



RIVEREAST

News Bulletin

Serving Amston, Andover, Cobalt, Colchester, East Hampton, Hebron, Marlborough, Middle Haddam and Portland

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Valentine's Dance...The residents, staff and volunteers at Harrington Court Genesis Healthcare in Colchester got all gussied up in their best duds for their 3rd annual Valentine's Day Dance Friday, Feb. 14. The Silver Wolf provided entertainment and everyone got out on the dance floor to show off their best moves. Earlier in the day, residents had their hair and makeup done and in the weeks leading up to the dance, the residents chose their outfits for the dance. Here, Dylan Jascenia, a volunteer, dances with Irene Keel, a resident. Keel commented that the first time she danced with Jascenia at a Valentine's Day Dance, they were the same height. "He's so big now!" she exclaimed.

Towns Impacted By Demand for Road Salt

by Elizabeth Bowling and Melissa Roberto

Residents across the state have become all too familiar with snow this winter. Storms like the one Tuesday may have left many people feeling eager for spring, but the reality is the first day of spring is still a month away – and municipalities across the state are focusing on how to man the roads until then.

According to a press release from the governor's office, the state Department of Transportation distributed "nearly 5,000 tons of salt to 42 Connecticut cities and towns to replenish diminishing local supplies caused by an unusually harsh winter season."

Two of those 42 municipalities are the *RiverEast* towns of Marlborough and Colchester, which received 100 and 80 tons of road salt from the state, respectively.

The recent string of snowstorms left Marlborough in such a salt shortage that First First Selectwoman Cathi Gaudinski declared an emergency for the town during the storm last Thursday, Feb. 13.

Just two days later, on Saturday, Feb. 15, Gaudinski said the town received 100 tons of salt from the DOT facility in Mansfield. The town has since purchased an additional ton of salt, and has begun to mix it with sand to create a larger supply. The first selectwoman said the salt shortage is primarily due to a delivery the town is still waiting to receive from International Salt – one of the country's leading producers and suppliers of premium bulk and packaged deicing salt products – which was expected

back on Feb. 6.

"We haven't heard a word from [International Salt] so we're trying to get that nailed down as to when our next delivery is," Gaudinski told the Marlborough Board of Selectmen at its meeting Tuesday.

Also at Tuesday's meeting, the town's assistant treasurer, Hayley Wagner, said Marlborough has incurred \$196,000 in snow-related costs this winter. That does not take into account the overtime expenses for Public Works employees who have been working around the clock to clear and treat roads, Gaudinski said. This has resulted in an overspending of the initial \$130,000 for snow removal that was placed in the current fiscal year budget.

With that in mind, the Board of Selectmen Tuesday voted to increase the amount proposed for snow removal in next year's budget, from the initial \$130,000 proposal to \$150,000.

As far as the current fiscal year goes, the overspending on snow removal led Gaudinski to issue a budget freeze on Tuesday, to cut down on expenditures in other departments. With the exception of insurance, utilities and monthly expenses, all town departments will have to go through Gaudinski for discussion of upcoming purchases and potential approval.

"We'll see if that ascertains some savings within the budget," she said.

Gaudinski continued, "In the future we need to assess our snow product purchasing and find

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Scoring Both On and Off the Court

by Geeta Schrayter

Tessa Smolinski is obsessed with volleyball.

She's been playing the sport since she was 14, was a member of the RHAM volleyball team all four years of high school and went on to play at college. Although her final college volleyball season came to an end in November – which she said has made her "very, very upset" – her time on the court has left her with a number of accolades, most recently the Capital One Academic All-American of the Year for Division III volleyball.

After graduating from RHAM in 2010, the Hebron native went on to play as an outside hitter at Springfield College in Springfield, Mass. This week, she said the support she's had has allowed her to succeed both on and off the court, which in turn led to her most recent accomplishment: being selected as one of the top players in the nation in terms of both athletics and academics.

The selection, she said, "was definitely an honor."

"I was very humbled by it," Smolinski added. "I didn't expect it at all but I'm very excited to represent the school in something both academically and athletically."

To be eligible for the Academic All-America program, which is sponsored by Capital One

and was created in 1952 by the College Sports Information Directors of America (CoSIDA), a student-athlete needs to be a varsity starter or key reserve player with at least a 3.30 cumulative GPA and sophomore standing, according to the website capitaloneacademic.allamerica.com.

As a senior at Springfield with a 4.0 GPA, Smolinski certainly meets those criteria. In a press release sent out regarding her selection, Smolinski was mentioned as having led her college team to "unprecedented success." The team made four consecutive trips to the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division III championships, and won the New England Women's and Men's Athletic Conference (NEWMAC) championships in 2011 and 2013.

During her time on the team, Smolinski led Springfield to a 118-22 record with 1,556 kills and 1,355 digs. Both stats rank in the top five in Springfield's program history.

She was a four-time NEWMAC All-Conference honoree including three first-team selections, and earned NEWMAC Athlete of the Year honors this past season. She was also the first player in Springfield's Division III history and the second player overall to become an American Volleyball Coaches Association All-American after receiving second-team accolades dur-

ing the past two campaigns, the release shared.

In addition, Smolinski was recognized at the national level when the team advanced to the NCAA Division III Championship Elite Eight in 2011 and she was given the NCAA Elite 89 award, which is given to the participating student-athlete with the highest cumulative GPA at each championship.

Springfield College head women's volleyball coach Moira Long said in the press release that Smolinski "epitomizes the Division III philosophy."

"She's the perfect example of a Springfield College student-athlete, as she represents all that we stress; the importance of excellence on the court and in the classroom," Long stated. "She truly is the gold standard when it comes to Division III athletics."

This week, Long added this was a first time honor for a student-athlete at Springfield College.

"To not only be a Capital One All-American but THE Capital One All-American is pretty amazing," she said. "Tessa is a player who just loves to compete and does all she can to help her team win."

Long called Smolinski "one of the craftiest and smartest players" she's had the privilege to

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Hebron resident Tessa Smolinski was recently named the Capital One Academic All-American of the Year for Division III volleyball, due to her academic and athletic accomplishments at Springfield College.

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out more clearly what the issue is with International Salt not being able to deliver to us.”

Gaudinski furthered she’s also made state Rep. Pam Sawyer and state Sen. Cathy Osten aware of the situation the town is in. Gaudinski stressed Marlborough is not the only town experiencing these problems, and said she hopes to see a change in the weather in the weeks ahead.

“Let’s just hope Mother Nature is going to be kinder than today,” Gaudinski quipped. “She has not been too happy.”

While it too received extra salt from the state, Colchester hasn’t witnessed as drastic of an impact on its snow-removal supplies as Marlborough. Indeed, Gaudinski said Marlborough Public Works employees picked up sand from Colchester on Tuesday.

In his weekly email update on Friday, Feb. 14, First Selectman Gregg Schuster said Colchester had enough salt to deal with last Thursday’s clobbering, as well as the Tuesday’s snowfall.

Colchester Public Works Director Jim Paggioli expanded on this. Although the salt deliveries have not gone “as smooth as they normally would be,” Paggioli said salt has still made its way to Colchester. A couple weeks back the town had made a request for 500 tons of salt from International Salt, and is still waiting for 135 tons of that amount. Since then an additional 200 tons were requested and the director said the town should have received portions of both of those deliveries on Wednesday and Thursday.

“We’ll have enough on hand for a snow event but we would obviously like to have 200 tons of salt on hand at all times,” Paggioli said. “The shortage throughout the state hasn’t made that possible.”

* * *

According to the press release sent out Tuesday on behalf of Gov. Dannel P. Malloy, the state’s total salt distribution to towns and cities was set to exceed 5,000 tons by the time deliveries were completed.

Putting a positive spin on a salty situation, Malloy commended the DOT for its work this winter.

“Our municipalities have turned to us for help and ConnDOT has done a great job of stepping up and getting salt to the cities and towns that were facing shortages,” Malloy said in the press release. “These non-stop storms have put a severe strain on local supplies and budgets, but we are committed to working together to get through this and keep every mile of roadway safe and passable.”

In another bout of positivity, the press release stated, “ConnDOT currently has adequate supplies of road salt.” Plus, International Salt is due to deliver an additional 45,000 tons of salt to the state this weekend, the release stated.

Though East Hampton wasn’t on the governor’s list of municipalities that received additional salt from the state, the town still felt the burden of the snow this winter.

According to Town Manager Mike Maniscalco, East Hampton had 26 “snow or winter-related events” as of last Tuesday, Feb. 11, that required the town’s Public Works Department.

“Our Public Works Department has done an incredible job. The storms this year have been challenging in some instances,” Maniscalco said at last week’s Town Council meeting. “They’ve done a great job at managing resources and making sure our roads are safe.”

Maniscalco also said at the Feb. 11 council meeting that the town had approximately 300 tons of salt remaining.

While there have been a few snowfalls since that meeting, Maniscalco stressed this week East Hampton was not at risk of running out of salt. He said the town experienced “a ripple effect” as a result of the high demand on salt throughout the state, and had to wait for its deliveries to come in from its supplier, International Salt. He affirmed the town received those deliveries earlier this week.

Now East Hampton’s main concern is storing its salt, Maniscalco said. The town has a 500-ton storage unit at its Public Works Department. Thus, since the town can only store a maximum of 500 tons of salt, it “will probably need continuous deliveries,” Maniscalco said.

Asked if the events of this winter will impact the town’s budget for next year, Maniscalco said, “We’re really limited in the storage capacity that we have. Even if we approved more money for [more salt], where would we put [the additional salt]?”

Regarding salt shortages in general, Maniscalco said, “I think every town is experiencing that in some way, shape or form.”

That certainly seems to be the case in Andover; First Selectman Robert Burbank said Wednesday Andover had “a real scare” going into Tuesday’s storm.

“We were pretty fortunate because we were going into this storm and we had one truckload of salt on backorder since early in February,” he said.

He said he contacted the town’s salt supplier, Cargill Deicing Technology, last Friday, Feb. 14, to find out why the 150-ton order hadn’t yet been delivered.

“We were told that they had delivery problems from their supplier due to railcars not getting through,” he explained.

“We were able to supplement the existing order by getting 50 tons of untreated salt,” he said, which is almost exactly how much salt the town goes through during a “major storm” like Tuesday’s.

But, like everything else salt-related, the 50 tons did not come easy. They were supposed to be delivered Saturday but didn’t come in until Tuesday, during the beginning of the storm, Burbank said. He affirmed the town didn’t run out of salt at any point during Tuesday’s storm, but said it was “right on the verge.”

As of Wednesday, the 150 tons of salt had still not been delivered but if a small storm hits before the order comes in, the town could “probably get through” it, he said.

Burbank affirmed Andover’s budget for snow removal is \$92,400 – and \$37,500 of that is for salt alone.

“Our budget right now is completely spent and we hope we will get through with only a minor amount of overages,” he said. “This is kind of an unusual winter so we’re going to try next year to keep the budget the same [for next year].”

But the town of Portland was more “fortunate,” according to its first selectwoman, Susan Bransfield, who called the town’s supply of salt this winter “adequate.”

Bransfield said the town contracts with International Salt via the state Department of Administrative Services for a “competitive price.”

At Wednesday’s meeting of the Portland Board of Selectmen, Bransfield said the town ordered 207 tons of road salt on Jan. 31, and 67 tons of that shipment was delivered Feb. 7. The remaining portion of the shipment is due to come in next week. But even without the remaining 140 tons that should be coming in, she said, “we have enough salt for another storm.”

What Portland *does* need, however, is treated salt for parking lots and sidewalks. Bransfield said the town is expecting an order of “several tons” to come in.

Bransfield concluded, “International Salt has been very good.”

Portland’s town budget allocates a total of \$91,500 to snow removal – \$46,500 of that is for overtime, and \$45,000 is for road materials.

Similar to Portland, the Town of Hebron didn’t suffer from any road salt shortages, according to its town manager, Andrew Tierney.

“We have no issues,” Tierney said Thursday. “We never ran out of salt, we always had a couple hundred tons on reserve. So we were lucky.”

Hebron’s budget for snow removal is approximately \$186,000. But as of Feb. 15, the town had already spent \$192,795.35 on snow removal, Tierney affirmed, and said “we’ll probably ask for a supplemental appropriation [from the boards of selectmen and finance] to cover the overage.”

Tierney said he doesn’t envision raising the amount for snow removal in next year’s budget.

“This was a very extreme year,” he said.

* * *

Ultimately, there seems to be a lack of a common theme among the six regional towns when it comes to snow removal supplies. Some towns have experienced smooth sailing over the course of this winter’s storms, while others were biting their nails waiting for their orders of salt to come in. Unfortunately, with the uncertainty that is the weather, it’s difficult to tell at this point how the remaining weeks of winter will go for local municipalities.

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coach, and said, “Tessa has been successful because Tessa has the mindset of a winner. She sets a goal and does all she can to accomplish it.”

Smolinski also credited her success to the support she’s had from her family – which she said “means everything” – and individuals from both college and RHAM High School.

Being successful both on and off the court “has been difficult at times,” Smolinski added, “but everyone here at Springfield College is just so amazing.”

“They take care of you,” she furthered. “They’re very understanding if you have to miss class and the coaches are great too if you have to miss practice for a study session.”

In addition, Smolinski said attending RHAM High School helped prepare her to succeed.

“RHAM has helped me through the process: it definitely prepared me academically and athletically” she said, explaining she had wonderful classes, and her Advanced Placement courses helped challenge and prepare her.

She also said her high school coach Tim Guernsey was a help.

“Coach Guernsey said ‘believe in yourself and you could do anything you want,’” Smolinski stated. “So everyone throughout my collegiate and high school career has prepared me and helped me to get where I am.”

And currently, that’s focusing on the future.

Smolinski is presently working on a number of research papers and taking part in her practicum; she spends three days a week at a local high school assisting the speech pathologist. Smolinski is a part of the communication sciences and disorders program at Springfield College and after graduating in May, she plans to head to grad school.

Just this week she received her acceptance letter to the audiology program at the Univer-



Smolinski’s college volleyball career ended in November and she’ll graduate college in May, but due to her success both on and off the court she’ll be able to look back fondly at her time at Springfield College.

sity of Massachusetts at Amherst and is waiting to hear back from the University of Connecticut.

While Smolinski hopes to one day be an audiologist, she said she plans to ensure volleyball remains a part of her life.

“I’m literally obsessed with the sport and can’t get enough so I will play anytime, any day” she said.

And when she does, she’ll be able to recall a successful career playing volleyball at both the high school and college level – and she’s got the awards to prove it.

Police Searching for Hebron Bank Robbery Suspect

by Geeta Schrayter

State Police are investigating a bank robbery that took place at the Savings Institute Bank and Trust this week.

At approximately 9:28 a.m. Tuesday, Feb. 18, State Police Troop K received a report that the bank, located at 115 Main St., had just been robbed.

Police said a lone white male entered the bank, presented a note and demanded money.

The suspect was described as approximately six feet tall with a thin build and a light-colored goatee. Police said he was described as wearing a gray-colored hooded sweatshirt under a tan-colored coat with a lapel-type collar and a zip front, and dark colored jeans. He was also wearing a green or gray winter hat, dark-colored sunglasses and white Nike Cortez sneakers, with a blue-colored swoosh.

Police said a weapon was implied but not shown.

After procuring an undisclosed amount of money, the suspect fled the bank on foot, most likely to an awaiting vehicle, police stated.

Troopers responded to the scene and initiated a search in the area. Area police were also notified and detectives from the State Police Eastern District Major Crime Squad processed the scene, interviewed witnesses and collected evidence.

The investigation is ongoing and police ask anyone who was in the area during the time



State Police are looking for this man, who they say robbed the Savings Institute Bank and Trust on Main Street Tuesday morning.

of the robbery who may have seen anything, or anyone with information to contact State Police Troop K at 860-537-7500 or 860-465-5422.

All calls will be kept confidential.

Beloved Longtime West Hampton Mail Carrier Retires

by Elizabeth Bowling

East Hampton's favorite mail carrier for the past 21 years, Paul Wendrychowicz, retired last month, but took some time Monday to reflect on the positive experiences he had with the people to whom he delivered mail.

Wendrychowicz, 66, of Wethersfield, grew up in Middletown, where he graduated from Woodrow Wilson High School in 1966. He attended Central Connecticut State University – where he met his now-wife, Ellen – for two years, before he was drafted into the U.S. Army for another two years.

In 1970, he came home from the Army and married Ellen. Shortly after, he took a job with the U.S. Postal Service as a “city carrier” in Portland for five years before he left to own his own catering business out of Hartford called “White Cedar Caterers.”

He stuck with catering for about 18 years, but then, he said, “business went south. We went out of business.”

At that point, Wendrychowicz wanted to go back to work for the Postal Service so he went to its headquarters in Hartford and sought employment. He was given an option between a job in Willimantic and East Hampton.

He said he chose to work in East Hampton those 21 years ago because he was born and raised in Middletown, so he was familiar with the area. He recalled thinking, “Logically, it would be better for me.”

Wendrychowicz said one of the biggest mistakes of his life would have been not going back to college after he returned home from his service in the Army; but, he said, it didn't turn out to be a mistake in the long run, because if he had gone back for a degree, he never would have taken the job in East Hampton – a job he truly loved.

“They call me ‘the mayor of East Hampton,’” he said with a smile.

He explained that he earned the nickname by doing “the extra things I used to do for people.”

For example, he would roll a senior citizen's trash barrel up their driveway to save them the hassle, or he would make it a point to knock on the door of a known sports fan and talk about a game from the night before. He'd also take note if someone's mail was piled up in its box – he'd knock on their door to make sure they were well.

“These are things that made them happy, which made me happy,” he said.

He also enjoyed delivering mail to the East Hampton Housing Authority, which provides affordable apartments for seniors and the disabled. He said he would come up with a “trivia of the day” for the residents; for example he would quiz them on music from the 1940s. He said there were no prizes with his trivia; he and the seniors played “just for the fun of it.”

That friendly and positive attitude was a staple in Wendrychowicz's work and something he brought to every single mail route in town.

“In the years I've done all these routes I got to know everyone,” he said. “I knew everybody by name.”

He laughed that he spent so much time waving at people as he walked or drove by that it became a “problem” – but one he was happy to have.

Another “problem” came in the form of Wendrychowicz's run-ins with dogs on his route, like any tried and true mailman would experience.

He said there was a German shepherd named Bear on one of his routes who was never on a leash nor fenced in.

“Every single day, Bear would come charging at me,” Wendrychowicz said. But in the daily man-versus-animal situation, Wendrychowicz would come out on top, thanks to his spray bottle – he would just spray the dog when it came running at him. Finally, “after a couple years,” Wendrychowicz said he would only need to hold up his hand, without even holding a spray bottle, and Bear would retreat.

On the opposite end of the spectrum, a golden lab named Rhody would wait for Wendrychowicz every day. Wendrychowicz said he didn't technically have time to pet the pup, but “I'd have to make five minutes to play with the dog.”

Asked what he'll miss most about his job, Wendrychowicz said, “the friends I've made in East Hampton.” He added, “I've made so many friends over the years it's mind-boggling.”

For the most part, Wendrychowicz worked eight hours per day, every day except Sundays, for 21 years.

He said the job wasn't as physically trying as one might imagine, because “you get used to it.” He said working outside built up his immunity so much that he never called out sick – not even for one day – in the 21 years he worked in town.

Regarding his health and physical fitness, he said, “I was lucky.” He noted that he never slipped and fell on the job, and because he was out in the fresh air instead of in an office setting, he managed to stay very healthy.

“I loved it. I loved the people I worked with. I loved delivering mail,” he said, noting that it was something he took pride in. “One thing I'd always pride myself on was consistency of delivery,” he said, referring to his own timeliness.

And, as is the case with many jobs, Wendrychowicz has seen plenty of changes during the two decades he's been with the U.S.P.S.

“Email is killing the Postal Service,” he said.



Paul Wendrychowicz, an East Hampton mail carrier for 21 years, retired last month after a fulfilling career with the U.S. Postal Service. Wendrychowicz, pictured here, is known for his friendly demeanor and willingness to lend a helping hand.

Wendrychowicz said that, at the beginning of his career, there was “no care or concern” regarding how long it took a carrier to complete a route. But now, he affirmed, there is “more disciplinary action” to ensure quick deliveries.

Unfortunately, because of the haste with which mail carriers must work nowadays, “there's not going to be a personal touch because they don't have time to build that rapport,” Wendrychowicz said.

He also said no one is getting hired to replace him now that he's retired. He speculated that the Postal Service is going to consolidate routes, thus giving carriers more individual work and fewer opportunities for consistency in their delivery times.

* * *

In reflecting on his career, Wendrychowicz said, “The most important thing is how much I'm going to miss the people of East Hampton. They were always kind to me and I always tried to be kind to them.”

Wendrychowicz officially retired on Jan. 31 and has already been enjoying his newfound free time. For example, he and his wife attend the University of Connecticut men's and

women's basketball games.

“I'm a tremendous UConn basketball fan,” he said, recalling the days that he painted his face blue and white to cheer on his team.

Now that he is retired, he also plans to continue refereeing high school basketball games throughout central Connecticut. He's also considering accepting a job offer to become a security guard at UConn sporting events, including basketball, hockey and soccer games.

He joked that his only fear in taking the job is someone would ask him for directions to their seat and he'd tell them to quiet down because he's watching the game.

Also in his retirement, Wendrychowicz and his wife plan to travel. In fact, they have a trip to Europe scheduled for September.

The retiree ruled out moving away permanently, though, because he wants to stay close to his family, including his two adult sons who live nearby.

Looking ahead, Wendrychowicz said he'll continue to nurture the friendships he's built during his time in East Hampton. He plans to continue knocking on the doors of people to whom he used to deliver mail, but now, he will be knocking only as a friend.

Portland Selectmen Discuss Tryon Street, Smoking Policy

by Elizabeth Bowling

Due to the icy conditions Wednesday night, the Board of Selectmen kept its regularly-scheduled meeting brief, but covered a variety of issues.

First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield informed the selectmen on all Tryon Street-related updates. She said she received a letter from the residents of Tryon Street, which presented “a number of matters.” Those issues included the flooding of the street, maintenance of the street, mosquitoes, hunters and property values.

Since her receipt of the letter, Bransfield has drafted a response and asked that the selectmen review it and provide her with any changes or additions they'd like to include. She said the residents can expect her reply in the “next couple of weeks.”

The draft, as it is now, suggests the residents of Tryon Street meet with their first selectwoman in the future. She mentioned the possibility of having officials from the Chatham Health District, some of Portland's public safety personnel, and town officials from Glastonbury at the meeting as well.

“There is, I believe, a need to take a look at the road itself because the road does flood,” Bransfield said. “The challenge here is that the section of the road that floods is actually in Glastonbury, it's not in Portland.”

She furthered, when the road floods, the residents that live on Portland's portion of the street “can't evacuate” or “don't want to evacuate,” thus causing a safety issue.”

“It's a unique situation,” Bransfield concluded. “[The residents] certainly have legitimate concerns.”

Bransfield also touched on the town's smoking policy, which was adopted in 2008. She suggested changing it to include “town grounds” in the list of places where smoking is prohibited. As the policy reads now, smoking is prohibited in town buildings, facilities and offices.

Bransfield defined the term “town grounds” as “pretty much any grounds that Portland owns.”

However, selectman Fred Knous said the term “grounds” was “too broad,” and he

wouldn't support it.

Selectman Brian Flood said, “I think we can all agree that secondhand smoke is not good for you.” He furthered, “At the same time, the person smoking has every right to smoke. To me, the easy solution is to have a designated area that's not going to interfere with somebody who wishes not to have smoke in their face.”

Flood made a motion to add the term “and grounds” to the policy, and designate areas for smoking in places where smoking is permitted. The motion failed 3-3, with Flood, Bransfield and selectwoman Kathy Richards voting for it; and Knous, and selectmen Mark Finkelstein and Carl Chudzik voting against.

Finkelstein said, “I don't think there needs to be legislative action by this board to put up a sign. . . that says ‘smoking over there.’”

The board ultimately decided to table the discussion until its next meeting.

Bransfield supported the decision to wait, but also mentioned the possibility that no action needs to be taken at all.

“There's concerns all the time about a lot of things. You can't take care of everything all the time,” Bransfield said. “I think maybe the policy is okay the way it is.”

Also at Wednesday's meeting, the board discussed the broken gate at the park on Rose Hill Road. The surrounding residents have been “very neighborly,” Bransfield said, by locking the gate at night and opening it in the morning so that people could use the park from sunrise to sunset.

“It's been a nice arrangement. It keeps everybody safe, keeps the park safe,” Bransfield said, but promised to “pursue” getting the gate replaced.

* * *

The selectmen scheduled a town meeting date for a resolution regarding a lease agreement between Portland and the YMCA for the soccer fields located at Camp Ingersoll. The meeting will take place Wednesday, March 5, at 7:15 p.m., at Portland Library, directly before the regularly-scheduled Board of Selectmen meeting at 7:30 p.m.

Hebron Resident Recognized for Paying it Forward

by Geeta Schrayter

Vince Colonna believes in paying it forward. When his son Mikey was diagnosed with cancer in 2006, he explained his family received an outpouring of support from the community. Three years later, his son came off treatment and Colonna decided it was time to do some giving of his own. He's done just that in the years since, and last month he was recognized for that giving when the Lions Club named him Humanitarian of the Year and presented him with the Melvin Jones Fellowship.

Each year, the Hebron Lions Club seeks out individuals to nominate for this award; some are known by club members, while others are recommended by an organization in town such as AHM Youth and Family Services, Hebron Interfaith Human Services and local churches. Such was the case with Colonna – known as Vin to most.

Hebron Lions board member Rich Griswold explained this week he came to know of Colonna after asking Stephanie Haines, Gilead Congregational Church's minister of missions, if she knew anyone who fit the bill.

"She suggested that I look into him and I did and we found out he would be a good nominee," Griswold said. "He gives so much time to so many organizations and so many individuals in town on a regular basis."

The nomination from Haines came in conjunction with those from Hebron residents Allison Heneghan and Meg Yetishefsky, and this week, all three women had praise for Colonna.

Haines called Colonna a "wonderful support in the community" and said "he's been a gift."

In her nomination letter to the Lions Club, Heneghan added Colonna's face "is everywhere" in town.

"If you attend any fundraising event, get together to help people in need, sporting event or committee meeting in town, the face you will always see is that of Vin Colonna" she wrote, calling him "the man behind all the 'good' that is happening in Hebron."

Some of the fundraisers he's been involved with include the Dapsis Family Fundraiser, which helps the family of Ross Dapsis, a Hebron resident and owner of Something Simple Café who was severely injured in a bicycle accident last year, and a fundraiser last year for John Georgides, a RHAM student stricken with cancer who passed away a short time thereafter.

Colonna has also been heavily involved in the Coach Nick Classic Golf Tournament, now in its third year, and a cause near and dear to Yetishefsky's heart, as it's held in memory of

her husband.

Yetishefsky said she could go "on and on" about Colonna.

"When I moved to Hebron 20 years ago, I knew it was a small community and I wanted to be here but I never realized these people would become my family," Yetishefsky said. "People say it takes a village to raise a family and that personally came true after the loss of my husband."

Yetishefsky explained that even though Colonna has a family of his own, he was "always, always here," helping the family by selling tickets for the tournament, shoveling their driveway before he goes to work and other "little quiet things" she said.

"He doesn't require any fanfare, he has no expectations," Yetishefsky furthered. "Not many people can say they're doing things without wanting things in return but he just does it."

And the golf tournament, she said, wouldn't happen without him and his work.

"It wouldn't happen without him," she said. "It just wouldn't. He's helped not only me and my family, but the town of Hebron."

"He's a good man" Yetishefsky concluded, adding, "When people say 'it takes a village' – it really does. And I'm lucky to have Colonna as part of my village, I really am."

Colonna was selected from 11 Humanitarians honored at the annual Lions District 23C – which includes Middlesex, New London, Windham and Tolland County – Humanitarian Awards Dinner.

In addition, he was presented with the Lions' Melvin Jones Fellowship. Hebron Lions President John Johnson Jr. explained the Melvin Jones Fellowship is "the highest award you can receive in the Lions essentially, and named after the founder of Lions International."

"In our District 23C there was about a dozen people nominated this year from different clubs in the district and the committees at the district level selected [Colonna]," Johnson said. "We had a night where we honored all the nominees but only one [Melvin Jones Fellowship] is given out."

And this year, that fellowship went to Colonna, who said this week the recognition took him by surprise.

"I was a little bit shocked and surprised," he said, explaining as he listened to the presentations on the other nominees he was in awe of the work that they did.

"I would have voted for some of the other nominees" he said, which is in line with the thinking of an individual who gives without the expectation of receiving in return.

Colonna said he does what he does because



Hebron resident Vin Colonna was named Humanitarian of the Year and received the Melvin Jones Fellowship at the recent District 23C Lions Humanitarian Dinner. Shown here, from left, are Colonna, Hebron Lions President John Johnson Jr. and District 23C Governor Steve Novic.

of a combination of his upbringing and his faith.

"That kind of taught me to give back," he said.

And of course, one of the "bigger events" that led to his giving, he said, was his son's cancer diagnosis.

"We received an outpouring of support both from [The Worship Center], from our neighbors, from the town itself – a lot of people we didn't know and that didn't know us that kind of came out and offered their support," Colonna explained.

During that time, the community came together to help in various ways both large and small, such as mowing the lawn and making meals.

"My son came off his treatment with flying colors in 2009," Colonna said, "and I would say that was probably when I really decided that if I had the opportunity to give back that I would, and kind of pay it forward as the saying goes."

And while it's now been nearly five years since the treatment ended, Colonna said he plans to continue adhering to that motto – because there will always be a need. In addition, he said getting involved enhances the commu-

nity.

Colonna grew up in New Haven, where he didn't know a lot of his neighbors or people in town, which he said made it difficult to have a sense of community. But having one, he said, "makes those tragic events – whatever they may be – more bearable."

"You never know when you're going to find yourself in a time of need," Colonna explained. "I don't want to wish that on anybody but if by chance you're in that position, the feeling that you get when the support flows in from the community is really overwhelming and it helps you to get through and to keep going and not give up, not to get down on the situation or to get depressed."

"On the brighter side," Colonna continued, "you look around and you look at all the people that have come out to help in any way and it's healing – both for the person going through it and the person that's helping."

And in Hebron, those looking around in a time of need or while helping themselves, are bound to see Colonna's face – the face of the Lions Club Humanitarian of the Year and Melvin Jones Fellowship recipient – as he continues to pay it forward.

Marlborough Selectmen Glance at Capital Requests

by Melissa Roberto

The Board of Selectmen Tuesday took its first glance at capital expenditure requests from town departments to possibly be included in the 2014-15 fiscal year budget.

The total cost of the projects requested is \$937,775, with First Selectwoman Cathi Gaudinski proposing over \$76,000 to be paid for by funds from Public Works and Parks and Recreation to cover specific projects in those departments.

Gaudinski confirmed this year's grand total of requests is higher than usual, but explained to fellow selectmen Dick Shea and Denis Soucy that the expenses are merely requests at this stage. The next step, she said, is for the board to review the requests and decide which ones to include in the budget proposal before it heads to the board of finance for consideration.

The largest expenditure on the list comes from the fire department, the selectwoman pointed out. The request is for \$180,000 to purchase 20 new air packs. The department currently has 16 air packs that were purchased back in 1998. She said the number requested is due to the number of volunteers.

Additionally, the fire department in a document communicated to the selectmen that it is currently facing difficulties with its existing air packs and new air bottles that do not fit one another. This equipment has undergone four revisions, and after only two, the equipment cannot be certified. Wagner said this capital request was included on a five-year plan that was anticipated to be purchased in the 2015-16

fiscal year at a cost of \$100,000 so the request for the next fiscal year came as "a big surprise," Gaudinski said.

Another expense of \$30,000 was requested by the fire department regarding the underground storage tank at Firehouse 2. Gaudinski explained the request is to remove and dispose of the underground tank and to put in an above-ground tank. This is due to a change in the state's funding for tank insurance which now places more responsibilities on municipalities, she explained.

"There's quite a process for those storage requirements," Gaudinski said. "What they do today is a lot different than what they did 20 years ago. The request is to put in an above ground tank that would help alleviate some of the requirements set by the state in terms of our obligation and maintenance."

Shea questioned if there was a time constraint for making this change, to which Gaudinski replied, "As soon as possible."

"If you don't have them all registered there could be funds for the town," the selectwoman continued.

Three requests were also made by the Public Works Department. The largest request from the department is a \$130,000 backhoe/loader vehicle to replace a 1994 CAT. Gaudinski said she proposed \$56,450 – that the department received by selling five of its vehicles through online auctions – to be used towards this purchase to offset costs. That would leave an ex-

pense of \$73,550 to be paid for by the town's capital non-recurring fund. Additionally, Public Works requested a bucket loader at a cost of \$155,000 to replace a 2000 Volvo, as well as a \$65,000 request for a fuel master system to replace a 1997 fuel management system and fuel pumps. The current 17-year-old fuel management system is no longer made and sometimes doesn't function, she explained.

Parks and Recreation's capital requests were also discussed at length. The department requested repairs to the Rolling Ridge tennis courts, which was publicly stated to be in need of repair by the selectmen last year. Reconstruction costs, which include drainage improvements, paving, new posts and netting for the tennis courts, are estimated at a cost of \$15,650. Additionally, the Parks and Recreation Department requested \$4,125 to be included in the budget for new sand at the Blish Park beach, which was last refreshed in 1998.

Gaudinski proposed both of these requests to be paid for by the department's "revolving fund" – a fund built by program revenues, designed primarily for emergencies. Gaudinski admitted tapping this fund could be concerning to members of the department.

"They work hard to have the fund replenish itself," she said. "They're judicious in the use of it and they're concerned about it being replenished as quickly as it was initially."

The first selectwoman continued the department also likes to keep that fund for emergen-

cies. However, Gaudinski said there's also a need to "balance accomplishing some of the items and see what funds are available in the town to do it." She furthered if these requests were completed in the next fiscal year "all the immediate needs for parks and recreation would be taken care of."

Other capital requests include two engineering expenses proposed by the building department. The first is a capital expenditure of \$136,500, which had been highlighted at the last selectmen meeting. This would cover the engineering and rebuilding costs of Fawn Brook Bridge, which the state Department of Transportation deemed in need of reconstruction last May. The second request, of \$75,000, is proposed for the design and engineering costs for Williamsburg and South Road.

Other capital expenditure requests include: a \$50,000 Ford Inceptor SUV for the police department to replace a 2001 Crown Victoria which would then go to the Building Department, three portable radios for the police department at a cost of \$11,500, and \$40,000 from the assessor's department to go towards the upcoming revaluation, and \$45,000 to go into the future capital expenditure reserve, which has been done for the last two years.

Continued budget discussion is anticipated to take place at a special Board of Selectmen meeting next week. The date for that meeting had not been decided as of press time Thursday.

Marlborough Officials Explore STEAP Possibilities

by **Melissa Roberto**

The deadline for eligible municipalities to apply for Small Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP) grants is right around the corner, so Town Planner Peter Hughes paid the Board of Selectmen a visit at its meeting Tuesday night to discuss some ideas of what projects the town could seek funding for.

And the idea that seemed to gain the most traction was an expansion to the town's sewer project.

STEAP grants are only awarded for capital projects to towns not eligible to receive Urban Action bonds. The program is administered by the Office of Policy and Management and each year the governor prioritizes and awards grants to a portion of the towns who apply. The grants have a maximum amount of \$500,000.

This round's application deadline is April 14. Hughes proposed what he felt were the top three priorities of capital projects in Marlborough that meet STEAP requirements, and the selectmen discussed each at length.

The first Hughes presented was the opportunity to fix the roads of Austin Drive and Hodge Road. The idea is to widen one of the roads or both, which would in turn create better angles for truck drivers who often have difficulties pulling into businesses located on those roads.

This would cost between \$500,000 and \$600,000, depending on which roads are constructed on. In total, the roads cover 1,700 feet, Hughes said, and the town would be looking at a cost of between \$325 and \$350 per foot.

Hughes explained this option would improve "access to existing businesses and roads." He stressed rather than improve ball fields or town buildings like other towns have chosen to do with their STEAP grants, fixing Austin Drive and Hodge Road focuses on economic development.

The second option Hughes presented is a second phase of the Town Center Public Water System project. This program was actually allowed to be expanded through the \$500,000 STEAP grant the town was rewarded last July. Through last year's grant, Marlborough expanded its municipal water system from the Senior Center, Cragin Memorial Library and Marlborough Elementary School to all properties in the Marlborough Village Center.

Hughes explained a second phase would bring a water tank to the system. The planner said the benefit of this would be to provide fire protection, or a source of water in the center of town.

"It would provide fire protection," he explained. "It would help improve people's insurance rates and public safety."

Hughes estimated this second phase would cost between \$600,000 and \$750,000. Fire hydrants would be put up near businesses, which he said would "lower the insurance rates a lot."

Hughes' third idea was to fund an expansion of the sewer project, which is currently undergoing its second phase. The Water Pollution Control Authority has been reviewing all un-

finished phases of the project so the expansion Hughes communicated Tuesday could change.

However, Hughes did suggest one possible sewer expansion to expand the sewer line across the Marlborough Commons and to the neighborhood including Hickory Road, Glenwood Road, Sherwood Lane and a few homes on Hebron Road.

"This is one of the most deserving neighborhoods of sewers in this town," said Hughes.

Preliminary cost estimates for this phase range from \$1.7 million to \$3.5 million. The \$500,000 grant would offset costs of the pump station, Hughes said. The town would then apply for the STEAP grant pending town approval. Because of the hefty price tag, Marlborough voters would need to approve it at a referendum, which would not occur until November, Hughes explained.

In relation to the road improvement idea, selectman Dick Shea said he understands there is "kind of an obligation to existing business owners to at least make the roads accessible," but felt that did not necessarily need to be conducted through the funding of a STEAP grant.

Hughes agreed. "This is something we can do in a capital project," the planner said. "It's a very low-usage road."

Shea also said the water tank would allow for "an opportunity for economic development."

The possible sewer expansion, though, drew the most rave reviews. Hughes said it "opens up a door that hasn't been opened."

Shea and fellow selectman Denis Soucy both labeled a sewer expansion a "bigger bang for the buck."

And Shea furthered the sewer project could also appeal to a bigger crowd than the road improvements would.

"It would probably be a greater appeal to the idea of helping out 40 homeowners that are in dire straits than it would be for a possibility of helping a future development owner sitting there with a couple of old buildings that have been sitting there forever," Shea said.

Soucy also referenced the neighborhood homes are dealing with septic systems that were built in the 1950s.

"It definitely seems like a better opportunity for the town," Soucy said.

But Hughes and the board cautioned that another sewer phase would come with a steep price tag. They discussed opportunities of reaching out to possible partners in the area who could also benefit from the project, and potentially assist in the construction costs.

For now, Hughes told the selectmen a decision would need to be made by its next regular meeting on what a STEAP grant could be applied to. But he reminded the selectmen the options he presented aren't the only ones.

"You can invent more," he said.

Information about STEAP grants can be found by logging on to ct.gov/opm. The next regular selectmen meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 4, at 7 p.m., at Town Hall.

State Rep. Melissa Ziobron to Seek Re-Election

by **Elizabeth Bowling**

It may seem like election season just ended, but a local state representative already has November on her mind.

Melissa Ziobron, R-34th District, officially announced this week that she will run for re-election in November.

The 34th District consists of East Hampton, East Haddam and a portion of Colchester. Ziobron is a lifelong resident of the district, as she grew up in East Hampton and currently lives in East Haddam with her husband and their two children.

The Republican is currently serving her first term as state representative, and has a slew of accomplishments to show for her first two years on the job. She reflected on this time in a phone interview Tuesday.

"Personally, it's been a dedication and a passion for me to give back and be a part of public service," she said, adding, "I really do believe my efforts are worthwhile and public service is important."

Asked why she's running for re-election, Ziobron said, "I really want to be able to advocate for this district." She added, "I really believe I did a great job of representing the constituents' needs."

Ziobron said her campaign platform when she ran for the office two years ago was attainable, and allowed her to be successful in fulfilling her promises to the people.

Ziobron said, "I made some promises when I ran for election in 2012 and I purposely made promises that I thought I could achieve."

Those promises focused on communicating with the community, as well as bettering the environment and the economy.

She called communication her "number one achievement" over the course of her two-year term.

"I really feel strongly that my communication skills have been strengthened," she said.

Also regarding communication, Ziobron recalled a promise she made in 2012 not to participate in mailing legislative newsletters "at taxpayer expense."

"I promised to stop doing that and I have," she said. "Instead, I've focused on communication in other areas."

For example, Ziobron communicates to her constituents via the "letters to the editor" section of the *RiverEast*, as well as through social

media.

In terms of the environment, Ziobron spent her first term advocating for state parks. One way she followed through with that can be seen during a visit to Sunrise State Park in East Haddam.

"I was very successful in cleaning up Sunrise State Park," she said, crediting the more than 100 people who joined her for a "volunteer day" last year during which they cleaned up debris on the property.

"We saved the taxpayers additional money," she said. "I was really proud that I was able to lead that effort."

In focusing on the grander issue at hand in terms of state parks, Ziobron noted their "budgetary issues."

"Our state park system is so under-funded," she said, adding that she's "not satisfied" with letting it remain that way.

"State parks are a passion of mine," she said. "We need to do something and I know there's a group of people out there who are passionate about state parks like I am."

Ziobron proposed a bill this year that, if passed, would mandate money earned in state park fees go back into the state parks for maintenance and improvements. She is currently working to send her proposal to public hearing. Then, if it passes a public hearing, it would go through "many hurdles to become law," she explained.

In addition to working to improve state parks, Ziobron's focus on the environment includes making improvements to Comstock Bridge.

She said she got the East Hampton Garden Club in touch with the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection to take over the stewardship of the East Hampton portion of the Comstock Bridge on Route 16. (One end of the bridge is in East Hampton and the other end is in Colchester, she explained.) Ziobron said the Garden Club is currently working on getting a formal permit to take over the bridge.

She called the takeover "an example of how our small towns and communities are so special because we have all these volunteers."

Her next hope in furthering this project is to reach out to the Colchester Garden Club and ask them to take over the Colchester portion of the bridge.

Regarding her focus on the economy in the current term, she said she has "been working

hard to support small businesses to grow jobs and lessen the tax burden on small businesses." * * *

Ziobron said that during her first term, she built "a coalition of support" behind her causes – something she'd continue to do if re-elected.

Also if re-elected, Ziobron would follow through on her 2014 platform, which calls for advocating for economic, environmental and educational improvements.

For the economic portion of her 2014 platform, Ziobron said she plans to do more of the same; she said she will be mindful when going through the budget, and she will support job growth.

In terms of environmental betterment, she noted her interest in extending the Airline Trail to Portland. She said the trail is "not just an asset in our district, but for all of New England."

Regarding her interest in public education for the coming term, Ziobron, a former member of the East Haddam Board of Education, proposed a bill this year to delay the implementation of the Common Core State Standards "until public input and a real review of the standards in the state of Connecticut could be done." She added she'd like to see "a study of the cost" of the new standards, too.

Her goal next term, if re-elected, would involve "supporting parents and teachers in trying to find the best way to implement some sort of accountability to make sure our kids get what they need out of our education system," she said.

In sum, she said, "Education is something I'm going to really focus in on [next] term."

Ziobron will further promote her platform during campaign season, which begins in May and runs straight through elections in November.

But until then, she will continue to represent the residents of the 34th District and she will continue to learn on the job, like she's done throughout her first term.

"I've learned a lot," she said about the past two years. "And I'm learning more every week."

For example, she said she learned how bills get made at the state level, as well as how to be a better listener.

In referencing another highlight from this term, she said, "I've also made some really great friendships with other legislators."

But the overall highlight for Ziobron is the



Melissa Ziobron

people she represents.

"For me it's really an honor to serve the people of this district," she said.

And many of her constituents reciprocate that support.

"I'm very fortunate to have the support of a lot of people, not just Republicans," she said, stressing that she's thankful for the support she also receives from Democrats, Independents and Chatham Party members. "I'm really so honored and humbled by that sort of support. Knowing they have my back makes it easier to fight for them at the Capitol."

She mentioned that the hours are long, and cause her to miss a lot of her son's baseball games. That's why she credited her loved ones for helping her take on the role of state representative.

"I couldn't do this job without the support of my family, so I'm so grateful for that," she said.

Another downfall to the long hours? "I don't wear my crocs as often as I'd like," she laughed.

But she's certainly happy to trade the extra time in comfortable shoes for the betterment of her district.

* * *

For more information on State Rep. Melissa Ziobron, visit her website, melissaziobron.com or cthousegop.com/melissa-ziobron/.

Colchester School Board Approves Bacon Bridge

by Melissa Roberto

The Board of Education Wednesday approved the building of a bridge on Bacon Academy property, to be utilized by teachers and students.

The project was initiated by Bacon Academy science teacher Joe Hage. He explained to the board he discovered a brook 20 years ago, when he took students outside for classroom activities. Beyond the outdoor track exists a cross country trail, Hage said, and eventually you come across a “lovely brook.”

“It has an amazing wealth of wildlife,” the science teacher said. “There are honest to God wild crayfish in there and guaranteed you will see or catch one. That’s delightful to almost every student.”

And on the other side of that property is the White Oaks development, Hage furthered, and 180 acres of that land was deeded to the town years ago. Hage said he once ventured down to the area with a state archeologist. The archeologist pointed out a “great deal” of historical significance within the area, Hage recalled excitedly, like “some of the largest charcoal pits he’s seen in the state.” At that point, Hage thought, “What an opportunity we have here integrating all kinds of subjects together.”

However, in order to do so, Hage said the Bacon Academy community would need to be able to access the 180 acres, by crossing over the brook. With the help of Wetlands Enforcement Officer Jay Gigliotti and Town Engineer Sal Tassone, who backed him on the idea, the idea of constructing a bridge across the brook was birthed.

Tassone designed the bridge, which Hage said is simple in nature. It would be 30 feet

long, and constructed through the use of three telephone poles, with rails, and ramps, and access for trail maintenance and emergency response crews. The bridge would solely be built on Bacon Academy property, but the land beyond it lays several possibilities for students and teachers, Hage said.

“I envision possibly outdoor areas of learning where students go to write poetry, to paint, to bird watch, to take samples,” Hage said. “The property has so much to offer. It has a cedar swamp, it has wetlands, mixed deciduous hardwoods.”

Hage concluded history, archaeology, English, and “tons and tons” of science lessons could be enhanced through use of the area. He furthered the bridge would be student-run, starting with its construction. Hage said he’s looking into the possibility of having the telephone poles donated. If not, he said, the telephone poles alone would cost \$1,000 – but, he stressed, he does not plan to leave the costs up to the Board of Education.

“We’ll have to raise more funds,” he told the board. “I’m not going to go to you. I’m doing this whether I have to go and cut trees down myself.”

Board of Education member Mary Tomasi questioned who would maintain the bridge. Hage said the materials – what he said would have no environmental impact on the land – were estimated to last 40 years. Additionally, he said he is not looking to paint the bridge, and signs would be constructed – some already have been – by students.

The board unanimously approved the project and Hage commented on what a “beautiful

thing” it will provide for the high school community.

“It’s going to be student-designed,” he said. “It’s going to be student-built – student-run.”

* * *

Also at Tuesday’s meeting, Director of Educational Operations Ken Jackson and an employee from Honeywell gave an update on the progress of the upgrades made to school buildings through the Honeywell Energy Performance Contract, a project approved by the town last spring that consists of energy upgrades to school and town buildings.

Jackson explained upgrades have consisted of retrofitting existing lighting fixtures within Bacon Academy’s media center and classrooms, upgrades to the hallway lighting at both Jack Jackter Intermediate School and Colchester Elementary School, urinal flush valves and toilet replacements at JJIS in addition to transformers at Bacon Academy, among others.

Additionally, the board received a walk-through of the web-based system that is associated with the project known as the “dashboard.” The online program gives a visual of each of the four school layouts and shows the temperature of each room. These temperatures can be controlled by the click of a computer mouse, which seemed to impress board members.

After the meeting, Board of Education Chairman Ron Goldstein commented, “It’s an impressive energy management system because it monitors in real time what’s going on with the energy systems in our buildings, so I’m very impressed with it.”

Jackson continued head custodians are able to manage the scheduling of temperatures within the building but it is himself and Public Works Director Jim Paggioli who have access to alter the energy and temperatures in the buildings if something is not functioning properly. This can be done efficiently, Jackson said, because the dashboard would send alerts to the two directors if something goes wrong.

* * *

The board also unanimously supported the idea of administrators strengthening communication efforts to other schools about Colchester’s tuition policy, which allows other school districts without their own high schools to send their students to Bacon Academy.

The tuition policy is already in place, but Bacon Principal Mark Ambruso said this change would consist of administrators reaching out to other districts by word of mouth to make them aware of the opportunity.

Goldstein said he was excited about this for two reasons. The first is it would make other districts more aware of the unique class offerings that Bacon Academy has, and that it could potentially serve as a supplemental source of revenue for the district. Ambruso noted two Bacon Academy students from other districts have taken advantage of this policy.

* * *

The next regular Board of Education meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 11, at 7 p.m., at the Bacon Academy Media Center. A special school board meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, Feb. 25, at 7 p.m., also at the media center, for discussion of the 2014-15 budget.

Colchester Resident to Seek State Rep. Seat

by Melissa Roberto

Colchester Democrat Jason Paul last week announced his candidacy for state representative in Connecticut’s 48th District, and hopes to bring a fresh perspective to the role if given the opportunity by voters later this year.

The makeup of the 48th District includes portions of Colchester, Lebanon, Windham and Mansfield. It is represented in the General Assembly by Democrat Linda Orange, a Colchester resident currently serving her ninth term in office.

Paul, who moved to Colchester last October, grew up in Hamden and West Hartford, though he has fond memories of visiting Colchester as a child. Each summer growing up Paul would visit his grandparents on Amston Lake so he’s familiar with the area “in a lot of ways,” he said.

Paul holds a bachelor’s degree in politics from Brandeis University and is currently a third-year law student at the University of Connecticut School of Law, which he will graduate from in May.

Interestingly, Paul is also the great-grandson of a former mayor of Colchester, Zadel Goldberg, but that’s not the only way he’s tied to politics. The candidate first got his feet wet volunteering for political campaigns in eighth grade, and continued his political pursuit by interning for campaigns throughout high school and college.

In 2000, Paul volunteered for U.S. Representative Sam Gejdenson’s campaign in the 2nd Congressional District. From there, he assisted in several others, including Bill Curry for Governor in 2002, Joe Courtney for Congress in 2006, Susan Johnson for state representative in Windham in 2008 and the Obama for America campaign in 2008.

Additionally, in 2010, Paul was a field assistant for U.S. Rep. John Larson’s re-election

campaign, and in 2012 was the campaign manager for David Alexander, who won election to state representative for the 58th District, which covers Enfield.

Paul is also involved as a Jewish community leader and is known as “Jason the Greek” to readers of CT News Junkie, an online Connecticut news source for which he’s written a political column for the last three years.

“I’m someone who’s been around and thinking about public policy and politics my entire life,” Paul explained.

But in terms of his own campaign for the 48th District, Paul said it’s one built on a foundation of “new ideas and a fresh perspective.” He is ambitious to take over the seat Orange has kept warm for the last 18 years straight. In fact, his and Orange’s opposing stances on two state issues played a large factor in his decision to run, Paul said.

The first, Paul explained, was Orange’s vote against the Act Concerning Gun Violence Prevention and Children Safety, a post-Sandy Hook safety measure involving guns. He explains on his website jasonpaul48.com, “Not only was [Orange] one of a small handful of Democrats to vote against Connecticut’s most recent gun safety law; she even voted against a law that required reporting if a gun went stolen or missing.”

In a press release Paul continues his stance on this.

“Ever since our incumbent state representative stood with the NRA in opposition to common-sense restrictions on assault weapons, I said that someone needed to stand up,” Paul wrote. “After several months of consideration, I decided that I was ready to be that someone.”

Paul explained his difference of opinion with Orange on the state’s campaign finance law also had an influence on his decision to run. He explains on his website the law “has the potential

to dramatically decrease the amount of time legislators spend raising money.” The candidate said he disagreed with Orange and others who voted recently to weaken that law.

“I was very disheartened when the legislature voted to weaken it,” Paul said.

Orange confirmed this week she is planning to file paperwork for a re-election bid shortly. Of Paul’s decision to run against her for the Democrat nomination, she said, “It’s unusual to have in our district party primaries.” Nonetheless, Orange said she has “no intention of stopping now.”

“It’s a great district,” Orange continued. “I diligently work for the constituents and I continue to move forward doing the same.”

And Paul, who seems to have similar ambition, said in this case, “Competition is a good thing.”

In addition to the issues he disagrees on Orange with, Paul listed off several ideas he not only supports, but also hopes to bring to fruition if elected. These include raising minimum wage and making college more affordable.

“These ideas are very good but when you look at the back end of implementing them, we didn’t exactly get there,” Paul said.

“For me, it’s finding a way to make government services more efficient,” he continued.

The law student also commented on Gov. Dannel Malloy’s vision of ending veteran homelessness. What Paul referred to as a “fantastic idea” is also one he said he believes could be taken a step further, by ending homelessness “not just for veterans” but altogether.

And Paul has already received support from Democrats around the state. The Connecticut High School Democrats, a 700-member-strong organization that backed Senator Chris Murphy in his 2012 Democratic Senate primary, recently announced its support of Paul’s campaign.



Jason Paul

President of the group, Julian Waddell, commented on its decision to do so.

“Jason’s strong progressive stance on gun violence prevention was an important part of why we chose to back him,” Waddell said. “We couldn’t be prouder to stand with Jason on this crucial issue.”

And while the state representative candidate will continue working towards his law degree this spring, he’s also looking forward to knocking on doors of citizens in Colchester, Lebanon, Mansfield and Windham and attending community events come March.

“I’m excited to be running,” Paul said, “and I look forward to meeting the citizens and hopefully gaining their support.”

To read more about Paul and his campaign, visit jasonpaul48.com.

Marlborough Grand List Grows By Less Than 1 Percent

by **Melissa Roberto**

The town has released its Oct. 1, 2013 Grand List of assessable properties, and while it represents a scant increase of .75 percent, it's an increase nonetheless, town officials stressed.

The net grand list totals \$572,265,450, an increase of \$4,274,880 over the 2012 grand list. "I'm glad there's an increase at all in this economy," said Marlborough Assessor Marie Hall. "I'm satisfied with it."

The list represents Marlborough's net value of assessed property in categories of real estate, personal property and motor vehicle. Unlike the 2012 list, Hall said the category of motor vehicle assessments saw an increase. On the 2012 list, motor vehicle assessments fell by 1.11 percent from the 2011, or a drop of \$561,419. However, on the 2013 grand list, motor vehicle assessments totaled \$51,255,520, which resulted in an increase of \$1,442,910 over the 2012 list, or 2.90 percent.

Also on the list, real estate assessments totaled \$510,038,960, an increase of \$1,722,810, or .34 percent over the year prior. The category that saw the largest increase was personal property, totaling \$10,970,970, an increase of \$1,109,160, over the last year, or a 11.25 percent increase.

Hall said the increase in the grand list is primarily due to a few more houses built this year as well as a newly-constructed industrial building, Marlborough Plastics Inc., located on North Main Street.

"Last year we had one new house," Hall re-

called. "This year we have five."

Additionally, the assessor said permits for new construction are continuing to come in, so "that's a good sign."

At Tuesday's Board of Selectmen meeting, First Selectwoman Cathi Gaudinski commented on the .75 percent increase – and expressed similar sentiments to Hall, in that it may not be much, but growth is growth.

"It's not a decrease," she said. "It's a little bit of growth. That's similar to what many other towns are experiencing."

The top taxpayer in the town on the 2013 grand list is Connecticut Light & Power, Co. at \$4,095,295 followed by Elliot Enterprises/Robert Elliot at \$3,923,920, and then BOTH, LLC at \$3,311,700.

The remaining top ten taxpayers in town were: Milborough Health Care Realty, Co. at \$2,579,500; Robert H. & Mary C. Soleau at \$1,722,390; C & B Marlborough Associates, LLC at \$1,326,220; BCD Holdings, LLC at \$1,123,640; The Lacava Construction Co. at \$1,081,450; Country Barn Properties, LLC at \$949,200; and Known Litigation Holdings, LLC at \$907,340.

Taxpayers unhappy with their appraisal can appeal them in front of the Board of Assessment Appeals. The deadline to apply for an appeal was yesterday, Feb. 20. Appeals will take place in March and all decisions are expected to be made by the end of that month.

Fatal Crash in Colchester

by **Melissa Roberto**

An Uncasville man was killed last Tuesday, Feb. 11, when his pickup truck veered off of Parum Road and struck a utility pole during the overnight hours.

State Police identified the driver as Charles Malloy, 22, of 150 Gay Hill Rd.

Police said the crash occurred shortly after 2:30 p.m. Malloy was traveling alone in a 2011 Chevy Silverado westbound on Parum Road, also known as Route 354, approximately 1,800 feet from Maclyn Road, when he lost control of his vehicle.

The truck traveled off of the right side of

the roadway and collided into a utility pole. Malloy's vehicle then rolled over and came to a final rest on its roof. Police said Malloy was pronounced deceased at the scene.

As a result of the collision, the utility pole was severed in half, leading to downed power lines across the roadway. Sergeant Joseph Mercer of the Colchester Police said Parum Road was closed for 10 hours, due to Connecticut Light and Power repairing the utilities on the scene.

State Police are still investigating the crash.

Colchester Police News

2/10: State Police said Jarrod Varney, 19, of 37 Gardner Lake Heights, Salem, turned himself into Troop K on an active warrant for two counts of disobeying the signal of an officer and two counts of reckless driving.

2/12: State Police said Danielle Pesta, 34, of 72 Route 66, Columbia, was charged with second-degree failure to appear.

Marlborough Police News

2/11: State Police and the Marlborough Resident Trooper's Office are investigating two thefts of vehicle catalytic converters taken from parked vehicles at the Route 2 Exit 12 commuter parking lot. The thefts occurred during the hours of 6 a.m.-5:30 p.m., police said, with the first occurring Dec. 17, 2013, and the second Feb. 11. Police ask anyone that observed anything suspicious on either of these dates to notify Trooper Jeff Dunshee at 860-465-5455 ext. 4019. Police also remind the public to always immediately report any suspicious behavior.

Obituaries

Portland

Sebastian S. Milardo

Sebastian "Nutzie" S. Milardo, 86, of Portland, passed away Wednesday, Feb. 12, at Middlesex Hospital. He was the son of the late Louis and Anna (Ruffino) Milardo.

Born May 23, 1927, in Middletown, he was a lifelong Portland resident and worked at Standard Knapp for many years until his retirement. He was a member of Portland Fire Company No. 1 and he was a U.S. Army veteran having served during Korea from 1952 to 1954.

He leaves his sister, Rosemarie Nichols of Portland; nieces, Felicia Grzejszczak, Rosella Stevenson and Donna Delesdernier; nephews, John Pitruzzello, Philip Grzejszczak and William Nichols.

He was predeceased by four sisters and a brother, Josephine Rand, Minnie Grzejszczak, Gen DiProto, Santina Pitruzzello and Frank Milardo.

Relatives and friends called Sunday, Feb. 16, at Portland Memorial Funeral Home, 231 Main St., Portland. Burial will be private.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Wounded Warriors Project, 4899 Belfort Rd., Suite 300, Jacksonville, FL 32256 (woundedwarriorsproject.org).

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



Portland

Harold B. Rider

Harold B. Rider, 89, of Portland, husband of Alice "Peggy" (Kennedy) Rider passed away Wednesday, Feb. 12, at Middlesex Hospital. He was the son of the late Clarence and Edith (Griggs) Rider.

Born Jan. 29, 1925, in North Haven, he has lived in Portland for the last 57 years. He worked at Pratt & Whitney for many years until his retirement and served in the U.S. Army Field Artillery Battalion and in the European Theater in four different campaigns. He was a member of the First Baptist Church in Middletown for over 50 years serving as Deacon and member of the choir. He was a member of the First Congregational Church in Portland, a member of the Masons, the American Legion for many years and the Portland Golf Club.

Besides his wife, he leaves his daughters, Karen Norton and her husband, Michael of Portland, and Elizabeth Rogers and her husband, Timothy of Middlefield; five grandchildren, Caroline and Olivia Norton of Portland, Scott Rogers and his wife Ashley, and Justin and Kristen Rogers, all of Middlefield.

He was predeceased by six brothers and sisters. A memorial service will be held Saturday, Feb. 22, at 11 a.m., at First Congregational Church, 554 Main St., Portland, with the Rev. Jane Hawken officiating.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Middlesex Hospital Cancer Center, 536 Saybrook Rd., Middletown, CT 06457 or to the First Congregational Church, 554 Main St., Portland, CT 06480.

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

East Hampton

Randall K. Perry

Randall K. Perry, 54, of East Hampton, passed away Sunday, Feb. 16, at his home. He was born Sept. 4, 1959, in New London, the son of Anita Perry Kettner of Groton and the late George Perry.

Randall had served in the U.S. Navy and had been employed for many years as a supply and equipment manager with the environmental services department at Foxwoods.

Visiting hours will be held from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 23, at Byles Memorial Home, 99 Huntington St., New London.

At his request, there is to be no funeral service.

In lieu of flowers, his family requests that donations be directed to the Covenant Shelter of New London, Inc., 42 Jay St., New London, CT 06320.

East Hampton

Clara Guiot

Clara (Jane) Irene Laufersweiler Guiot, dearly-loved mother, formerly of East Hampton, passed away peacefully, with her daughter at her bedside, after almost 99 well-lived years, on Thursday, Feb. 13 in Glastonbury, at the home she has shared with her daughter and son-in-law since 2005.

Jane was born in New Britain May 4, 1915. She was the second daughter of Clara (Frick) and Edward A. Laufersweiler and was the "little kid sister" to Edna, who was eight years older.

Clara (Jane) graduated from New Britain High School and her first employer after that was The Institute of Living in Hartford. After leaving there, Jane held several clerical jobs prior to and during World War II. She enjoyed an active social life with many friends from the New Britain area, dancing to the new style Swing Music, horseback riding in the local municipal parks and Catskill dude ranches, swimming and vacationing with her girlfriends at Lake Pocotopaug in East Hampton.

One special evening, at Carrier's Casino on the lake, she met her husband-to-be, Allen, and they danced throughout the night. Then and there he told her he was going to marry her. In 1944, while on leave from his Army assignment, they were married in the Congregational Church in New Britain. After the war was over, they settled in East Hampton, Allen's hometown, and that became Jane's hometown also, until failing health necessitated her moving to Glastonbury.

Jane took time off after the war to raise her family. Jane and Al continued to dance and they enthusiastically embraced post-war jazz musicians by becoming frequent patrons of the many jazz clubs on Manhattan's famous 52nd Street. During all those years living in East Hampton she was involved in many of the community activities so prevalent during the simpler times of the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s; she was an active enthusiastic member of the garden club, the Blue Jeans; a University of Connecticut Extension Service club, a Girl Scout leader, and participated as a member in the Congregational Church's women's club events for many years. As a seamstress, she was a perfectionist and she created unique Halloween costumes which are still remembered fondly by her daughter.

Eventually Jane re-entered the work force, and took her retirement from Traveler's Insurance Company.

Jane and Al spent many happy years at their second home on East Beach in Charlestown, R.I. In more recent years she became a staunch UConn women's basketball fan, enthusiastically watching every game on the TV. She read avidly, her passion for cozy mysteries was well known. She also kept up with current events and could keep up a lively conversation on many subjects until recently, when her health declined precipitously. She had a rapier-sharp wit and wasn't afraid to employ it, much to the enjoyment and amusement of her family.

Jane was predeceased by her husband, Allen, in 2001.

She leaves behind her daughter, Marna, and her son-in-law, David Ruddick of Glastonbury; her son, Allen J. Guiot of East Hampton; her cherished granddaughters, Jennifer Gold and her husband, Robert Gold and their two sons, Miles and Owen, of West Hartford and Beijing, China, Adrienne Pollard and her husband, Thomas Pollard and their two sons, Joshua and Finn of Wesley Chapel, FL; and her step-granddaughter, Katherine Matheson and her husband Jermaine Matheson of New York, NY.

Jane's family would like to give special recognition to the outstanding care she received from the special caregivers provided through Companions and Homemakers in Glastonbury through the auspices of Connecticut Community Care Inc. In particular, thanks to Lorraine Crain, her principal caregiver, who wholeheartedly embraced the concept of Holistic caring; employing her extensive artistic abilities to making Jane's environment visually beautiful and keeping her mind stimulated with interactive activities. Lorraine would tirelessly knit little items for Jane's great delight. Thanks also to Roxanne Gill, for her gentle and compassionate care for Jane during the past year.

There will be a private memorial service held at Lakeview Cemetery in East Hampton at the convenience of the family.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made in Jane's name to POA (Protectors of Animals), 144 Main Street, Unit O, East Hartford, CT 06118.

Spencer Funeral Home in East Hampton is in charge of the arrangements. Online condolences may be addressed to spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

Hebron Police News

2/13: State Police said Patrick M. Duhamel, 25, of 161 Old Willimantic, Columbia, was arrested for DUI and two counts of making an improper turn.

2/16: State Police said Luis Enrique Cowit, 18, of 3 Slocum Rd., Hebron, was charged with fifth-degree larceny.

2/16: State Police said Ian Pierce, 18, of 10 Wellswood Rd., Amston, was charged with DUI, two counts of improper parking and risk of injury to a child.

East Hampton

James Patrick McWade

James Patrick McWade, 57, died Saturday, Feb. 15, peacefully at home, surrounded by family. Jim was raised in Larchmont, N.Y., where he attended Saints John & Paul Elementary School and Iona Prep High School in New Rochelle.

His family relocated to Connecticut in 1973, where he graduated from Avon High School. Jim attended the University of Connecticut and graduated in 1978 with a Master's Degree in business administration after receiving an Undergraduate Degree in accounting. Shortly after graduating, he became a licensed CPA and worked in the public and private sector for 33 years. After living in various areas throughout Connecticut, he settled in Chester in 1996.

Throughout his life, Jim enjoyed sports, boating, fishing, gardening, home improvement projects, and above all, spending time with his family. In his final years, Jim made his lifelong dream a reality when he built a cabin for his family to enjoy time together for generations to come. Jim will be remembered as a loving husband, father, grandfather, brother, uncle, and friend.

Jim is survived by his wife Kathleen and his mother-in-law Sachiko; his children Jason, Brandi, Seanna and Connor and step-son Michael; his daughter-in-law Bethany and granddaughter Molly; his siblings Vincent, Mary and Phyllis; as well as nieces, nephews and many friends.

A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated Saturday, Feb. 22, at 11 a.m., at St. Joseph's Church, 48 Middlesex Ave. in Chester.

Memorial contributions in Jim's name may be made to the Middlesex Hospital Center for Survivorship & Integrated Medicine through their website, middlesexhospital.org/support-middlesex-hospital/donate-now.

Arrangements by the Robinson, Wright, & Weymer Funeral Home, 34 Main St. in Centerbrook. To share a memory of Jim or send a condolence to his family, please visit rwwfh.com.



Colchester

Mary E. Blinn

Mary E. Blinn, 67, of Broad Brook, formerly of Colchester, loving wife of James G. Blinn passed away at her home Sunday, Feb. 16, after a 17-month battle with pancreatic cancer. She was surrounded by her loved ones.

Mary was born in Hartford, the daughter of the late Charles and Evelyn Giordano of Colchester. She graduated from Bacon Academy in 1965, then attended Porter and Chester Institute where she obtained a certificate and became an electronic technician and worked for a short time at Hamilton Standard.

Her true love was being a homemaker and caring for her children and grandchildren. She was a devoted Catholic and member of St. Catherine Church, where she was a Eucharistic minister, served on the parish council and enjoyed teaching second grade CCD. She married James Blinn on May 2, 1970, and was happily married for 43 years. She was a loving wife, mother and grandmother.

Mary will be fondly remembered and never forgotten by her loving family, her daughter, Paula Morabito of Colchester; her son, John and his wife, Sarah of Windsor Locks; her five grandchildren, Dylan, Amanda and Erica Morabito and Zachary and Rachael Blinn; two sisters, Evelyn Bayles and husband Edward of Columbia, Md., Diane Riemann and husband Bruce of New London; two godchildren, Donna Martin and Narissa Myers; and several nieces and a nephew.

Mary was predeceased by a brother, Thomas Giordano, and a sister, Mathilda Infante.

A funeral service began Thursday, Feb. 20, from the Bassinger & Dowd Funeral Home, 37 Gardner St., East Windsor, followed by a Mass of Christian Burial that day in St. Catherine Church, Broad Brook. Burial followed in Mt. St. Benedict Cemetery, Bloomfield. Visiting hours were held Wednesday, Feb. 19, at the funeral home.

Memorial donations may be made to: St. Catherine Church Stained Glass Window Fund, 6 Windsorville Rd., Broad Brook, CT 06016.

For online condolences and directions, visit bassingerdowdfh.com.

Colchester

Madeleine A. Gignac

Madeleine A. Gignac, 79, died Wednesday, Feb. 12, at Apple Rehab of Colchester, peacefully surrounded by her loving family. She was born in Bedford, Quebec, Canada, on May 18, 1934, daughter to the late Louis-Philip and Alma (Boucher) Demers.

As a young girl, she attended The Couvent St. Joseph, in Bedford, Quebec and was a graduate of The St. Maurice College in St. Hyacinthe, Quebec. After her children were grown she was employed at John Meyers and AD Tripp Co. Madeleine was a loving wife, mother and grandmother, whose family meant the world to her. She loved spending time with her family and grandchildren and frequently traveled north to see family in Vermont and Quebec, Canada. In younger years she loved skiing and playing tennis and loved to cook and would always be found building a puzzle.

She was known for her big smile and hugs that would brighten up any room. She also held a very special place in her heart for the nurses, aides and staff of Apple Rehab of Colchester and Chestelm Health Day Program of Moodus who unfailingly cared for her.

She was married to her beloved husband, John A. Gignac. They were married Nov. 16, 1957, at St. Damien's Church in Bedford, Quebec, Canada, and were happily married for 46 years until John's death Nov. 26, 2003.

Madeleine is survived by her son, Richard J. Gignac and his wife Brenda of Canterbury; daughter, Louise M. Lillpopp and husband Michael of Colchester; five grandchildren, Katie and Matthew Gignac, Lauren, Anastasia and Rose Lillpopp; and several nieces and nephews.

In addition to her spouse John, she was predeceased by a brother, Jean Jacques Demers of Quebec City, Canada.

Visitation was Monday, Feb. 17, at the Labenski Funeral Home, 107 Boswell Ave., Norwich, with procession to a Mass of Christian Burial later that morning at Sacred Heart Church, 156 Providence St., Taftville. Interment was Tuesday, Feb. 18, at St. Joseph Cemetery, 815 Boswell Ave., Norwich.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made in Madeleine's memory to Apple Rehab Recreation Fund, 36 Broadway, Colchester, CT 06415.

To leave an online condolence or share a memory, visit labenskifuneralhome.com.

Colchester

Dorothy J. Mulholland

Dorothy J. Mulholland, 84, of Colchester and formerly of Norwich, died Tuesday afternoon, Feb. 11, at Harrington Court in Colchester. She was born in Norwich March 16, 1929, the daughter of the late Albert J. and Mary Ann (Grimshaw) Mulholland.

She is survived by one daughter, Marguerite "Peggy" Auger and her husband Daniel of Norwich and two sisters, Frances Lachapelle of Groton and Rosalie Fabisian of Norwich and nieces and nephews.

She was predeceased by three brothers, Harry J., Albert J. and James F. Mulholland, and one sister, Mary Irene (Mae) Ward.

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated Tuesday, Feb. 18, at Sacred Heart Church in Taftville. Burial followed in St. Joseph Cemetery Norwich. Calling hours at the Guillot Funeral Home, 75 South B. St., Taftville were Monday, Feb. 17.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Harrington Court Recreational Fund, 59 Harrington Court, Colchester, CT 06415 or to the Taftville Fire Dept., Ladies Auxiliary, 136 Providence St., Taftville, CT 06380.

Portland

Walter Ralph Schultz

Walter Ralph Schultz, 90, of Portland and formerly of Durham, husband of the late Anna (Gawlak) Schultz, passed away Saturday, Feb. 15, at Portland Care & Rehabilitation. Born in Middletown, he was the son of the late Robert and Olga (Woike) Schultz.

Walter was a veteran of World War II, serving in the United States Army. He was employed by Fenner America for many years. He enjoyed fishing and was an avid collector. Walter is survived by five nieces and nephews.

Along with his wife and parents, he was predeceased by two brothers, Harold and Irving Schultz; his half sister, Edith Gowala and a special neighbor, Joan Smith.

The family would like to say a special thank you to Greystone and Portland Care & Rehab for their wonderful care.

A graveside service will be held today, Feb. 21, at 10:30 a.m., in the State Veterans Cemetery, 317 Bow Ln., Middletown, where full military honors will be accorded.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in Walter's memory to Faith Lutheran Church Memorial Fund, 300 Washington Street, Middletown, CT 06457.

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

From the Editor's Desk

Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

Tired of the snow yet?

I know I certainly am. Tuesday's mess dumped another six inches on Manchester, on top of the foot or so the week before, and another foot or so the week before that. And in between we have had those little "nuisance snows" – like the quick three or four inches that fell last Saturday afternoon and evening, just enough to make travel a bear – and, of course, cold, cold temperatures.

Towns' road salt supplies are running low, snow banks are running high, and tempers are running short, as I think a lot of people's patience – even the snow lovers out there – is beginning to really tire out.

The good news? When you read this on Friday, it will be nearly three weeks since the groundhog made his lousy "six more weeks of winter" prediction. So there's only three more weeks to go!

This winter, I'm holding that little guy to his word.

The snow's been to blame for a lot of stuff this year – from lost school days to canceled town government meetings to rescheduled community events – and when I heard Tuesday the price of milk is expected to skyrocket in the coming weeks, I figured snow was to blame. After all, whenever a snowstorm is in the forecast, there's always a rush to stock up on milk (along with eggs and bread; as a friend of mine once quipped, it's like everyone's gearing up to throw French toast parties). So the simple law of supply and demand figures to raise the price of milk, no?

Well, no. Turns out my favorite milk by-product – cheese – is to blame. According to NBC News, short supply pushed cheese to a new peak in January, going from \$1.80 to \$2.36 a block. That in return is leading to a March increase for "fluid milk" – i.e., fresh liquid milks and creams.

Also, in early 2013, farmers responded to higher feed costs by cutting back on herd growth. That, and growing international appetite, especially from China, has also led to tighter supplies and, in turn, higher prices.

What's the end result? Well, while some stores may choose to eat the increase in milk prices, others could increase their milk prices by 50-60 cents a gallon.

How long will the spike last? Well, a new batch of calves is being born; cows reach peak milk production within 60 days of birth, and thus supplies are projected to increase. This in turn should lead to a tapering off of milk prices.

But will it? According to dairy economist Mary Ledman, whom NBC interviewed for its story, the current drought in California is causing problems. Without rain, production of alfalfa, a key feed for cows, could be curbed – and this would push up milk prices even higher in late 2014 and early 2015.

So, if you like milk, or if you just like to throw those French toast parties, be prepared to possibly pay more for it.

Jimmy Fallon's first *Tonight Show* was this past Monday. While I didn't see a second of it – NBC's Olympics coverage pushed the start time to 12:05 a.m., and your humble editor needs his sleep – I was interested in reading the reviews – and especially the ratings.

Fallon's *Tonight* debut drew numbers that were a little higher than Conan O'Brien's first *Tonight* in 2009 – Fallon drew 11.31 million overall viewers to O'Brien's 9.17 million, though the two tied in the number of 18-49-year-old eyeballs watching, with a 3.8 rating – though, perhaps not too shockingly, 23 percent lower than the ratings for Jay Leno's final *Tonight* earlier this month.

Fallon blew David Letterman on CBS and Jimmy Kimmel on ABC out of the water, ratings-wise – which I'm sure was expected. It'll be interesting to see how long he continues to do so. Back in 2009, O'Brien started out with a huge edge over Letterman (ABC was still airing *Nightline* in those days), but as his debut week wore on, the gap between the two grew closer, and before long, Letterman was topping O'Brien in the overall ratings.

O'Brien still maintained a massive edge in the 18-49 numbers, at least for a while, but even that edge started to evaporate as time went on.

If the same thing happens with Fallon – and I'm not sure as it will, as he seems a little more mainstream than O'Brien and thus a little less of a change from Leno, which will probably lead more longtime *Tonight* viewers to give him an extended try – I'm sure some people are wondering how long NBC will stick with him, seeing as how they replaced O'Brien in a matter of months. Even Fallon, I read, made a little joke about it during Monday's telecast, saying, "I'm Jimmy Fallon, and I'll be your host for now."

But honestly, I don't think Fallon's going anywhere. This time around, there is no Leno at 10 p.m.; his final *Tonight* on Feb. 6 was a sweet, sentimental affair, and had all the markings of Leno's last time behind that desk (including some touching tears from the guy).

Moreover, NBC got beat up so much for replacing O'Brien with Leno that I think there's no way they'd let that happen again. The network came away from that looking utterly foolish. There's new management in charge at the Peacock Network these days, and from what I've read, the new regime is not interested at all in repeating that episode.

All of which is good news. I was never a regular *Late Night with Jimmy Fallon* watcher, but what I did see, I always liked. I hope he succeeds, and if he struggles a bit these next few weeks or months, I hope NBC shows him the patience they didn't show with O'Brien.

I think they will.

See you next week.

Colchester

Jeffrey Paul Durkee Jr.

Jeffrey Paul Durkee Jr., 27, of Colchester, passed away Monday, Feb. 17. Born Jan. 4, 1987, in Norwich, he was a son of Jeffrey and Christine (Charbonnier) Durkee Sr. of Colchester.

From the age of 2, Jeffrey fought a valiant fight with kidney disease, always keeping a positive attitude. He was a 2005 graduate of Bacon Academy in Colchester.

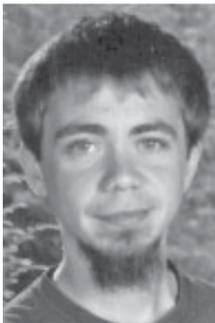
In his spare time, he was an avid outdoorsman, spending time at Cape Cod and Bluff Point, hunting and fishing as well playing extreme frisbee.

In addition to his parents, he leaves his brother, Justin; half siblings, Joshua and Jessica; grandparents, Paul and Donna Durkee and Arthur Charbonnier; a niece, Julianna; and numerous extended family members and friends.

The family received guests Thursday, Feb. 20, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. A chapel service was observed that evening.

In lieu of flowers, donations in his memory may be made to the American Kidney Fund, 11921 Rockville Pike, Ste. 300, Rockville, MD 20852.

For online expressions of sympathy, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.



Colchester

Michael Paraszczuk

Michael Paraszczuk, 88, of Colchester, passed away on Monday, Feb. 10, at The William W. Backus Hospital.

Calling hours were held Saturday, Feb. 15, at Belmont-Sabrowski Funeral Home, 144 South Main St., Colchester, followed by a Mass at St. Mary's Ukrainian Church. Burial immediately followed at St. Mary's Cemetery.

Belmont-Sabrowski Funeral Home has been entrusted with the arrangements.

East Hampton

Nathaniel L. Holloway

Nathaniel L. Holloway, a.k.a. Tiny, formerly of East Hampton, passed away Monday, Feb. 10.

A memorial service will be held at St. Albans Baptist Church, 196-02 119th Avenue, St. Albans, N.Y. 11412 today, Feb. 21.

Contact E. Holloway at 347-299-3876 for further information. You may post at Nathaniel Holloway Facebook page.