland High School this past June. Alex played tennis in high school, loved video games, and hanging out with his friends. He will be missed by many people.

Besides his parents, he leaves his brother, Christopher Wiezbicki; paternal grandfather, Edward Wiezbicki of Plainfield; maternal grandparents, Barth and Ellen Phelan of Middlebury; aunts, Kathleen Kirschner and her husband, Joseph of Wake Forest, N.C. and their children, Brittany, Matthew and Andrew, and Tonya Charwood and her husband, Scott of Moosup and their children, Kayla, Zachary and Lindsay; and numerous extended family members.

He was predeceased by his grandmother, Joyce Wiezbicki.

Relatives and friends called Tuesday, Oct. 21, at the Church of St. Mary in Portland. Mass was held Wednesday, Oct. 22, also at the Church of St. Mary.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Connecticut Children's Medical Center, 282 Washington St., Hartford, CT. 06106.

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

East Hampton

Ellen A. Stankevich

Ellen A. Stankevich, 64, loving and beloved wife of Richard Stankevich, died Monday, Oct. 20, at their home, after a lengthy illness.

Born in Meriden on Dec. 28, 1949, the daughter of the late Loretta and Gino DeMartin, she had resided in Meriden, then in Naples, Italy, after her marriage, before returning to Connecticut. She graduated from Maloney High School and Central Connecticut State University with a master of arts in education.

Ellen was employed by Town of Cromwell Public Schools, teaching language arts at grade eight for 30 years, retiring in June 2011. El loved teaching. While not a veteran, she accompanied Richard during his U.S. Navy service in Italy.

Including her husband, she is survived by a son, Stefan Stankevich and his wife, Meghan Von Stankevich, of Port Chester, N.Y.; a sister, Dawn Frase and her husband, Lawrence, of Meriden; and a brother-in-law, John Stankevich, of Meriden. El is also survived by two nephews, Jason Frase and his wife, Monica and their son, Max, of Woodbury, and Gregory Frase, of Meriden.

We invite friends, relatives, and extended family to remember Ellen, gathering at Angelico's Lake House, 81 N. Main St., East Hampton, 860-267-1276, Saturday, Oct. 25, from 1 to 4 p.m.

Ellen was an avid gardener. Flowers are encouraged and can be delivered to Angelico's after 10 a.m. on Saturday.

Arrangements are under the direction of the John J. Ferry & Sons Funeral Home, 88 East Main Street, Meriden, CT 06450. For online condolences, visit jferryfh.com.

Colchester

Robert Paul Genesi

Robert "Bob" Paul Genesi, of Colchester, and formerly of North Adams, Mass., passed away suddenly at home Wednesday, Oct. 14. Born June 30, 1952, Bob was the firstborn son of Paul and Theresa (Boudreau) Genesi.

In addition to his parents, he leaves his loving and devoted wife of 29 years, Susan Lillian Genesi.

There will be a private memorial service for the family.

Arrangements have been entrusted to the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home of Colchester.

Amston

Peter Humphrey Martin

Peter Humphrey Martin, 67, of Amston, passed away peacefully after a courageous battle with cancer Thursday, Oct. 16, with his beloved wife and best friend, Pat by his side.

Born Dec. 23, 1946 in Van Buren, Maine, he was the son of the late Edgar and Florence (Humphrey) Martin. His family moved to Canton in the 60s where Peter graduated from Canton High. He began his higher learning at Eastern Connecticut State College and from there went on to earn his PHD in education from UConn.

His career began as a special education teacher. When he left that position, he founded RISE, a Regional In-Service Education program for teachers. He was later hired to be the acting principal for the then newly-created East Hartford/Glastonbury Magnet School, a job he loved. His final post in the education field was Director of Education for the Town of Ellington. He retired in 2006.

Peter was a unique individual with varied interests and talents. He enjoyed Jazz music, playing jazz piano, painting with watercolors, architecture, archeology and carpentry. He was a self-taught builder of stone walls using his Ford 8N tractor he named "Nellie" to aid in the moving of large stones. He loved the state of Maine, where he and his parents and sister would annually rent a cottage in the summer until his parents purchased a summer home there. He inherited his parents' cottage and he and his wife Pat stayed there as often as possible during the summer months, dining on two of his favorite foods: lobster and Maine blueberries.

Being a Mainer, Peter loved the snow and while others would dread the oncoming storm, he would gleefully await it to the groans of those around him. Peter had a wonderful sense of humor and was a big fan of the "Bert and I" duo and could recite some of their skits in his "wicked good" Maine accent. He was kind, compassionate and loving with a sincere, heartfelt interest in people. He will be deeply missed but always remembered by all who knew and loved him.

In addition to his wife, Pat, of 26 years, survivors include a sister and her husband, Valerie and Michael Heath and their son, Benjamin of Brunswick, Maine; and numerous and beloved extended family and countless friends. He also leaves behind his two special and much loved Maine Coon cats, Dexter and Molly.

Visiting hours were held Wednesday, Oct. 22 at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home in Colchester. A celebration of his extraordinary life is to be scheduled at a later date. Burial will be private.

Donations in his memory may be made to the American Cancer Society, 238 West Town St. Norwich, CT 06360. Messages of condolence may be made online at courant.com.

Portland

Perry Hale

Perry Hale died Sunday, Oct. 12, at age 76. He was the much-cherished son of Perry T.W. Hale and Wilhelmina Piekarz Hale.

A lifelong resident of Portland, Perry graduated from PHS in 1956 and served in the U.S. Army in the early 1960s. He was a talented amateur pianist and watercolorist and an avid fly fisherman and gardener.

His remains will be interred in the family plot at Center Cemetery in Portland. He is survived by his sister, Marilyn Hale Brooks and nephew Nathan Brooks of Albuquerque, N.M.

May Perry find in death the peace that eluded him in life.

Memorial contributions may be made to NAMI CT, 576 Farmington, Ave., Hartford, CT 06105.

East Hampton

John Joseph Morris Jr.

John Joseph (Jim) Morris Jr., 79, beloved husband of Katie (Walsh) Morris, of East Hampton and formerly New Canaan and Stamford, died Friday, Oct. 17.

Born in Stamford, the son of John and Marie Tucker Morris, Jim lived in East Hampton for the last 15 years after spending 30 years in New Canaan and 34 years in Stamford. He graduated from Fairfield University with a masters degree and followed with a 6th Year at NYU.

Jim spent his professional career working in the Stamford public school system first as a teacher, and later as Assistant Superintendent of Personnel. He served the Stamford Public School System for over 30 happy years. Jim met his wife while they were both teaching at Rippowam High School.

After many years with the public school system, Jim then devoted his time to his passion of running his own general contracting and home services business. Over the 20 years of applying his passion for building, Jim helped more than 100 families turn their dreams into reality. Amongst his favorite projects was the Morris family home on the shore of Lake Pocotopaug. He established countless friendships and enjoyed the satisfaction of helping others.

A devout Catholic, he was a parishioner of St. Patrick Church in East Hampton. As an active member of the Knights of Columbus, Jim became a Grand Knight of the East Hampton Council.

Jim served on the East Hampton Planning and Zoning Board, was president of the East Hampton Volunteer Ambulance Association, and most recently a member of the East Hampton Facilities Evaluation Committee.

Jim and the love of his life, Katie, shared 50 years of marriage. Together they enjoyed travel and spending time with friends and family. Jim loved visiting with his grandchildren and especially enjoyed hosting annual summer visits to Lake Pocotopaug for boating, swimming, and family fun.

In addition to Katie, he is survived by his three children and their spouses: Beth Byers and her husband Mark of Milford; Mark K. Morris and his wife Susie of Manhattan Beach, Calif.; John J. Morris and his wife Christel of Austin, Texas; nine grandchildren: Hayley and Anna Byers, Charlotte, Caroline, Chloe and Mark Harrison Morris, Kimberly, Joe and Jackson Morris; brother George Morris his wife Jeanie of Seattle, Wash.; and sister Eleanor Borgatti and her husband Paul of Mandeville, La.

Friends called yesterday, Oct. 23, at the Spencer Funeral Home in East Hampton. The Funeral Liturgy was scheduled for today, Oct. 24, at 11 a.m. in St. Patrick Church on West High Street in East Hampton.

Donations in Jim's memory may be made to: East Hampton Volunteer Ambulance Association, P.O. Box 144, East Hampton, CT 06424; American Heart Association P.O. Box 417005 Boston, MA 02241-7005; or to a charity that is meaningful to you and your family.

To leave online condolences visit spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

Portland

Roberta Smith

Roberta "Bobbie" (Wilk) Smith, 65, of Cromwell, beloved wife of 44 years to Thomas R. Smith, died Monday, Oct. 20, at Middlesex Hospital after a brief illness.

She was born in Middletown, daughter of the late Frank and Palma (Serra) Wilk. Bobbie had recently retired after 20 years as the accounting manager and corporate secretary for Spring Brook Ice & Fuel Company in New Britain.

Bobbie enjoyed antique shows and flea markets, gardening, yard and flower care, collecting Blue Willow dishware, Sunday drives to the shore for Seafood with Tom on his Harley or in his Mustang, weekend trips to Vermont, New Hampshire or Maine, riding snowmobiles with Tom and a wide circle of family and friends in New Hampshire. She also enjoyed the beaches, antique shops, outlets and restaurants of southern Maine with Tom. She was an accomplished cook and salad maker, creating her own signature macaroni and cheese, and a special salad dressing that made her famous among family and friends.

Bobbie was a strong woman, a passionate woman; who took life head-on and lived it on her terms. She was a Leo to the core. She had a great sense of humor. She had a way of coming out with things and, for just a split second, she would stun those around her.

Besides her husband, Bobbi is survived by her two adored cats who she called her "children with fur." Her sister, Jane Sterry and her husband John of Portland; her nieces and nephews include John B. Sterry Jr. and his wife Joyce of Portland, and their son Noah, Sandra Sterry Watson (Gary) of Beaufort, Australia, and their sons Edward and Joseph, Janine Sterry Pittman (Patrick) of Morrison, Okla., and their children Kayla, Austin and Colten, Sara Sterry Rutter (David) of Portland, and their daughter Devon, Jennifer Mills (Nathan) of Scarborough, Maine, and their daughter Paisley; Matthew Bishop (Courtney) of Monkton Maryland, and their children Henry, Brooke and Kelly.

She was predeceased by her sister, Mary Ann Wilk.

Funeral services will be held Monday, Oct. 27, at 9:15 a.m. from Biega Funeral Home, 3 Silver St., Middletown, followed by a 10 a.m. funeral liturgy in St. Mary Church in Portland. Burial will be held at St. Mary Cemetery, Portland. Friends may call at Biega Funeral Home Sunday, Oct. 26, from 3-5 p.m.

Those who wish may send memorial contributions to the ARDS Foundation at ardsusa.org or, by contacting The ARDS Foundation at 1-312-749-7047

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

Colchester

Hilda McCarthy

Hilda (Dean) McCarthy, 89, of Windsor Locks, loving wife of 59½ years to the late Raymond "Mac" McCarthy, entered into eternal rest Thursday, Oct. 16, 2014, at Kimberly Hall.

Hilda was born May 21, 1925, in Colchester, the daughter of the late Marshall and Amanda (Wisman) Dean. Hilda was a devoted grandmother and loved her grandchildren dearly.

She is survived by two children, Deane R. McCarthy and his wife, Christine, of Monroe, and Diane M. Woodward and her husband, William, of Colorado Springs, Colo.; her five grandchildren, Devon McCarthy of Asheville, N.C., Caitlin Muller and her husband, Christopher, of Hingham, Mass., Bree-Anna Woodward, Amanda Goode and her husband, Brendan, and Dean Woodward and his wife, Joy, all of Colorado; a sister, Edith Bazar of East Hampton; and several nieces and nephews.

Hilda was predeceased by four brothers, Howard Sr., Gordon, Searles, and Francis Dean; three sisters, Helen Goulet, Alice Koshko, and Dorothy Pettengill.

Relatives and friends joined the family Tuesday, Oct. 21, at Windsor Locks Funeral Home, 441 Spring St., Windsor Locks. A funeral service for Hilda was celebrated Wednesday, Oct. 22, at the funeral home. Burial followed in Hillstown Road Cemetery in Manchester.

Memorial donations may be made to the American Cancer Society, 825 Brook St., I-91 Tech Center, Rocky Hill, CT 06067-3045.

For online expressions of sympathy or directions, visit windsorlocksfuneralhome.com.



Colchester

Reginald M. Sowa

Reginald M. "Reggie" Sowa, 78, of Colchester, formerly of East Haddam and Wethersfield, beloved husband of Nancy (Sienko) Sowa, died Friday, Oct. 17, at Middlesex Hospital, with his family at his side. Reggie, born in Hartford June 6, 1936, was the son of the late Michael G. and Anna M. (Skzypek) Sowa.

Prior to his retirement, Reggie was employed with Northeast Utilities (CL&P) as a Crew Supervisor of Lines. He was a veteran, serving with the U.S. Army. Reggie was a communicant of Saint Bridget of Kildare Church and St. Andrews of Colchester. He enjoyed gardening, woodworking, sports, coaching Little League baseball, and his beloved Red Sox and Cleveland Browns.

Besides his wife Nancy, Reggie is survived by three sons, Michael Sowa and his wife Lorelei, Stephen Sowa and his wife Amy, Jeffrey Sowa and his wife Carolyn, all of Glastonbury; two sisters, Elaine Maloy and Kathleen DeConti and her husband Michael, all of West Hartford; seven grandchildren, Tanner, James, Abigail, Molly, Benjamin, Emery, and Casey Sowa, plus several nieces and nephews.

Friends called at the Biega Funeral Home, 3 Silver St., Middletown, Tuesday, Oct. 21. A funeral liturgy was held Wednesday, Oct. 22, at St. Bridget of Kildare Church, 75 Moodus Leesville Road, Moodus.

Those who wish may send memorial contributions to Alzheimer's Association, Connecticut Chapter, 2075 Silas Deane Highway, Suite 1000, Rocky Hill, CT 06067.

Hebron

Ann D. Estby

Ann D. (Behme Osborne) Estby

From 1961 to 2014, Ann made the dash in between those years count for all it was worth. She attended Holy Trinity School ('75) and Lyman Hall High School ('79). Everywhere Ann lived, with every job she held, and every school and community organization she was involved in, she touched people with her gregarious personality and generous spirit.

Ann tackled over two years of cancer treatments with the same determination that she lived her life. Her positive attitude helped her continue to do what she loved... spending time with her family, traveling, camping, motorcycle trips with her husband, karaoke nights, and even throwing herself one last big "Girls Night In." Her attitude always reflected the fact that someone was always worse off than she was, and she would do whatever she could to help anyone in need.

Ann's presence and great sense of humor always lit up a room. Her parting words to the scores of friends and family who visited Ann in her last weeks were to live a full life, to take risks and to let go of regrets. She will be dearly missed by so many.

Ann leaves her legacy behind in her loving family, devoted husband Jim Estby; daughter Melissa Osborne, of Massachusetts; stepsons, Jeremy Osborne and Michael Osborne, of Florida, Ryan Estby and Greg Estby, of Hebron; her precious granddaughter, River, and second grandchild on the way; step-granddaughters, Lilly, Megan, and Julie; Ann's father, Bill Behme; and step-mother, Marilyn Perkowski, of Wallingford; siblings Bill (Veronica) Behme of Wisconsin, Jill (Robert) Conaway of Wisconsin, and Jim (Michelle) Behme of Cheshire; nieces and nephews, Maggie, Juliana, Liam, Kristina, Adelaide, Jacy, Grant, and Alaina; as well as many close aunts, uncles; cousins; and a multitude of friends who adored her.

Ann is preceded in death by her mother, Judith Behme; and her maternal and paternal grandparents.

Ann's family received relatives and friends in The Wallingford Funeral Home, 809 N. Main St. Ext., Wallingford, on Saturday, Oct. 18. Interment will be private.

Ann wishes that any donations in her name be made to North Country Ministry, PO Box 111, North Creek, NY 12853 or the charity of your choosing.

For online condolences, visit wallingfordfh.com.

Colchester

Edward F. Pecoske Jr.

Edward F. Pecoske Jr., 69, of Glastonbury, and Bonita Springs, Fla., formerly of Colchester, died peacefully, surrounded by his loving family, Tuesday, Oct. 21, at Hartford Hospital. Born to the late Edward F. and Cora (Thorp) Pecoske on June 8, 1945 in Meriden, he was the beloved husband of Constance (Fleming) Pecoske for 50 years.

Edd worked as a Senior Construction Supervisor for Northeast Utilities at Millstone for 35 years. He also owned and operated a greenhouse business with his wife Coni, Circle Pine Farm, in Colchester. In his free time, Edd enjoyed cooking, fishing, riding his Harley, and playing the acoustic guitar.

Besides his wife, Edd is survived by his son Erik Pecoske and his wife Patty of Colchester; a son-in-law, Joseph Vecchiarino of Glastonbury; three grandchildren, Daniel Pecoske, Haley Pecoske and Gemma Vecchiarino. He also leaves three brothers, Phil, William and Lawrence Pecoske of Meriden and several nieces and nephews.

Besides his parents, Edd was predeceased by his loving daughter, Pamela L. Vecchiarino.

A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated Saturday, Oct. 25, at 10 a.m., at St. Dunstan Church, 1345 Manchester Rd., Glastonbury. Friends may call today, Oct. 24, from 4-7 p.m., at Mulryan Funeral Home, 725 Hebron Ave., Glastonbury.

For online condolences, visit mulryanfh.com.



From the Editor's Desk

Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

First off, hello again. Those of you who read my weekly column (and I thank you both) no doubt noticed it was absent the past couple of weeks – and for good reason. I had some personal business I needed to take care of, and reporter/assistant editor Geeta Schrayter ably took the reins – no small feat, as I am well aware what the *Rivereast* is like in October. Lots of political stuff, all over the paper.

And speaking of politics, anyone who's watched local television in the past couple of weeks (the cable stations, thankfully, don't dabble in this stuff) has been bombarded with political ads. It's of course the time of year for it. And this year brings the races with the hefty spending accounts – races for governor, Congress and other state offices. So the ads have been nearly non-stop.

Not surprisingly, the negative ones outweigh the positive ones. The most negative ones seem to be the ones paid for by those delightful groups that are "independent of any political party" – but who don't mind at all telling you which candidate they hate the most. Still, the candidates themselves have been shelling out bucks for ads slamming their opponents while telling precious little about themselves. It's like it's more important for you *not* to vote for Foley than to vote for Malloy, and vice versa.

I know, I know; it's the same story every November – only the names seem to be different. But it never ceases to be kind of sad. Do the candidates really believe in their own platforms so little? Do they really feel the only way to reach voters is by being overly negative. Maybe it is; after all, I'm no political strategist. But I'd like to think it isn't.

* * *

Speaking of politics, next week's issue is the last issue before Election Day. And, as you were warned last week, only endorsement letters, or letters of a positive nature, will be published. No letters attacking candidates will be accepted. As you'll see, there are a bunch of those in this week anyway. So, when drafting your letter for next week, remember: as the World War II-era song says, accentuate the positive, eliminate the negative.

* * *

In other news, congrats to Colchester's Ron Wotus! For an amazing third time in the past five years, the San Francisco Giants are playing in baseball's World Series. Wotus is the team's bench coach – as he was in 2010 and 2012, when the Giants not just made it to the World Series, they won the whole thing.

Will the Giants win it all again this year?

The series started Tuesday night, and even though it's Friday when you're reading this, the best-of-seven affair is still going on. And while I won't be incredibly disappointed if the Giants win (they've already done what needed to be done – which is vanquish the St. Louis Cardinals, preventing them from going any further in the postseason), I'll be honest: I'm pulling for the Kansas City Royals.

Speaking as a Mets fan – and therefore someone who doesn't have a dog in this fight – it's tough not to like the Royals. It's the team's first trip to the postseason since 1985, and they've gone all the way to the biggest stage of them all: the World Series. Call it a Cinderella story, call it an underdog story, but whatever you call it – it sure has been nice to watch.

* * *

I was very sad to hear Monday about the passing of Jim Morris in East Hampton. I had heard Friday afternoon about a pedestrian who had been struck and killed by a car in East Hampton earlier that day – but it wasn't until Monday that I learned Jim was the pedestrian.

Jim, 79, was a veteran letter writer in the *Rivereast* – in fact, his letters to the editor predate my time as editor – and while he and I didn't always see eye-to-eye politically, he always struck me as a nice guy. Jim and his wife Katie were heavily involved in the East Hampton Volunteer Ambulance Association – a noble cause to be sure.

A look at Jim's obituary shows he was a parishioner of St. Patrick Church, and was also a member of the Knights of Columbus – becoming a Grand Knight of the Belltown Council. Jim was also on the Facilities Evaluation Committee in town, and had also spent time on the Planning and Zoning Commission.

Jim and Katie had spent the past 15 years in East Hampton, but before that, Jim worked in the Stamford Public Schools system for 30 years; in fact, it was while in Stamford that Jim met Katie, while they were both teaching at Rippowam High School. Jim eventually became assistant superintendent of personnel in Stamford.

So it definitely seems like Jim had a full, happy life – but it's tragic the way it ended. I offer my sincere condolences to Katie and the entire Morris family at what I'm sure is an incredibly difficult time.

While calling hours were last night, Jim's funeral will take place today, Friday, Oct. 24, at 11 a.m., at St. Patrick Church on West High Street in East Hampton.

* * *

See you next week.