

RIVEREAST

News Bulletin

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

Volume 39, Number 9

Published by The Glastonbury Citizen

June 20, 2014



On Wednesday evening, the East Hampton graduating class of 2014 anxiously awaited their diplomas as they sat in front of their school and gazed out at a sea of family and friends. More photos of this year's high school graduations are available online at gleitizen.com.

Belltown Grads Sent On Their Way

by Geeta Schrayter

Blue skies, sunshine and a summer breeze greeted some of Belltown's seniors yesterday, as they stepped out of East Hampton High School for the last time as students. They walked in their telltale blue and white gowns past family and friends with smiles on their faces, coming to sit in front of the school they'd become quite familiar with over the last four years.

As they sat anxiously awaiting their diplomas, they were encouraged by a number of individuals, including the class president and top three students, schools superintendent Diane Dugas, Board of Education Chair Kenneth Barber, and Principal John Fidler.

Each of the four students who spoke – Class President Samantha Roberts, Valedictorian Shayla Belanger, Salutatorian Brianna Woodbury and Essayist Madison Germain – had positive words and recollections for their fellow students.

Roberts shared a sentiment she and her classmates had said repeatedly as each new class came into the school: “wow – they're so small.” Looking back, it seemed impossible they could have ever been so little. And yet, she assured them, “we too started as awkward 14-year-olds.”

But, she furthered, “we've grown” – both physically and emotionally.

Roberts said senior year had been a bumpy

ride – likening it to a rollercoaster.

“But for all of the drops there were peaks and we even threw our hands up and had some fun along the way,” she stated, calling it an honor to grow up with her fellow students and represent them as class president.

“We're not small anymore: the future is ours,” she said, concluding with a quote by Henry David Thoreau: “Go confidently in the direction of your dreams. Live the life you've imagined.”

Germain, the third-ranked student in the class, chose to focus on the idea that it takes a village to raise a child. East Hampton, she explained, was a village that had taught the students there was more to life than drama and worrying about little things, like whether their dresses matched their shoes or creating the perfect diorama for language arts class.

“This village taught me to pick my battles and to only worry about things I have control over,” she stated, adding “this village has given us all the tools we need to venture off. And as I take a look around, I can see this village has done a pretty great job.”

She concluded, “Maya Angelou was right in saying ‘We cannot make it out here alone.’ In East Hampton, we have learned the importance of a community.”

For Woodbury, it was important the class rec-

See **Belltown Grads Page 2**

Portland High School Class of '14 Graduates

by Elizabeth Bowling

The Portland High School auditorium was packed – and the cafeteria took on the overflow – Wednesday evening for the PHS Class of 2014 graduation ceremony.

The full house consisted of family and friends of the graduates, there to show their love and support, as well as school and town officials.

Members of the PHS graduating class were led into the auditorium by bagpipes, their school administration and Board of Education.

The proud members of the audience came to a stand to watch their now-alumni enter the room for the last time as high school students.

While it's difficult to pull off the graduation cap and gown combo, the young men and women of PHS Class of 2014 managed to do so, with the gentlemen looking dapper in all black, and the ladies looking ready to conquer the world in red.

Principal Andrea Lavery was the first to step to the podium Wednesday. She acknowledged all those in the audience and asked members of the PHS baseball team to stand up and accept a round of applause for their recent state championship.

“What a game Saturday!” Lavery said. “Nice way to leave Portland High School. Congratulations.”

Moving on to addressing the class as a whole,

not just the ball players, Lavery noted the outstanding “personality” of the 2014 graduates.

“Every class has a personality, and I say the Class of 2014 is my caring, compassionate, kind class,” Lavery said. “They care about each other, they care about their families, their community and their school.”

For example, Lavery said, 2014 graduate Maddie McDougal, the president of the Rachel's Challenge Club, spearheaded a successful fundraiser and used the donations to set up an outdoor memorial honoring the victims of the Sandy Hook shootings.

Lavery also recalled the graduates' junior year, when one of their classmates was unable to attend school because “he was home [and] in hospitals battling a serious illness.”

“His classmates came to me,” Lavery said, “and said, ‘We want to do a few things so his family knows we're thinking about him and we can't wait for him to come back senior year.’”

Lavery furthered the students put together a community dinner and a road race for their friend.

The student council showed compassion, too, Lavery noted, by putting together an event to make incoming freshmen feel more comfortable and welcomed to the school. The Club and Sport Fair allowed freshmen to sign up

See **PHS Grads Page 2**



Portland High School students performed the National Anthem to kick off Wednesday's Class of 2014 graduation ceremony. The 103-member senior class was ushered into the future in front of a packed house of family and friends.

Belltown Grads cont. from Front Page

ognized it was up to them to bring about any changes they desired.

“We always discuss how the conditions we live in are worsening, but we don’t try to make a change,” she said. “Well, Class of 2014, we are the catalysts of that reaction. We are the next generation of scientists, superstar athletes, actors, businesswomen and even heroes. In other words, we are the change.”

As Belanger reflected on her time at EHHS, she expressed happiness in the friends she had formed and the class she was a part of.

“I am so proud of all the things we have accomplished thus far and all of the amazing things I’m sure we’ll accomplish in the future,” she stated, urging everyone to “keep on dreaming.”

When Dugas took to the mic, it was to tell the soon-to-be-graduates to take the road less traveled, because they become opportunities. She shared her hope that each student would embrace the unexpected and “apply grit to learn and grow,” which she described as a combination of tenacity and perseverance, before sharing various examples of well-known individuals who have done just that.

She mentioned Steve Jobs, whose journey took many unexpected turns; the Beatles, who were initially told by a record company that they didn’t have the right sound; Walt Disney, who had been told while writing for a newspaper that he lacked imagination; and Thomas Edison, who she said failed 1,000 times before inventing the light bulb.

Like all of the examples, she said, “have grit, be tenacious, persevere, leave your mark and change the world.”

To Barber, it was important that the students remembered the feeling of success they felt as they graduated, and then worked to achieve it again as they set their sights on new goals.

“I urge you to always seek it, always move forward towards achieving it and as you achieve success after success, I want you to remember those that helped you,” he stated.

When Fidler spoke, he focused on the class’s qualities, sharing that they’d “raised the bar” and “set the tone in so many ways,” from the amount of community service they performed, to the charitable donations they raised, the fact the school had been named to the Advanced Placement honor roll for the second year in a row, and had had “lightning strike twice in the same spot” athletics-wise, with one student bound for Major League Baseball and another who had participated in the World Cup Development Program.

But, he concluded, “It is your spirit that will be missed more than the many, many, many accomplishments you have achieved as a group.”

Mixed in among the familiar faces who had well wishes for the group, was the commencement speaker, who, while perhaps not known for his name, was known by some students for his online handle, “Major Nelson.”

This year’s commencement address was given by Larry Hryb, the director of programming with Microsoft’s Xbox Division, who, Fidler said “has been instrumental in the development of Xbox 1, Xbox 360, Xbox live and Xbox experience.”

Hryb also happened to walk the halls at East Hampton High School from 1979-83. His speech to the graduating class was one filled with various bits of advice that were actually applicable to anyone who listened.

“First of all” he said, “every job builds character.”

He stated, “Whether you are a dishwasher, mechanic or doctor, strive to be the best dishwasher, mechanic or doctor you can be. You have it in you.”

He urged the students to expand their comfort zone, “take pause and be creative,” and to be smart with their money.

In addition, Hryb said “never say anything you wouldn’t want printed on the front of the *New York Times*,” and cautioned students about the things they say, especially because of modern technology.

“Growing up my mother always taught my sisters and I, of course, ‘if you can’t say something nice about someone don’t say it at all.’ This is a new version of that,” he exclaimed. “That email you sent to someone complaining about someone or instant message – it will get back to that one person you don’t want it to get back to: be above reproach. Be kind with your words. Be the person your mother thinks you are.”

Hryb also pushed the students to choose their north star, follow it and never waiver.

“Every thought, every choice must lead you to that goal,” he said. “Every time you’re faced with a choice, ask yourself ‘will this lead me to



Two of the 120 members of the EHHS Class of 2014

or from my goal?” whether your goal is to be the first college graduate in your family or to one day own your shop right here in East Hampton, let every decision you make be driven by your own north star.”

The sound advice continued on from there, as Hryb told the students to “do what you love and the money will follow,” to be bold, and to fail, because “with each failure you learn.”

He concluded by saying what’s most important “is to be proud of the choices you have made in life. You are about to go on this great adventure: be brave, be bold and take risks. Unlike video games, you only have one life.”

And with that sound advice from all who spoke, all that was left was for the class to receive their diplomas and begin the great adventure Hryb spoke of.

The members of the East Hampton High School Class of 2014 are:

Olivia Ackerman, *+ Karina Michelle Aliprandi, Brandon Lee Allen-Twiss, John Michael Arcidiacono, Kyle Warren Atwood, Hailee Ann Baillargeon, Nathan Charles Baker, Kate Elizabeth Balletto, Victoria Ann Bartolotta, Joshua M. Basil, Kathryn Lyn Beem, *+ Shayla Marie Belanger, Matthew John Booth, Kory Michael Bracken, Mitchell Ryan Brown, Christine Ann Cagle, Krystal Lee Catalano, Taylor Marie Chagnon, Joshua D. Chasseau, Adam T. Chiu, Mileena Marie Chrystal, Nicholas Joseph Claps, Megan Haley Close, Hannah Rose Cook, + Jenna Kaitlyn Cordeiro, Nicholas P. Costa, Joel Edward Costanzo, Erin Margaret Crean, Abby Skye Danziger, Tanner Daniel DeBowsky, Genevieve MaryAnna Devin, + Sarah Jo Dickerman, Anthony P. DiStefano, Robert F. Dobrouch III, Lauren Elizabeth Dolce, Karah Doney+, Nana-Aba Dougan, + Hannah Dawn Einsiedel, Christopher G. Fellows, Aubrey B. Fillback, Emily Anne Flynn, + Krista Lynn Fraulino, Clayton Evan Gagliastri, *+ Madison Leigh Germain, James Joseph Ghezzi III, +Lyndsey Marie Gillespie, Brandon Christopher Goff, +Taylor Lynn Goodreau, Marvin M. Gorgas, *+Michele L. Hamel, Zachary James Harrington, Sharon E. Harris, Sara Ashley Hayes, Wadai R. Holman, Jennifer Anne Jendrzeczyk, Kendel John Kegley, Rachel L. Kelley, Donovan E. Knittel, Jena Lyn Kowalsky, Vincent R. Langenfeld, Mikaela N. Lemieux, Laura Elizabeth Lovely, Rebecca A. Lyons, *+Hannah Joy Magliano, Kyle Marchinkoski, +Kayla Sean Marrow, Nicholas Marteka, Gavin Maylock, +Taryn Adams McCabe, George Joseph McGuigan, Kylie Rae McKeller, Ashley M. Measimer, Alex T. Meeker, Jewell Lauren Moody, Phillip Andrew Moon, Raymond Thomas Morassini, Krista Renee Novotasky, Patrick Brice O’Meara, +Brynn Alexandra Owen, Colin Thomas Parks, Jacob Alan Pawlak, Steven Patrick Peltier, Samuel Peter Perault, Ryan Andrew Peterson, +Hailey Claire Picking, Sarah Ashley Piscatelli, Rachele Anne Poulin, Gregory James Pratt, Nicole M. Race, *+Lauren Nicole Randall, +Dakota Layne Reed, Matthew Miguel Reich, Mikala Elizabeth Repoli, Dylan Cody Riley, Garrett Craig Roberts, *Samantha Erin Roberts, Sienna Marie Roper, Ryan D. Roussel, Andy Russo, Kuresho A. Salad, *+Madison O’Connell Savage, Brendan W. Schaller, +Jordan Leigh Schuler, Katelyn Elizabeth Sehl, Brian Matthew Selavka, Matthew C. Seigny, Jeremy S. Simmons-Telep, Brian Robert Sirois, +Alison Laurel Spadorcia, *+Kelly Erin Stoldt, Kyle Richard Sturmer, Allyse L. Szkoda, Ryan David Taylor, Austin Patrick Tierney, Thomas John Tuxbury, Leandra M. Vancedarfield, +Matthew T. Vasquezna, Brianna Chase Wall, Austin Reed Wellman, *+Brianna Marie Woodbury.

*Top Ten Students

+Ferrigno-Bell Chapter National Honor Society

PHS Grads cont. from Front Page

for extracurricular activities and meet the school’s upperclassmen.

Another example of the Class of 2014’s compassion, care and kindness occurred this Memorial Day, when the then-seniors came together to place one flag on the school’s lawn for every fallen soldier since 2001, Lavery said proudly.

“We heard really nice comments from all the visiting teams that came in the spring: ‘What a beautiful memorial. Who did that?’” Lavery recalled. “And we said, ‘Our students did that.’ And they were very, very impressed – as we all are.”

Class President Christopher Leslie followed Lavery, and was the first student speaker to take to the podium.

He took his audience on a walk down “Memory Lane” in order to fully capture his classmates, or, as he called them, “some of the most fascinating people I have ever met.”

Starting with kindergarten’s “simpler times,” Leslie worked his way up to high school, which he said was when the students “truly became aware of the uniqueness” of their class.

He concluded, “Among our class are cancer survivors, great artists, thinkers, equestrians, future military leaders, countless good hearted people, great friends, and people who will go on to change the world.”

Leslie turned the microphone over to salutatorian Marisa DiMare, who started off her speech by admitting to her fear of public speaking.

“Public speaking always terrified me,” she said. “Yet here I am, speaking to all of you, facing my fear. But I guess that’s what graduating high school is all about: facing fears. We have the choice to go into the workforce, continue onto college, enter the armed forces, or do whatever else our heart desires. For many of us, including me, it’s terrifying.”

But then she recalled all the obstacles the group has already faced and conquered, like taking the school bus for the first time, and learning how to drive a car. Because she and her classmates have successfully faced their fears in the past and “survived,” DiMare said, “I know we’ll do the same with whatever path we choose to go on after today.”

And with that, she wished her classmates the “best of luck” before introducing Megan Errichetti, class valedictorian.

“We’ve learned a lot these past four years,” Errichetti said with a smile. “Yes, we’ve studied world languages, biology, pre-calc, English, but there is so much more to high school. We learned how to manage our time, trying to fit in time for work and friends between school and sleep. We learned that we are responsible for our futures. Each one of us is going to have the final say in our future. We can only get from life what we put into it.”

She said life after high school is going to be “an exciting new chapter in our lives,” but reminded her peers “we cannot forget to reminisce about this chapter we are finishing. Remember all the important lessons we have learned as well as all the people who have shaped us. After all, high school wasn’t merely about learning the facts; it was about becoming a person. And we, the Class of 2014, have turned out to be a phenomenal group of people.”

On that note, Superintendent of Schools Sally

Doyen affirmed that each student on the stage met all graduation requirements. She also took a moment to address her upcoming retirement at the end of the month, which, in a way, made her an honorary graduate.

She said, “I share both your terror and your excitement in moving into a new phase of life. So congratulations and best wishes to each and every one of you.”

Then, before he started handing out diplomas, Board of Education Chairman Christopher Phelps called graduation “a special day” that is “a culmination of 13 years of hard work.”

Hand-shaking and diploma-receiving ensued. And in only one short hour, the ceremony was over and the students became graduates, moving their tassels from the right side of their caps to the left, before promptly throwing those caps into the air in celebration.

The members of the PHS Class of 2014 are:

^Krystian Dominik Adamowicz, *#^Nicholas Tyler Adamsons, #^Weston Patrick Balskus, Justin Thomas Barksdale, ^Samantha Paige Bermani, Lauren Ashley Billings, #^Michael Joseph Bordonaro, Anthony Branciforte, Taylor Ruth Breece, #>^Olivia Jane Briggs, Timothy Brian Caplan, >Nicole Jo Caruso, ^Kayla Marie Dalton, Henry A. Deane, *#^Catherine Aline DeJong, Brandon Delvalle, Kyle Scott Dermody, Brittney DiCioccio, *#>+^Marisa Anne DiMare, *#>^Andrew Molloy Donahue, *#>^Molly Catherine Donahue, >Autumn Faith Dupuis, #^Jessica Paige Durkin, ^=Benjamin J. Eiss, Samuel Ellis, *#>^Megan Michelle Errichetti, Anthony Richard Faraci, #Sydney Nicole Famham, Emily Rose Fazzino, >^Samantha Noelle Fera, Cameron K. Frost, Colton Harrison Green, #Amanda Nicole Ghent, Leah Marie Gilbert;

Jill Gould, #>^Emily Caroline Guilmette, Lydia Elizabeth Harris, >Zachary P. Hintz, Robert Christopher Jeffers, Adam Julian, Haley Katherine Kopchyak, ^Joshua Sebastian LaBella, Donahven LaPointe, Roger Clifford Lasky, Jason Lesick, >Christopher Scott Leslie, Christopher Simon Levesque, Taylor Kathleen Long, John J. Lundell, >Rachel Eleanor MacKinnon, Patrick Alan Malloy, ^Cassandra Manner, Hayden Manning, Olivia Joan Marlow, *#^Amelia Rose Mattesen, >Madeline McDougall, ^Sean Patrick McGinley, #^Jillian Jane McGrath, ^Courtney Leigh Merrill, *#^Brandon Joseph Morris, Sean Anthony Muff, >John Joseph Muskatallo, ^Cameron Mark Noel, #>^Jacqueline Otake, ^Nicholas Patrick Perretta, ^Timothy Ray Peterson Jr., Michael Brefo Prempeh, Douglas Mitchell Puida;

#^Spencer Norman Ravagnani, #McKenzie Colleen Reimondo, ^Connor David Reinsch, *#^Alex Dominic Riccio, Tucker Riley Rozevink, Jenna Quinn Rudewicz, ^Gary Jon Scaramella Jr., #^Joshua William Scovill, ^Charles Shattuck, ^Michael Phillip Siena, *#^Daniel Ryan Sigman, Maddison Leigh Smith, Kimberly Lynn Spakowski, ^Jason Patrick Staub, Michael Walter Stefanski, #^Emma Kathryn Stoker, Jacob Andrew Strong, Gavin Sullivan, >Abigail Rose Sweet, Hannah Marie Tate, Michael Devaughn Tate, Jesse Lee Thatcher, David George Thomas, Stephanie Annette Thorell^Abner Velasco, Tyler F. Violissi, =Brittany Rose Vogt, ^=Jaclyn Reese Waller, Erin Margaret Webster, ^Alex Bryan Wiezbicki, #>^Jessica Wilcox, #>^Jonah Sidney Winakor, >Morgan Jean Wyslick, #>^Michael Antonio Zampano.

* Top 10% of the class – Yellow Cords

National Honor Society – White Cords

> Tri-M Music Honor Society – Pink Cords

+ Valedictorian

++ Salutatorian

^ CAPT Mastery (all tests)

= January Graduate

Top Two Sachems Look Back

by Geeta Schrayter

Yesterday, members of the RHAM class of 2014 accepted their diplomas, bringing an end to their high school career. At the head of that class were two girls who are now looking forward to an active yet relaxing summer before they begin the next chapter in their lives: college.

Andover resident Cecelia Tamburro and Hebron resident Annie MacLachlan, who have known each other since they were on the Blue Team together in seventh grade, earned the title of this year's valedictorian and salutatorian, respectively – something each said they were surprised to discover.

"I wasn't thinking about it," shared MacLachlan, although she said she was happy about the distinction. At RHAM, she explained, most students focus on the present. While students "think about what you can do to make your future better," the school, MacLachlan said, creates an environment "where all you're concerned about is what you're doing right now – like the classes that you're taking. They force you to be totally involved with what you're doing whether it's clubs, sports, music – whatever."

Similarly, Tamburro stated, learning her class rank "was surprising. I didn't plan on being valedictorian or salutatorian. I've always put pressure on myself to do well in school, [but] it was kind of a surprise for me because it's not like my grades were 100 percent perfect."

But they were obviously close enough to earn her the top spot – and the highlight of a high school resume that includes chorus and drama.

"I've been very involved in the RHAM music department," Tamburro said. "I've done some sort of chorus every year and I've done regional [competitions] all four years and All-State three years."

In addition, Tamburro's been involved with the drama department which she said "helped keep me sane," and is an interest that will carry over to summer, as she'll be involved with her final show as part of AHM's Summer Youth Theater program.

For MacLachlan, activities outside the classroom have also included chorus, as well as band and various clubs; she's vice president of the National Honor Society as well as Best Buddies, a non-profit that pairs high school students and students with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

In addition, MacLachlan is on the AHM Board of Directors and has been dancing at Dance Dynamics in Hebron for 14 years.

"That's kind of the after school thing I do," she said. "It offers a little relaxation."

Regarding academics, both students have a schedule that includes advanced placement (AP) courses. Tamburro took AP biology and AP calculus this year, while MacLachlan took AP calculus, AP language and composition and AP statistics. She also took two semesters worth of University of Connecticut Spanish, which garnered her some credits that will follow her to college this fall.

Speaking on some of their favorite teachers from their time at RHAM, Tamburro mentioned

Stephen Pingree from the World Language Department, who she called "an amazing man" and a "very funny guy," as well as Alexa Mitchell, who she said was always willing to answer any question she had, and whose biology class was "definitely worth taking."

For MacLachlan, some notables were English teacher Debbie Anger, who she said had been "great," and Shaun Keane from the math department.

"They're both totally supportive," she stated.

In return, each of the above teachers had nothing but praise for the girls.

Pingree called Tamburro "an all-around excellent student."

He explained she's stood out in regards to her ability with Latin and her work ethic.

"In my 29 years at RHAM, I have had numerous excellent students, but Cecelia belongs to the handful of students who were absolutely superior," he stated.

In addition to her academics, Pingree said Tamburro impressed him with her "vivacity" and other pursuits – "especially singing and acting." He said the student is a strong performer, and displays "excellent vocal talents."

Pingree concluded by calling Tamburro's joy for life "infectious" and sharing there was another student who had been quite quiet, but through her friendship with Tamburro, "she started to break out of her reserved nature and became much more outgoing."

To Mitchell, Tamburro was "one of the most intellectually-gifted and independently self-motivated students I have had the pleasure of teaching."

As a student, she said Tamburro was determined, confident and dedicated to completely understanding a subject.

"Rather than just obtaining only the information she needs to pass a test or earn points on an assignment, Cecelia wants to know how and why something works," Mitchell explained. "She asks probing questions and is not satisfied until she has a deeper understanding of the topic."

Beyond her academics, Mitchell furthered Tamburro's "modesty, positive energy, and ability to have fun are what make her approachable and friendly."

MacLachlan received similar praise from her favorite teachers.

Anger shared, "Annie truly enjoys learning and is motivated by her own quest for excellence."

She said during class discussions, Anger could tell when MacLachlan was struck by an insightful thought, "because she got a twinkle in her eye and a playful yet knowing smile crossed her face."

Anger added MacLachlan was the student classmates fought over for group projects, "because they knew that her performance would help to elevate their own."

"She served as a great role model and inspiration for her peers," Anger concluded. "Annie actively seeks opportunities for growth and never settles for the path of least resistance. She is an independent, self-aware young woman of whom I am most proud."

To Keane, MacLachlan "epitomizes the ideal



Last week, Annie MacLachlan (left) and Cecelia Tamburro reminisced about their time at RHAM and shared their thoughts on being named this year's salutatorian and valedictorian, respectively.

student."

He said her "intrinsic motivation and work ethic far excel the typical high school student," and her "humbleness and positive attitude has gained the respect of everyone around her."

"I will miss seeing Annie and her 50-pound backpack at RHAM next year," Keane quipped, "but I look forward to hearing great things about her in the future."

And for MacLachlan, that's a future which starts at UConn, where she will be a part of the honors program. MacLachlan is a Nutmeg Scholar and a Stamps Leadership Scholar, which means her full tuition, room and board, books – everything – will be paid for. In addition, she'll have a fellowship to supplement her time at school, which will pay for study abroad opportunities.

"I'm really excited," she stated. "I'm going into the five-year special education program, so that's bachelor's, master's and teacher certification; so it's all mapped out where I need to go."

Tamburro said she was similarly excited to head to Brown University come fall.

"I'm excited about it because they have an open curriculum – they let you take basically any classes that you want, which is good for me, because I'm undecided as to my major," Tamburro shared. "Even if I decided on my major, I wouldn't know what I want to do, and

that's stressful, but I think that's ok."

And with the personality traits mentioned by her teachers, Tamburro is certain to figure it out before long.

But before either student has to worry too much about college, they've got the summer to look forward to – one that contains quite a bit of activity for each.

MacLachlan will be working at Camp Adventure at Hebron Elementary School during July, along with an animal assisted therapy program.

"Other than that I think I'm just going to try to relax," she stated, which means reading lots of books, going to the beach, horseback riding, and dancing.

And for Tamburro, the summer will consist of preparing for the AHM Summer Youth Theater performance of *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*, along with fitting in some reading, music and sleep when she can – although, she laughed, "What's relaxation?"

And of course, the two will also have their recognition as this year's valedictorian and salutatorian to think of fondly as they reminisce about their time at RHAM – recognition which, as MacLachlan stated, "is like a special cherry on top – like a little 'congratulations' for getting through high school."

Marlborough Off-Duty Trooper Catches Robber in Attempt

by Melissa Roberto

An off-duty state trooper's keen observations led to the arrest of a suspect in the act of attempting to rob the Citgo Gas Station on North Main Street last Friday night.

A State Police news report at Troop K in Colchester states at approximately 8:20 p.m., the trooper noticed a man outside of the business acting suspiciously. The trooper then made contact with the man, who was found to be in possession of a butterfly knife and a "costume-type mask," police said.

The man was detained and admitted to state police that he had parked his vehicle at the Route 2 Exit 12 commuter lot and walked to his location where he was preparing to rob the business.

The suspect was identified as Andrew Bartholomew, 25, of 477 West Main St., Amston. He was arrested and charged with carrying and sale of dangerous weapons and second-degree robbery.

Police say the investigation is ongoing.

Colchester Day Pond Visitor Arrested for Trespassing

by Melissa Roberto

An East Hartford man believed to be intoxicated at Day Pond State Park was arrested May 31 for trespassing and a slew of other charges, according to a news release at Troop K.

The report states an Environmental Conservation police officer of the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) arrested Gabriel Raia, 50, of 22 Elaine Dr., on charges of first-degree criminal trespassing, assault on a public safety official, disorderly conduct, failure to comply with fingerprints and littering.

DEEP Sergeant Ramos, who did not disclose his first name, explained in a phone interview last week that the department had been receiving calls from individuals in the area reporting that a man "was intoxicated."

Ramos furthered "the initial report was that

he was trying to get into his vehicle." Callers also voiced concerns "for his safety," Ramos said.

As a result, Ramos said DEEP Emergency Medical Services personnel arrived to the scene, with the intention of transporting Raia to Backus Hospital. However, Raia was allegedly "being combative with EMS while being transported," Ramos said.

Raia was ultimately charged with trespassing, because he was at the local park "past the time of sunset," which is when the park closes, Ramos said. Additionally, he was charged with littering for allegedly dropping containers in the park, and due to his "non-compliant" behavior with EMS staff, Raia was charged with assault on a public safety official, failure to comply with fingerprints and disorderly conduct, Ramos said.

Four Longtime MES Teachers Retire

by Melissa Roberto

The 2013-14 school year came to a close at Marlborough Elementary School today – and so did the careers of four longtime teachers.

Darrell Netto, Ellen Eastwood, Ann Loftus and Bruce Foote will say goodbye to the school they've spent the majority of their professional lives in. In addition to ending their careers at the same time, the four seem to have another thing in common: their outlook on MES.

Netto said he felt MES is more than just a school. "It's not a school; it's a family," he shared.

And his fellow new retirees felt similarly. Eastwood said, "Working at MES is like being part of a big, tight-knit family," and Foote, too, called the school "very close-knit."

Loftus, meanwhile, described MES as a school that is "very warm, very supportive of education and learning."

Netto has worked at the school for 40 years. Throughout those four decades, he taught fourth-, fifth- and sixth-graders. He currently lives in Colchester but before that, lived in Marlborough for "quite a while," he said, and raised his two children there.

Netto also worked in Marlborough for 29 years at Netto's Camp, a camp through Parks and Recreation. A place he's familiar with, Netto said Marlborough is also a community that offers a lot of support.

"I couldn't have asked to be in a better place," Netto said. "The staff always comes through to help their own and be 100 percent supportive."

Netto said he's especially noticed that support the past two years, "when my wife was so sick." His wife, Paula Netto, a longtime MES social worker, recently passed away from cancer.

Netto added he's enjoyed teaching generations of families, and spoke highly of his students.

"They're fascinating," he said. "It's a blessing to be able to come in everyday and teach children and try to help them through their own lives and their own struggles."

Netto has no specific plans for his retirement, but said he hopes to stay busy. And he'll have plenty of good memories of his decades with the school.

"Marlborough has been my whole life," he said. "I love it here."

Eastwood is leaving MES after teaching at the school for 37 years. For a majority of those years, Eastwood taught first grade. The longtime teacher stressed both former and current professionals at the school have contributed to making MES "such a warm, caring place."

Eastwood said she is looking forward to spending time with her husband, family and friends. While she said she'll certainly miss MES, Eastwood added that she has "many good feelings and unforgettable memories to look back on."

Loftus is retiring after spending 28 years teaching in Marlborough. For 12 of those years, Loftus taught kindergarten, and taught second grade for the remaining 16. Altogether, Loftus has been a teacher for 30 years.

Loftus said MES "is just a wonderful school to work at." She shared one of the highlights of her career occurred in the 2008-09 school year, when MES received the Connecticut Association of Schools (CAS) Outstanding Elementary School award. "To me, it was a really big thing," Loftus said.

Loftus said she decided to retire this year to spend more time with her family while she is still in good health. She said she'll miss both the students and staff.

"I'll be missing the children and their smiling, little faces and the things they say and do," she said, "And working with the colleagues every day."

Loftus concluded her career was "very rewarding," because she "loved getting to see how much students grow every year."

While Loftus plans to spend retirement partaking in hobbies she enjoys, the Marlborough resident said she'll "definitely" come back to the school to visit.

Foote is bidding farewell after working as the school's band director for 38 years. He has been responsible for conducting the very bands he assembled: beginners band, symphonic band, jazz band and select band. He has also taught general music and recorder classes to the third grade.

Foote concluded his career has been "wonderful."

"I still love teaching," he said, despite his departure. "Marlborough has been a very supportive community. They've always supported the band program right from the start."



Darrell Netto, Ellen Eastwood, Bruce Foote and Ann Loftus (shown from left) stand together at their retirement party held at A Villa Louisa in Bolton on June 5. The four Marlborough Elementary School teachers are retiring after being employed many years in the district.

Foote explained he's chosen to retire so he can spend more time with family. Although he will not be traveling from his Manchester home to MES nine months out of the year, Foote said he will still "have my hand in music."

"I'm looking to do some private lessons in the area and help out in Manchester," Foote explained.

Last week, Foote reflected on his last year at the school, which has featured many concerts. He recalled his final spring concert that was held on May 8. The concert featured something extra memorable: the participation of 25 of his former students from RHAM.

"It was really special. They did a great job," Foote said.

Foote was also surprised to find "Foote-notes" lining the main hallway of MES. The foot-shaped notes were made by students.

"They said everything from 'we'll miss you,' to little reflections on their experiences with me," the band director said. "It was really cute."

Foote's position will be filled by Donna Arseneault, who has been employed as the school's choral director. "I have every confidence in her that she's going to do a wonderful job," Foote said. "It's time to step aside and let someone else do it."

Colchester Budgets Off to Third Referendum

by Melissa Roberto

The third versions of the town operations and Board of Education budgets for the 2014-15 fiscal year were moved to referendum Tuesday night – but not before the public weighed in.

The proposed budgets total \$53 million – \$13.33 million for town operations and \$39.66 million for education – and will go before the voters next Tuesday.

The spending packages have been cut by a total of \$1,250,000 since their initial proposals to the Board of Finance. Town officials have been trying since May 6 to get town and school spending packages approved for the coming fiscal year, which begins July 1.

At the May 6 referendum, the budgets totaled \$53.65 million. The two were both shot down heavily at referendum; the town budget fell by a 1,108-724 vote, while the school spending plan lost by a 1,194-640 tally.

The second referendum was held May 29, at which the budgets dropped to \$53.37 million. The town budget fell 1,428-1,108 the second time around, while the education budget went down by a 1,437-1,104 vote.

And since May 29, the budgets were scaled back an additional \$377,000. The new \$53 million spending package presents an increase of 1.47 percent, or \$769,973, over the current fiscal year. The town operations budget totals \$13,334,082 while the Board of Education budget amounts to \$39,661,795.

Should the budgets pass, the mill rate would climb .29 mills, from the current mill rate of 30.28 to 30.57. Listed on the town's website is a break down of how this proposed mill rate for the coming year would impact taxes. For example, if a home has a market value of \$200,000 and is assessed at \$140,000, the annual increase in taxes would be \$40.60, which comes out to an increase of \$3.38 per month. That annual tax increase would rise to \$46.69, or \$3.89 per month, for owners for a home with a market value of \$230,000 that is assessed at \$161,000.

Tuesday night's town meeting gave citizens an opportunity to comment or ask questions

about the budgets. As was the case in previous budget meetings, a majority of parents stood against the most recent cuts made to middle school and freshman sports.

Brett Rhodes, a father of two enrolled in the district, was one of many parents in the crowd who shared the importance of sports in kids' lives. "We need to keep our kids busy, healthy, exercising, and balanced in school, academics, leadership," he said.

Rhodes told officials he's "been a very good supporter" of the school budget at the last two referendums. Although he said he's questioning what his third vote will be.

"Small cuts that eliminate freshman sports trouble me greatly and will make my next decision very difficult," Rhodes said.

Superintendent of Schools Jeffrey Mathieu and Board of Education Chairman Ron Goldstein addressed the issue. Mathieu thoroughly explained why the cuts to middle school sports was made. He said it was a decision made after the administration team at the middle school compared it to the impact of eliminating the school's double block of English.

"Right now, middle schoolers have a double block of English meaning every student receives two blocks of language arts," said Mathieu. "And the results of that are it's an excellent school. In order to keep that program sacred, that model and those teachers sacred, [Principal Chris] Bennett needed to cut somewhere." The superintendent continued, "When you're faced with that balancing act you need to start making those hard decisions."

Goldstein piggybacked off of that. "To state the obvious, the reductions to sports programs have been a difficult choice by both the administration and the board. We have been keeping it...until this time around," Goldstein said. "It's one we decided to make until we were getting to this critical stage."

However, Goldstein also spoke of the possibility of the district being able to restore middle school and freshman sports, should the budget pass. This is due to the possibility of the district having a surplus in its self-funding health

insurance account.

"If trends continue, we might meet and perhaps succeed the funding for that account," Goldstein told the crowd. "If that is the case then there's a possibility that some funding for the board of education could shift for those to be restored."

Even with that news, parents continued to side against it.

"The same people who vote against this budget because their kids can't play sports are the same people that are going to be complaining when our kids are out in front of CVS 'cause they have nothing else better to do after school," said resident Tracy Fox.

However, there was another concern regarding the education budget brought up Tuesday night. A student from Jack Jacter Intermediate School, Marissa Nudd, presented a petition to "save Ms. Messinger, the CLIMB teacher." Messinger works as a half-time teacher for the CLIMB (Challenging Learners, Inspiring Minds, Beyond Boundaries) enrichment program. In a phone interview this week Goldstein explained the CLIMB program is a program for kids who are "high achievers, who are brought out for some different types of programming, different challenges and assignments."

Goldstein confirmed the enrichment program was featured in the recent round of cuts. He said Messinger would be reassigned elsewhere in the district. Goldstein said the petition was signed with 132 first names of students.

The budget conversation then shifted into what would occur if the budget should fail a third time. Goldstein told the crowd, "Although I very much appreciate your thoughts about not supporting the budget because it's reducing things that are very important to you, please don't think that by voting 'no' those things might come back," he warned the crowd.

"The Board of Finance made it quite clear that if this budget goes down the next budget will be even lower, perhaps down to a zero percent budget increase," the school chairman said.

One resident asked for the reasoning behind that notion. Board of Finance Vice Chairman Rob Esteve spoke to this.

Esteve said, "I'm confirming that the last discussion the Board of Finance had about what to do next is moving towards a zero increase budget. That decision is not made. That is at a discussion level."

Esteve sympathized with the crowd. He said he "personally [has] heartburn" when thinking about the cuts to sports. However, he said, "When you look at the decision the Board of Education has to make, and you take all of the mandatory and obligated budget items, and you fund those, there's not a lot of discretionary areas to go after."

The finance chairman concluded, "It is the thought of the Board of Finance that it makes no sense to go back with a budget that is higher than the one that was just voted down."

Citizen Merja Lehtinen questioned what the dollar amount would be should the next budgets drop to a zero percent increase. Although finance members did not have an exact number to communicate, finance member James McNair said with a zero percent increase, "spending will be a little larger than it was on the previous approved budget" due to contractual obligations, of which he informed the crowd "are what's driving the budget."

Lastly, selectman Bill Curran emphasized the need for the crowd to get their neighbors to come out and vote Tuesday. He admitted he felt the low voter turnouts of the last two referendums – the May 6 resulted in 18 percent of voters weighing in; on May 29 24 percent weighed in – were "disgusting."

"We want to have this thing passed. We want to have good government and schools. We have to get our neighbors up off their chairs, out to that polling booth and vote next week. That's how we make the change," Curran said.

The referendum will take place from 6 a.m.-8 p.m. on Tuesday, June 24 at Town Hall, 127 Norwich Ave.

Bacon Pair Rewarded for Love of Learning

by Melissa Roberto

Perhaps not every high school student would voice this opinion, but Katie Stevens and Meaghan Hickey agreed studying hard during the four years of high school was something they enjoyed.

And the pair's love of learning is just one of the reasons the two have since graduated, as of yesterday, as Bacon Academy's Class of 2014 valedictorian and salutatorian.

Stevens, the class valedictorian, said it was "long-term goals" such as going to college that motivated her to stay on top of her studies. Her next ingredient for success?

"I enjoyed school," Stevens said. "I like to learn and do my best – that was kind of what drove me."

Hickey voiced a similar sentiment. "I love learning. My parents are both teachers so that's always been a huge part of my life – learning and working hard in school."

Stevens and Hickey were set to take the Bacon Academy graduation stage yesterday, June 19, to share some encouraging words and reflections of high school in speeches to their classmates. Though that's not the only experience the two have endured together.

In their four years, the valedictorian and salutatorian took a total of nine Advanced Placement (AP) classes. They managed to do so while balancing busy schedules outside of the classroom, which involved volunteering and extra-curriculars.

Stevens was on the high school's track and cross-country teams all four years. She also participated on the math team and in unified sports, and was a member of the National Honor Society. The valedictorian also served as the 2014 class treasurer.

Hickey said one of her main passions in high school was the drama club. She also said she stayed busy volunteering through St. Andrews Church. Hickey also belonged to the National Honor Society, and volunteered as the student representative of the town of Colchester's Youth FIRST Coalition, and served on the high school's GMO-Free Committee, which researched ways of bringing organic and GMO-free lunches into the local schools.

The high school seniors first learned of their top two statuses in mid-May. They both said it was an "exciting" moment.

"I know we both worked really hard all four years," Stevens said. "It's great to be valedictorian and salutatorian together."

Hickey added, "It definitely felt good to know that my hard work paid off after dedicating so much time to working hard and not giving up."

Hickey said her "original goal" was to gradu-

ate as valedictorian, but said taking the number two spot is rewarding, too. In fact, not having things work out according to plan is something Hickey said she'll remind herself of when she gets to Middlebury College in Vermont in September.

"Probably the biggest lesson I've learned is through my pursuit of valedictorian and then not getting it [is] it's okay if things change," Hickey shared. "Even though I have goals that sometimes don't work out, it turns out for better in the end. It doesn't have to go the way I want it."

Hickey said she had a "really tough time" deciding to go to college between Middlebury and Tufts University in Massachusetts. Her final choice was made due to her love of the community at the Vermont school.

"It's a really small environment, and I love Vermont," Hickey explained. "I love how environmentally-friendly they are and how they educate the whole person."

"It's really about the same kind of feeling I get here in Colchester at Bacon Academy," she added.

Hickey plans to major in biology.

As does Stevens, who will become a University of Connecticut Husky come September. Stevens said her final two choices were UConn and College of the Holy Cross in Massachusetts. Her final decision was made after she revisited both schools; she deemed UConn "just a good fit."

"Holy Cross was awesome too, but I saw myself better at UConn," Stevens explained. "I liked the people; I liked the atmosphere."

Stevens said her "long-term goal" is to become a doctor, though she pointed out she's "not sure what type of specific doctor yet."

When it comes down to what lessons Stevens will bring with her to UConn from her hometown, she shared, "studying skills, time management, lessons of that sort."

And the valedictorian agreed with her counterpart. "Even socially, Bacon prepared us."

That balance of school and social life is what the graduates say will make their goodbyes from the district bittersweet.

"Everyone we've known forever will be going their separate ways," Stevens reflected on last week. "I'm sure we'll stay in touch with all our good friends. I'm excited for college but I'll miss everyone and all the teachers I've had."

Hickey agreed with the bittersweet vibe of graduation.

"I'm glad I'm leaving high school because I'm ready to move on, but at the same time I'm going to miss a lot of people," she said, adding with a laugh, "It's terrifying to know my future is going to be solely in my hands!"



Katie Stevens



Meaghan Hickey

Asked who helped support them in their high school careers – and when taking their studies seriously – the two agreed: parents, teachers and friends.

Stevens' mother, Mary Stevens, said she is "very proud" of her daughter.

"She's just a worker and a doer," she explained, adding, "She's always been full of energy. She's has a spirit where she wants to do her best and she holds herself to a high standard."

Mary Stevens said her daughter would go above and beyond in her school work. "She always wanted to stay up and do that extra bit to make it just the best she could. She always wanted to do her best."

Hickey's parents, Sue and Paul, described their daughters' efforts in school as "intrinsic."

"She doesn't settle for what's easiest," the parents explained in a statement. "She strives for what's best and sets high expectations for herself."

They said their daughter had always taken a liking to science – even at a very young age.

"At the age of 2, she had memorized a book [about] all of the giant sea creatures," the parents explained, furthering, "I think we just have great visions for her future."

Of course, finishing up high school isn't all about looking ahead to what's next. The valedictorian and salutatorian also reflected on what

memories as Bobcats they'll cherish.

Stevens said the plenty of activities the 2014 class participated in together, such as its recent class trip and both proms, stick out in her mind. Academically-speaking, the valedictorian's favorite memories are "classes."

Hickey agreed. "Even though we were taking AP classes, I really enjoyed them. I have a lot of good memories."

Because the two were enrolled in so many of those advanced classes together, they highlighted AP biology and AP chemistry as two of their favorites. Stevens said this is mainly because of the school's "amazing teachers," and Hickey added the staff members are "absolutely incredible."

One of the girls' AP science teachers, Norah Furlong, reflected this week on what it was like to have them in class.

"It was wonderful working with them," said Furlong. "They're intelligent, smart, hard-working. I just can't say enough positive things about those two young ladies, and I think they're going to go far."

And now that their most recent memory of Bacon Academy is throwing their caps into the air, Stevens and Hickey said the four years of hard work paid off.

"Someone asked me the other day, 'Now that it's all over do you think it's worth it?'" Stevens shared. "And I was like, 'Well, yeah!'"

Another Budget Referendum Next Week in East Hampton

by Elizabeth Bowling

A town meeting was held yesterday to set the date for East Hampton's third budget referendum for fiscal year 2014-15, and while the meeting was held after press time, it was expected the date will be Thursday, June 26, from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m., at East Hampton High School. This will be the budget's third trip to referendum since last month.

This time around, the Town Council's proposed budget totals \$40,285,926, a 2.67 percent, or \$1,047,951, increase from current-year spending. The proposed mill rate would be 27.14 mills, a 1.92 percent, or 0.51 mill, increase from the current year.

The proposed budget can be broken down into \$28,265,097 for the education budget; \$9,766,448 for town operations; \$954,701 for transfers to other funds; and \$1,299,680 for debt service.

Compared to the budget that was proposed and shot down at the second referendum June 3, this go-around features a total reduction of \$264,394 – with \$107,700 of that coming out

of the Board of Education budget.

One major reduction from the second referendum on the town side is the elimination of the police captain position, which initially made up \$59,748. After much debate, the town council also cut a facilities foreman position, which would have been a \$82,650 price tag.

Additionally, \$75,000 was cut for improvements to Sears Park, and \$16,608 was cut for a playscape replacement at Memorial Elementary School. Another \$10,000 was cut from the village water system along with \$20,388, which would have gone toward police cameras.

In the first two budget proposals sent forward by the Town Council, the Democrats and Republicans on the council were divided. The four Democrats were able to send two budgets to referendum despite the three Republican members voting against the proposals. For this upcoming budget, the council is not quite so politically divided. This time, the proposal passed with a 5-2 vote, with Democratic council members Kevin Reich and George Pfaffenbach vot-

ing against.

Both Reich and Pfaffenbach said at last week's Town Council meeting that they did not support cutting the facilities foreman position.

Town Council Chairwoman Barbara Moore, a Democrat, voted in favor of the proposed budget at last week's Town Council meeting. She explained her 'yes' vote in a phone interview earlier this week – and stressed the importance of the budget passing next week.

"If it goes to another referendum," Moore said, "we'll have to make more reductions and you get in the middle of people's summer plans."

Republican councilman Ted Hintz also voted 'yes' – the first time he's voted 'yes' on a budget proposal this season.

In an emailed statement to the proposal earlier this week, Hintz called the new budget "a compromise on both sides. I am happy that two of the [Democratic] members of the Town Council decided to concede to some of our ideas."

Hintz said it was unfortunate that the town had to spend money on two referendums already, and a third coming up, when the newest budget proposal is "very similar" to the one the Town Council Republicans presented early on in the budget season.

"The budget the Republicans put forward at the start is very similar to the current budget except for the amount being spent on education," he said, noting the school board could have taken a "zero-based budget approach" in order to limit increases from current year spending.

Hintz furthered if this third budget proposal passes, he hopes the school board will "be creative" and find a way to not cut full-day kindergarten, middle school sports, or teacher positions.

To confirm the date of the third referendum, check the East Hampton town website at easthamptonct.org.

Groundbreaking Held for Edgewater Hill in East Hampton

by Elizabeth Bowling

East Hampton's newest economic development is underway. Edgewater Hill, a mixed-use community that will offer residential, commercial and retail spaces, broke ground last Wednesday – and town and state officials, as well as the developers and tenants, could not be more pleased.

Stephan and Lisa Motto of Edgewater Hill Properties & Dream Developers have been working for years on the development of the 79-acre piece of land. The husband-and-wife team is also responsible for the Laurel Ridge development, a housing community next door to Edgewater Hill on Route 66. According to Stephan Motto, Laurel Ridge broke ground in 2004 and was completed in 2012.

He added the support and friendships made from the Laurel Ridge project “gave me the hope and the vision for this new project.”

The designing for the Edgewater Hill project began in 2005, but the concepts started being drafted in around 2003, Motto said.

“It’s finally here,” he said at last week’s groundbreaking ceremony. “It’s a long time in the making.”

Motto called the development his and his wife’s “dream.”

“It works for the town of East Hampton and it works for us, and it works from a logistical and financial standpoint,” he said, covering all the bases.

According to Motto, Edgewater Hill will feature one three-story building with office spaces on the second and third floors, and retail space on the first floor. The development is set to have more than 200 residential units, not including office or retail space, he said.

There are three spaces for tenants, Motto explained, and two have been filled already. One tenant will be Educational Playcare, and the other will be Berkshire Hathaway Realty.

Gerry Pastor, co-owner of Educational Playcare, explained his company already ex-

ists in six locations – Edgewater Hill would be its seventh. Pastor said he plans to offer services for 190 children, ages six weeks through pre-school, at the Edgewater Hill location.

Berkshire Hathaway New England Properties regional vice president, Beth DiLoreto, called the development “exciting growth for the community.”

Local and state officials agreed.

“Economic development is more important than ever,” state Sen. Art Linares said of Belltown’s promising new project.

“We welcome Edgewater Hill with open arms,” he added, before thanking the Mottos for their dedication to the project.

State Rep. Melissa Ziobron also welcomed the upcoming development to town.

“I know this project is just going to be amazing,” she said, mentioning to the crowd they are “standing here today on the vision of what we will be proud of.”

Referencing the Mottos’ entrepreneurship, Ziobron said, “This is what real economic development looks like. The state wasn’t here giving people money.”

Rather, Motto explained, funding for the Edgewater Hill project came from Farmington Bank. He recalled, “The recession was tough for us. Banks didn’t want to talk to us about this project.”

But Farmington Bank came through.

Town Manager Mike Maniscalco also noted that in 2012, when he was first introduced to the project, it was difficult to get financing for, and fill business spots in a development.

But, he said, he knew it would come to fruition after he met the Mottos.

“He’s the boots on the ground. He’s going to make it happen,” Maniscalco said of Motto. “He has the drive and the motivation to make this happen.”

He then called Motto’s wife “the lady behind the whole thing.”



East Hampton last Wednesday celebrated the groundbreaking of Edgewater Hill, an upcoming mixed-use development in town. From left are Town Manager Mike Maniscalco, Beth DiLoreto and Marion Terry (both of Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices New England Properties), architect Patrick Pinnell, developers Stephan and Lisa Motto, state Rep. Melissa Ziobron, state Sen. Art Linares and Town Council Chairwoman Barbara Moore.

Maniscalco got a few laughs from the crowd when he said the site “smells like economic development and it smells like dirt.” He furthered, “That’s a good smell in East Hampton.”

The town manager concluded that this new development is “the beginning of a lot of really good things to come.”

Maniscalco then turned the microphone over to Town Council Chairwoman Barbara Moore, who called the plans for the development “beautiful.”

“We look forward to watching it grow,” she said. “Laurel Ridge, I’m sure, is very, very

pleased to have such great new neighbors.”

Patrick Pinnell, one of the development’s architects, was just as optimistic.

“It’s fantastic to be here and see this mess,” he laughed, noting that the development has a “soft spot” in his heart.

He called the Mottos’ plans a “demonstration of the way that you can update the suburban Route 66’s of the world for the 21st century.”

Time will tell, but it seems Edgewater Hill is going to be a great step forward for economic development in Belltown, USA.

Colchester Building Official Killed in Crash

by Melissa Roberto

Colchester’s longtime building official, Tim York, died Monday following a New London motorcycle crash.

The well-known town employee had been traveling west on the Water Street/Huntington Street on-ramp for the Gold Star Memorial Bridge on I-95 in New London when, just before 12:30 p.m., the motorcycle he was operating traveled off the road and struck a metal beam guardrail, according to an accident summary provided by State Police Troop E in Montville.

York, 64, of North Stonington, was then ejected from the motorcycle and struck a vertical support beam. The motorcycle continued to travel on its own across four lanes of traffic before coming to an uncontrolled rest, the release stated.

York, who was not wearing a helmet, was transported by the New London Fire Department to the Lawrence & Memorial Hospital, where he succumbed to traumatic injuries, the document said.

The crash closed the on-ramp and bridge temporarily due to an investigation. State police and the DOT were notified of the investigation.

In Town Hall this week, York’s fellow employees were stunned by the news. First Selectman Stan Soby said York was a husband and a father, and called the passing of his friend and colleague a “tremendous loss.”

“Tim was a wonderful family man. He was a friend to many in this building,” Soby said, referring to Town Hall. “He was a trusted, knowledgeable colleague. He had respect of everyone in this building and respect of his peers around the state.”

Soby also praised York’s work, calling the building official “an expert in his field.”

“He was a teacher; he shared that knowledge,” Soby continued. “It’s just an incredible loss and I feel so bad for his family.”

Others who worked with York recalled what

he will be remembered for. Town Planner Adam Turner, who worked closely with York within the Building Department, said the building official was “totally committed to the town.”

“He did whatever was necessary,” Turner continued. “You can’t replace people like that.”

York was in his 20th year working for Colchester. He was first hired on April 4, 1994. Turner explained York was responsible for “all the construction” that’s gone on in town since then – and “did so much more than that,” he added.

“Every responsibility in the Planning and Zoning Department at some point he did,” Turner explained. “Whether it was taking ice off a roof, demolishing a building, whatever it was, he was an expert at. Tim took care of everything.”

Turner concluded “everybody” in Town Hall is “shocked and sad, of course.”

Gregg Schuster, who was first selectman in Colchester from 2009 until last month, also reacted this week to the news, writing on Facebook he was “heartbroken” by it.

“Tim was an incredibly generous and kind person with a big heart,” Schuster wrote.

Schuster expanded on those thoughts in a phone interview Wednesday.

“He always offered to help people, always went the extra mile to accommodate others,” Schuster said, and added, “I’ve never heard anyone say anything bad about him. He was so renowned in his work. He would get asked from the state, other states and organizations to come and train their building officials.”

“It’s such a huge loss to the community,” Schuster continued. “He was just an all-around great person.”

Funeral services for York will be held at 10 a.m. Saturday, June 21, at Dinoto Funeral Home, 17 Pearl St., Mystic. Interment will follow in Elm Grove Cemetery, Mystic.

East Hampton Police News

6/1: Ramsey Cornelio, 29, of 3111 Town Colony Dr., Middletown, was issued a summons for operating a motor vehicle while under suspension, East Hampton Police said.

6/2: John Patrick Kehoe, 31, of 36 East High St., No. 2, Brett Joseph Michnowicz, 19, of 165 Clark Hill Rd., and Scott Evan Jackson, 22, of 242 East High St., were all arrested, police said. Kehoe was charged with driving too close, traveling unreasonably fast and possession of narcotics. Michnowicz was charged with possession of narcotics, possession of drug paraphernalia and possession of less than half an ounce of marijuana. Jackson was charged with possession of less than half an ounce of marijuana, possession of drug paraphernalia, possession of narcotics and illegal storage of narcotics.

6/3: Anthoula Manolakis, 42, of 89 Abbey Rd., East Hampton was arrested for DUI and

failure to drive right, police said.

6/4: Kyle Marchinkoski, 18, of 85 North Main St., and Barton Blau, 66, of 7 Hills Ave., were involved in a two-car motor vehicle crash on Route 66 at its intersection with Sinco Place. Marchinkoski was arrested for DUI and following too close, police said, and Blau was issued a summons for misuse of plates and operating an unregistered motor vehicle, police said.

6/7: Wigberto Laboy, 33, of 17 Old Coach Rd., was arrested and charged with disorderly conduct and third-degree criminal mischief, police said.

6/12: Farid Ahmed, 46, of 550R Main St., Cromwell, was issued a ticket for traveling unreasonably fast, possession of less than half an ounce of marijuana and possession of drug paraphernalia, police said.

East Hampton Car Accident Identities Released

by Elizabeth Bowling

The identities have been released of the six people involved in a three-car, two-collision accident that occurred in East Hampton about three weeks ago.

According to Sgt. Paul Battista of the East Hampton Police Department, the May 31 accident resulted in all three drivers and all three passengers involved being sent to various hospitals. Five of the six parties were released from their respective hospitals that same night, but one is yet to be released.

Mail truck driver Adrienne Shonio, of East Hampton, was the sole occupant of her vehicle and was flown by Lifestar to Hartford Hospital following the accident. As of Wednesday afternoon, she had not been released from the hospital.

According to East Hampton Police Chief Sean Cox, the first of the two collisions involved two vehicles traveling south on Young Street. The first of those two vehicles was a

mail truck, which was being followed by an older model Ford F150, Cox said.

As the two vehicles traveled southbound, the F150 struck the mail truck in the rear, forcing it into oncoming traffic in the northbound lane. The mail truck was forced into the path of a Chevy Avalanche pick-up truck, Cox said of the second collision.

“The mail truck came to an uncontrolled rest” in the northbound lane, Cox said. The Chevy Avalanche drove off the unpaved shoulder to an uncontrolled rest, and the F150 stopped in the southbound lane, he said.

Battista identified the driver of the Ford as Jason Vicchitto of Deep River. Vicchitto was the vehicle’s sole occupant

Samantha Chapman, of East Haddam, was operating the Chevy. Chapman had three passengers – another adult and two young children, Battista said.

Worship Center Eagerly Planning Its New Home in Hebron

by Geeta Schrayter

At 99 Marjorie Circle in Hebron, passersby will find a stone pillar with the words “The Worship Center” set beside an asphalt drive that curves up and around one of the highest points in town.

Those with a curious mind might travel up that road, which would bring them to a peaceful prayer garden framed by nature with stone seating, gravel pathways, and blooming flowers. Beyond that, the road continues to climb, winding around a hill of dirt and rock adorned with a large wooden cross – a spot some have trekked up on to pause and reflect, taking in a nearly 360-degree view of distant ridges.

Yet it’s what’s behind that hill – or rather, what *will* be there, at which point the rubble that makes the hill will be used as fill – that’s the final destination.

At present, the site is nothing more than leveled land: an expanse of dirt, rock, stubborn weeds and patches of grass that have grown since the land was excavated years prior. But for members of The Worship Center it’s much, much more; it’s a dream – a vision. It’s their future home.

The Worship Center was founded in 1986 by Pastor Mark Santostefano, his wife Judy and a group of about 25 people. Since its inception, the church has had a kind of nomadic lifestyle, congregating first in the basement of a medical building in Marlborough, then at Patty Dunne’s School of Gymnastics in Hebron and, for the last 15 years, the auditorium at RHAM High School.

But now, the dream is for a place that will offer the parishioners some permanence – and it’s a dream that’s been in the works since 1997, when 11 acres of land was donated to the church by resident Mary Florence Boucher. Sharon Gonyaw, who is a part of the design team, explained Boucher and her husband had always wanted to build a church at the top of their property.

One day, a parishioner from The Worship Center went to work on Boucher’s home. They got to talking, and when she learned about The Worship Center, “she said, ‘I got land and my husband and I want a church,’” Gonyaw stated.

And so, Boucher gifted the land to the church – just like that – and ended up joining the congregation, which she was a part of until her passing in 2005.

But the vision lives on, and much has already been done to ensure it comes to pass: utilizing the numerous and varied talents of congregation members, the costs were kept down as the land – which was initially wooded – was cleared and leveled and a road, retaining wall and prayer garden were constructed.

“We saved up the money,” Santostefano explained. “It cost us about \$250,000 just to put this road in, and we had people from the congregation help – there was a guy that was an engineer, [Gonyaw’s] son is a heavy equipment operator – and so we just had a lot of people that kept the cost down.”

Gonyaw added, “we have so many talented people in this congregation,” including artists, plumbers, builders, gardeners, landscapers and the stone mason who worked with others to build the wall and the prayer garden.

“We felt like we’d work our way up” the property, said Santostefano.

And they’ve done just that. Now, the task lies before them to raise the money needed for the pièce de résistance: the actual church sanc-

tuary and grounds.

To do that, around \$292,000 needs to be raised; the rest will be paid for with a \$550,000 loan, which Santostefano explained would mean the church will have to pay an amount equal to what they currently do to rent the RHAM auditorium and their offices. It was important, he said, to only get into “manageable debt.”

Getting to this particular point – where the end appears to be in sight – has taken time and effort. But Gonyaw shared everything that’s happened has happened for a reason.

“It becomes thanksgiving, because you go, ‘Thank God that didn’t happen,’” she stated.

For instance, the church was initially approved for a larger loan back in 2008 before the economy crumbled, but before going through with it, the building team took a step back, thought things over and regrouped. As a result, the designs for the church were changed and downsized, so that it became “just the right size,” Gonyaw said.

In addition, she stated from the beginning there had been a desire to incorporate green energy. But at that time solar energy wasn’t as common as it is now.

“When we first started on this project that was just not well known – now is time,” Gonyaw stated, adding a solar company had already been lined up to install panels on a portion of the roof once the building is completed.

Furthermore, both Gonyaw and Santostefano were thankful the original building design didn’t work out because at first, Santostefano didn’t feel like he’d been able to communicate his vision.

Along with making sure the work they did was quality, Santostefano said he wanted a building that pleased the town, and made the correct statements about the congregation’s beliefs about God and themselves.

“The type of building that you build can make a theological statement and a statement about identity,” he stated, adding a lot of modern church architecture looks like a theater, which gives those inside the feeling of being an observer rather than a participant.

“We wanted to make sure that we had a lot of light, because even the idea of God and light is a big thing, and we wanted the church to be three things: welcoming, warm and worshipful,” he stated, adding to achieve that, the desire was for a church that looked like a New England barn.

And now, that’s precisely what they’ve got. “It’s evolved to exactly what we need,” said Gonyaw.

“Passionate” and “excited” are the perfect words to describe both individuals when they talk about their hopes for the building – a place they’re praying will represent their beliefs; a place that reflects what Gonyaw described as “the light of the world,” and uses architecture to “speak of the love of Christ.”

The land will be landscaped with gardens, birch trees, a gazebo, a picnic area, play area and plenty of opportunities for photos, which Santostefano said he took into consideration since he’s also a wedding photographer.

“I was very conscious of how a wedding would take place,” he said, “so we wanted to design the church with that in mind.”

The building will consist of a main sanctuary that will seat around 300 people and a ministry building that includes offices, classrooms for activities and a toddler/kindergarten room,



Members of The Worship Center, who currently meet Sundays in the RHAM High School auditorium, are eagerly awaiting the construction of their church. But before that can happen, around \$292,000 still needs to be raised.

and restrooms.

“I could take hours expressing what’s been in my heart” regarding the design, Gonyaw shared. She explained when people enter the ministry building it will be a place for coffee and fellowship, but as they near the sanctuary, the architecture “is going to start to say ‘hunker down and get formal.’”

“Architecture helps you to be reverent,” she stated.

Details such as stone water walls, a barrel ceiling decorated with a mural and a beam over the double doors that reads “This is the house of God: this is the gate of Heaven,” will greet people.

Inside the main sanctuary, congregants will find large windows, hammer beam trusses, a platform up front with enough room for the congregation’s band, and a large stone water wall with a wooden cross suspended in front of it.

The building, Gonyaw stated, will be a mix of old and new, much like the congregation.

“God is relevant. He’s very aware of the now. So the mixture of our church is going to be some of the old which is so important, but it brings in the new,” Gonyaw said.

She furthered, “I want everybody to be able to actually speak of the lord as they come into our church. And it’ll be practical, because that’s what Jesus was.”

The Worship Center, she concluded, “is such a gem.”

“It’s been around for 25 years and the ministry it has – it’s wonderful. But it’s time. We need a home to be a city of refuge – to be that place where people can come.”

But before that can happen, there’s money to be raised.

“When you think of \$300,000 it’s really not a lot in the scheme of things,” Santostefano stated. “But it’s a challenge for a small congregation, and so God has just got to come through in some ways that we may not even expect or anticipate.”

To help The Worship Center in their quest for a home, a tax-deductible donation can be made out to “The Worship Center,” with a note in the memo section that reads “Building Fund” and sent to The Worship Center Building Fund, P.O. Box 1435, Hebron, CT 06248.

A fundraiser has also been planned for September in the form of an art show. The show will consist of worship inspired art from at least 20 local artists, as well as a wine and local cheese tasting, a silent auction and live music, with 100 percent of the proceeds going toward the building project.

For more information, visit theworshipcenterbuildingproject.weebly.com or call 860-228-4442.

Town Receives Preservation Grant for Peters House in Hebron

by Geeta Schrayter

The town recently learned a \$10,000 grant application to continue work on the Peters House had been approved.

Hebron Town Planner Mike O’Leary was informed June 6 by Mary Dunne, architectural historian with the State Historic Preservation Office, that the grant had been approved.

With the grant, O’Leary said, the town can now hire a qualified historic engineer to work with BL Companies, the architect of record on the Peters House project, to review existing plans for strengthening the first floor framing.

He explained strengthening the framing was necessary to “ensure structural integrity of the floor and the house; to ensure compliance with the Secretary of the Interior’s standards for the treatment of historic properties; to consult with BL on necessary or desired modifications to the plan; and, to have BL revise construction plans as necessary.”

Town Manager Andrew Tierney said he was “ecstatic” Hebron received the grant.

He explained \$30,000 had been included for restoration work on the Peters House in the approved Capital Improvement Plan budget for 2014-15, “but before we move forward we want to make sure what we’re doing to restore the floor is in line with historic preservation.”

Efforts to bring the house, which dates back to the 1700s, back to its former glory have been

ongoing by both the town and volunteers. Once completed, the idea is to use the building as a place for meetings as well as historic displays and exhibitions.

But this isn’t the first grant that’s been received for the project: some of the work that’s already been completed on the house includes insulation and window restoration or replacement along with exterior painting, which was paid for with a \$200,000 Small Town Economic Assistance grant in 2009. Work has also been funded with a grant from the 1772 Foundation, an organization that provides support for historic preservation projects around the country.

And grants of any size are welcome, Tierney stated.

“We’re very happy anytime we receive a grant, large or small. It’s stuff taxpayers don’t have to pick up, so we apply for any and all grants,” he shared.

Tierney furthered the town was also waiting to hear back on the status of their application for more STEAP grant monies, part of which, if awarded, would also go toward the Peters House.

According to the Connecticut Office of Policy and Management, applications for fiscal year 2014 were due no later than April 15 and “decisions on awards will be announced periodically but no later than Sept. 15.”

Portland Resident Earns Eagle Scout Rank

by Elizabeth Bowling

The past week has been particularly monumental for Portland resident Andrew Donahue – not only did he graduate from Portland High School Wednesday, he also earned the highest Boy Scout ranking last Friday, June 13.

But his accomplishments didn't come without hard work.

Donahue graduated on a high note as the captain of the track and cross-country teams. The PHS alumnus plans to attend Norwich University in Vermont in the fall, where he will be enrolled in Army ROTC and study civil engineering.

Regarding his post-high school plans, Donahue said he's "a little nervous but excited." He furthered, "It's nice. I'm excited to get out."

Even though Donahue has a lot to look forward to, he met with the *RiverEast* last week to reflect on the recent completion of his Eagle Scout project – an endeavor not to be lost in the shuffle of graduating and planning for college.

For his Eagle Scout project, the 17-year-old built two new bridges along the walking/hiking trail at Portland Reservoir. Between the planning, paperwork-gathering and physical construction, Donahue's project took about four years to complete, but for the proud Eagle Scout, the time and effort was well worth the reward.

Donahue said he came up with the idea to build the two new bridges at the reservoir because he was all too familiar with the prior condition of the trail's single bridge. He used to hike the trail with his family, and run through it with the PHS cross-country team.

He explained there used to be "only one bridge" about halfway into the approximately two-mile trail but it was "dangerous" and "in need of repair."

He explained a second bridge was needed because springtime flooding renders the stream uncrossable.

So, as part of his Eagle Scout project, he took down the existing bridge "because it was unsafe," took it apart and replaced it using new materials and reusing some of the original materials, he explained.

Donahue noted that sturdiness was important in the building of the new bridges because people often ride their quads through the trail so he designed the two new bridges to be sturdy enough for quads to drive over.

Donahue worked with a local architect, Rick Staub, to design the bridges and with Portland Parks and Recreation Director Sean Dwyer to

arrange the fundraising for the project.

Dwyer said, "Andrew was instrumental in helping push this project along."

Dwyer said Donahue "did an excellent job." He furthered, "The bridges now give access to more people."

* * *

Donahue joined the Cub Scouts Pack 15 when he was 7 and became a Boy Scout in Troop 2 at age 10. He worked his way up the ranks of the Boy Scouts and last Friday he officially became an Eagle Scout.

"To become an Eagle Scout I had to progress from the rank of Scout, to Tenderfoot, to Second Class, to First Class, to Star, and then to Life," Donahue explained.

In order to become an Eagle Scout, Donahue had to complete more than 21 merit badges – 12 of which were mandatory, the remaining nine were elected – and serve in a leadership position within his troop. For Donahue, that leadership position was "Senior Patrol Leader," a title he held for two years. As Senior Patrol Leader, Donahue organized all of the troop's activities and trips.

The third and final requirement for becoming an Eagle Scout is the Eagle Scout project.

In order to become an Eagle Scout, a boy must be under the age of 18. Donahue said he started thinking about and planning his Eagle Scout project when he was a freshman. Now, with his 18th birthday around the corner in September, his plans have come to fruition.

The lifelong Portland resident said of his project, "I was really happy with how it turned out because it promoted public awareness to the reservoir."

The recent graduate had to present his project to a Comprehensive Board of Review. Essentially, he met with troop leaders and people from the Mattabesett Trails District, he said. His presentation to the board, he recalled, required that he discuss the project and reflect on it, including his role as the project leader.

Donahue said he recruited people within his troop and from his high school to volunteer for the project. With about 40 volunteers between the ages of 10 and 65 working on the project – some of whom had never met prior to this endeavor – it was inevitable that some did not know how to operate the machinery or tools involved in building the bridges. So Donahue was responsible for teaching them and bringing them together to build two bridges.

Donahue and his team worked at the reservoir for a cumulative six-weekend period that



Portland native Andrew Donahue, 17, officially earned the rank of Eagle Scout last Friday, June 13. He is pictured here standing on one of the two bridges he and his team built on the Portland Reservoir walking/hiking trail as part of his Eagle Scout project.

spanned over the course of a year and a half. He said getting the paperwork together and getting town and Boy Scout approval was about a two-year process, but the construction portion of the project took about 18 months because of unexpected setbacks due to weather. Mainly, Tropical Storm Irene and Hurricane Sandy resulted in time being set aside for brush clearing.

Donahue wished to especially thank his parents, Christopher and Michelle Donahue, as well as his twin sister Molly, and younger sisters Sarah and Katherine, for all their help in the completion of his project.

He also attributed much of the project's success to its generous donors, who sent in donations to the town's Parks and Recreation Office. He explained he used the donated money to cover the cost of beams, hardware and re-

bar.

Additionally, Donahue said the Lyon and Byllard Lumber Co., of East Hampton, was a major donor, as it donated most of the decking materials. Finally, the Tierney family of Portland donated telephone poles.

The money left over from fundraising must be used at the reservoir, Donahue explained. There may be another scout interested in making a third bridge, toward which the excess money could go.

* * *

Donahue's Eagle Court of Honor, where he was presented with the Eagle Scout award, was last Friday, June 13, at 6:30 p.m. at St. Mary's Church in Portland. His troop members, family and friends who helped him complete his Eagle Scout project were in attendance to support him.

Marlborough Police News

6/12: State Police said Athanasios Gakidis, 41, of 768 Bantam Rd., Bantam, was arrested for DWI and speeding.

6/14: State Police said Heather M. Campbell, 28, of 89 Edstrom Rd., was arrested and charged with interfering with an officer.

6/14: At 1:08 a.m. a one-car crash occurred on Route 2 two-tenths of a mile from Exit 15 in Marlborough. State Police said Myrna Perez, 23, of 101 Spring St., 3S, Hartford, was operating a motor vehicle in the left lane of two when she lost control on the wet pavement and spun off into the center median. The vehicle then came to a rest facing eastbound between the metal beam guide rail and a row of bushes. Police said Perez and her three passengers,

Davian Samuels, 22, of 59 Sterling Rd., East Hartford, Chasitty Matos, 23, of 11 Cobbs Mill Ln., Glastonbury, and Jaime A. Velasquez, 21, of 29 Hopkins St., Newington, were transported to local medical facilities for evaluation.

6/15: State Police are investigating a residential burglary that occurred on Islieb Road between 12:30 p.m. and 4:30 p.m. Police said a Matika work radio, a 55-inch LD SD Smart TV and a 15-inch Dell laptop were stolen from the residence. Police said entry was forced through a front window by cutting a screen. Anyone with information regarding this incident is asked to contact Trooper Philip Soucy at 860-465-5455 ext. 4015.

Hebron Police News

6/11: State Police said Robert E. Claydon, 65, of 28 Ridge Ct., Saratoga Springs, N.Y., was traveling on Route 85 when he slowed for an animal in the roadway and was struck from behind by a vehicle operated by Nancy Taylor Hatch, 60, of 420 Salem Tpke., Bozrah. Police said Hatch was transported to the Marlborough Clinic for evaluation. She was found at fault for following too close, police said.

6/14: State Police said Jordan Detweiler, 19, of 20 Wellwood Rd., was traveling north on Wall Street when he failed to negotiate a curve and ran off the left shoulder of the roadway. Police said Detweiler was transported to Marlborough Clinic by the Marlborough Fire Department for minor injuries. The driver was issued an infraction for failure to drive right.

Portland Police News

6/12: Andreas Guliani, 23, of 10 Farm La., was charged with interfering with police and possession of less than half an ounce of marijuana, Portland Police said.

Andover Police News

6/9: State Police said Leah Botti, 34, of 92 Shoddy Mill Rd., was arrested and charged with DWI and risk of injury to a child.

Colchester Police News

6/9: State Police said Gordon G. Saucier, 45, of 642 Old Hartford Rd., turned himself in on charges of two counts of violation of probation.

6/9: State Police said sometime between June 6 and June 9 an unknown person broke the back window of a state police Inceptor SUV that was parked in the lot for State Police Fleet Operations on Mill Hill Road in Colchester. Anybody with information is asked to contact Trooper Joshua McElroy at 860-465-5400 ext. 4066.

6/11: Colchester Police said Jeremy David Abbatomaro, 19, of 409 Linwood Cemetery Rd., was charged with possession of less than half an ounce of marijuana.

6/13: State Police said Gretchen D. Sebjan, 41, of 215 Valley St., Willimantic, was transported to Troop K from the Putnam Police Department for the charge of second-degree failure to appear.

6/14: State Police said Chantel L. Wrighten, 28, of 40 Convent Ave., Norwich, was arrested and charged with OUI and improper parking.

6/15: State Police said Cody Eifler, 23, of 534 Norwich Ave., was arrested and charged with second-degree burglary. According to police, Eifler entered into a residence during the night and went upstairs into a bedroom where the residents were sleeping. The release furthers that when the occupants awoke Eifler fled from the scene. A State Police K-9 then located the

subject a short distance away from the residence.

6/15: Colchester Police said a concerned citizen reported at 2 p.m., that he was walking on Bull Hill Road near the "S turns" when he found a Sentry S0210 safe in the woods near the roadway. The safe is white and approximately 1' x 1 1/2'. Anyone with information is asked to contact Officer Eric Watrous at 860-537-7270. This case is currently under investigation.

6/15: State Police said Geoffrey Asselin, 24, of 280 Parum Rd., was arrested and charged with third-degree assault.

6/16: Colchester Police said a resident of Mill Hill Road arrived at his job site located at Lot 15 Goldberg Road and found four aluminum planks and six ladders, with a total value of \$3,715 had been stolen sometime between June 14 and June 16. Anyone with information is asked to contact Officer Eric Watrous at 860-537-7270. The case is currently under investigation.

6/17: At 9:45 a.m., Colchester Police said it was reported that approximately 50 automotive batteries were stolen from the Colchester transfer station. The batteries were valued between \$8 and \$10 each. This case is under investigation.

6/17: State Police said Heather Foster, 32, of 139 Lebanon Ave., Apt. 6, was arrested and charged with first-degree forgery.

Portland School Superintendent Looks Back

by Elizabeth Bowling

Portland's Class of 2014 can consider Superintendent of Schools Sally Doyen an honorary graduate, as she will retire at the end of the month, after nine years in the Portland school district.

In her superintendent's newsletter for the Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents, Doyen wrote she had a "rewarding and varied career" in Portland.

She wrote, "The years in Portland have been a gift, working with wonderful, dedicated people and a community that continues to value hard work, loves its children, and respects education."

In an interview last week, Doyen called Portland "an appealing town" with "lots of opportunities for students and teachers."

"I loved the small environment. But there were a lot of resources here," she furthered. "It was a really nice community."

Over the course of Doyen's nine years in Portland, the district earned two National Blue Ribbon Schools of Excellence awards – Brownstone Intermediate School received the designation in 2011 and Portland Middle School earned it for the 2014 academic year.

Doyen called the Blue Ribbon award a "huge honor," for which a school must "meet certain student performance criteria in terms of learning."

She added that only a handful of schools earn the award, which is a "recognition of the quality" of a school.

Another highlight of her time in Portland, Doyen said, was the installation of Project Lead the Way, an engineering program at PHS.

Doyen's career brought her to Connecticut about 20 years ago, but in total it spanned seven states and nine school districts.

She said she had to get re-certified to teach in each state she moved to, "so every state was an adventure."

Doyen started her career in education in Illinois where she taught high school English. From there, she moved to Kansas, then Massachusetts, then Cincinnati, Ohio, where she taught fourth grade, as well as high school and junior high. While living in Cincinnati, she also worked at a pharmaceutical company and a consulting company, she said.

Then she moved to Connecticut.

First she worked in South Windsor as a technology coordinator. Then she went to Manchester, where she served as assistant superintendent for nine years before becoming the superintendent in Lebanon. Then she took on her current position as superintendent of Portland schools.

Doyen's career has also involved teaching at the university level. Those teaching assignments included an assistant professorship at Miami University in Ohio, and adjunct positions at the University of Connecticut, Eastern Connecticut State University and Southern Connecticut State University.

Asked what motivated her to get started in the education field – teaching, specifically – Doyen said, "I always liked working with people. I really liked working with kids. It seemed like a good fit."

Doyen has been a professional educator for much of her life, but that wouldn't have been possible without her own education. Over the years, she's earned a bachelor's degree in education, a master's degree in English, a master's degree in information science and, on top of all that, a doctorate degree.

In reflecting upon her decades in the field of education, Doyen said there have been countless changes.

"I've been able to experience lots and lots of positive changes in public education," she said, comparing current teaching practices to those of 25 years ago. "Our work is much more research-based now."

Doyen praised teachers as being "very highly professional people," and added that expectations for teachers and administrators are very high, which is "encouraging for the future years." She also noted that globally, expectations on students are higher than they used to be.

"I think in Portland we've really stepped up to that well," she said. "The community is very supportive of the schools."

For example, she said, "Parents have always been there to help."

She also noted the volunteerism amongst teachers and administrators in the Portland district.

"Everybody is willing to jump in and help," she said, which is "very unique and appealing."

Asked why she decided to retire now, Doyen said, "A lot of reasons."

"It's time for me to look into some other things that I'd always wanted to do but didn't have the time to do," she said, concluding that she's looking forward to having "time to do other kinds of things."

For example, Doyen said she has family in other parts of the country she'd like to visit.

In addition to her desire for free time, Doyen said this year seemed like a good time to retire because "it's been a difficult year."

"There's been a lot of changes that everyone's had to face," she said, mentioning new teacher evaluations and new technology requirements

for student testing as examples of those difficult changes. "It just seemed like this was the right time."

This past school year was a tough one in terms of the weather, too, Doyen said.

She wrote that her plans for retirement include "never having to call another snow day, refinishing all the old furniture she has accumulated, and taking time to appreciate her family, friends and the many opportunities of life."

Being superintendent during a recession was no walk in the park, of course, and Doyen called those years "the most challenging financially."

Doyen said she and her team, including the Board of Education, managed to stick to their principles. In other words, there were no staff layoffs during that trying economic time.

"We didn't skip a beat, even with the financial impact that that had," she said, referencing the recession.

Doyen said her goal – as well as that of the school board – every year was "to maintain our staff" and give them confidence that problems are being handled somewhere else so teachers don't have to worry about them.

Doyen called past and present members of school board the "foundation of that goal" to avoid layoffs while maintaining an affordable budget.

In fact, Doyen recalled there were two years of a zero percent increase in the Board of Education budget. Overall, Doyen said, the budget increases have been "very reasonable" over the course of her career in Portland. That may be because Doyen considers budget management "a continual thing," which allows for the maintenance of Portland schools' programs.

She furthered that maintenance of a budget and programs, as well as the assurance of job security for teachers and staff, provides stability in a school district within a small community.

Doyen said disagreement over a school budget is "detrimental to a school district," so it was important to her to maintain focus on the classroom and not on finances.

Doyen said as superintendent, the biggest challenges were also the biggest goals; and that they were: "keeping the classroom learning and the programs moving ahead" and "keeping concerns and politics out of the classroom so teachers can do their jobs."

She called the board members "helpful" and "supportive" and said they're good at giving her clear direction.

"I feel very fortunate that I've been able to work with such great board members over the nine years," she said.

Doyen described her relationship with the



Sally Doyen

Board of Selectmen over the years as "very good," too. She also said she had a "wonderful working relationship" with First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield.

But even with all the great relationships and successes to come from her career, the soon-to-be retiree said two of her proudest accomplishments in her personal life are her 18-year-old daughter, adopted from China, and a 3:15 San Francisco marathon time. Doyen ran six marathons in her life.

For the past 22 years, Doyen and her family have resided in Storrs, where her husband is an industrial engineering professor and her daughter just completed her freshman year at UConn.

Doyen's official last day is June 30, but she plans to stick around until the end of July in order to get things "tied up as much as possible" and make sure things are "as clear as possible" for the next superintendent.

Some ongoing projects for the superintendent include: negotiating contracts; making sure each school is ready to start in the fall; the summer school program; and thinking about and doing some "preliminary planning" for the 2015-16 education budget, which typically begins in the summer months.

Regarding the Board of Education's search for new superintendent, Doyen affirmed, "They're working on it. They're moving along pretty quickly."

Obituaries

Colchester

Irving Melvin Plotkin

Irving Melvin Plotkin, 86, of Colchester, passed away Friday, June 13, at home, with his loving wife, Roz by his side. Born Nov. 6, 1927 in New London, he was the son of the late Philip and Rebecca (Greenberg) Plotkin.

Mr. Plotkin served in the U.S. Army as a staff sergeant during the Korean War. On Feb. 11, 1951, he wed the former Roselyn Gordon at Beth Jacob Synagogue in Norwich.



In 1952, he and Roz opened Plotkin's Jewelers in Colchester. Over the years, Irv was well known throughout the region as a specialist in watch repair. He was a member of the Connecticut Jewelers' Association and the Jewelers of America.

Irv was a member of Congregation Ahavath Achim in Colchester, having served on the Board of Directors and as Chairman of the Ritual Committee for over 15 years.

With a strong sense of concern for the community, Irv was an extremely active member of the Colchester Lions Club for 60 years serving as president and in many other capacities. He was a recipient of the Melvin Jones Fellowship, Knight of the Blind and was a distinguished Life member of the Colchester club, for whom he was also Lion of the Year. He loved working local events, including the pancake breakfast, carnival on the green and fishing derby.

Irv and Roz attended the Lions International Convention in Minneapolis, where Colchester was recognized as a model club for its efforts to support Campaign Sight First. He was also a member of the Donald A. Bigelow American Legion Post 54, service officer and Colchester representative of the Connecticut Soldiers', Sailors' and Marines' Fund for many years; Hadassah Associates; Colchester Historic District Commission; and Charter and very active member of the Colchester Business Association.

Most importantly, he was a devoted husband, father and grandfather; and will be greatly missed. May his memory be for a blessing.

In addition to his loving wife of 63 years, survivors include two children, Paul Gordon Plotkin and his fiancé, Deborah Henderson of Waterford and Hillery Fern Plotkin Bauman and her husband, Daniel, of Stoughton, Mass.; four grandchildren, Betty, Michael, Adam and Cassandra; caring sister-in-law, Phyllis Plotkin; and numerous extended family members and friends.

Funeral services were observed Sunday, June 15, in the sanctuary of Congregation Ahavath Achim, 84 Lebanon Ave., Colchester, with Rabbi Kenneth Alter, officiating. Interment followed at Ahavath Achim Memorial Park Colchester.

Shivah was observed through today, June 20, at his residence (64 Kennedy Drive).

Donations in his memory may be made to the synagogue, P.O. Box 5, Colchester, CT 06415, the Colchester Lions Club Charities, P.O. Box 423, Colchester 06415, the Colchester Business Assn., P.O. Box 453, Colchester, CT 06415 or to Hadassah, c/o Fran Hirschkowitz, 19 Great Plain Rd., Norwich, CT 06360.

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

For more information, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

Portland

Hazel Lee Green

Hazel Lee (Dease) Green, 90, wife of the late Buster Gibbs from Newport News, Va., and the late George Green from Middletown, passed away Tuesday, June 10, at Portland Care & Rehab, after a short illness. Born Aug. 4, 1923, in Pamplico, S.C., she was the daughter of the late Leon and Loraine (Cain) Dease.

Hazel was a long-term employee of the Connecticut Valley Hospital, rising to shift supervisor before her retirement. She was president of the La Bon Ami Club, a social club that did community work. She was an original board member on the Hark L. Wright Scholarship Committee for years, a committee that awarded annual scholarships to local high school graduates. Hazel also volunteered serving meals at Saint Vincent DePaul, was an active member of the The Order of the Eastern Star for years and was one of the original founding members, along with Rev. and Mrs. Zack Hart, of Zion First Baptist Church in Middletown.

Hazel will be remembered as a caring wife, a loving mother, a great sister, a terrific aunt, a loving mother-in-law and a wonderful grandmother.

She is survived by her son, Leon Gibbs Sr. and his wife, Dorris of Fairfax, VA; a grandson, Leon Gibbs, Jr. and his wife, Tonya and two great grandchildren, Joy Destiny Gibbs and Zion Leon Gibbs, all of Lorton, Va. She is also survived by three

sisters, Starlene McWhite of Pamplico, S.C., Annette Dease of Paterson, N.J., and Jeannette Dease Morrissey of Englewood, N.J.; a brother, Bob Dease of Burlington, N.J.; many nieces and nephews in Middletown, including the Rev. Greg and Nora (Hyman) Woods, Jackie Hyman Self and Bobby Hyman and their many children; many nieces and nephews on the Gibbs, Cain, and Dease side of the family in Philadelphia, Pa., Florence and Pamplico, S.C., Pahokee, Fla., and Atlanta, Ga., and many nieces and nephews from her second marriage to George Green, including James Allen Green of Berlin, Renette (Green) Shields of Middletown, Jeannette Green of Hartford, Barbara (Green) Langlois of Dayton, Ohio, and Johnny Green of Santa Monica, Calif.

Along with her two husbands, Hazel was predeceased by four sisters, Dorothy Hyman, Ruby Lee Cockfield, Geneva Burgess and Evelyn Robinson.

The family wishes to thank the doctors and staff of Portland Care & Rehab and Middlesex Hospital for their devoted medical and physical attention to Mrs. Green over the years. The family wishes to acknowledge with deep appreciation the many expressions of love, support, concern, and prayers shown to Mother Hazel Green, who will be missed.

Funeral services were held Wednesday, June 18, at Doolittle Funeral Home, 14 Old Church St., Middletown, with the Rev. Willie James Young, the Rev. Greg Woods and family members officiating. Interment followed in Pine Grove Cemetery. Family and friends called Tuesday evening, June 17, at Doolittle Funeral Home.

To share memories or send condolences to the family, visit doolittlefuneralservice.com.

Andover

Bruce H. Goulet Sr.

Bruce H. Goulet Sr., 68, of Andover, passed away Saturday, June 14, after a long illness. He was a combat Marine, Vietnam veteran and served honorable in the United States Marine Corps. Bruce was also a lifelong member of the Andover Volunteer Fire Department.

Besides his beloved wife of 42 years, he is survived by his two sons, Bruce Jr. and Todd, and four loving grandchildren. He was a devoted husband, father, brother and brother-in-law. Bruce will be sadly missed by all of his family and friends.

Graveside service with military honors will be held at Townsend Cemetery on Townsend Road, Andover, on Saturday, June 21, at 11 a.m.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the AVFD, 11 School Rd, Andover, CT 06232.

We thank everyone for their care and support.

Colchester

Margaret Edna Cosgrove

Margaret Edna Cosgrove, 96, of Granby and Colchester, passed away Tuesday, June 17, at Apple Rehabilitation of Colchester. She was born in East Hartford June 13, 1918, daughter of the late James M. Gorman and Laura E. (Morse) Gorman, and graduated from Bloomfield High School in 1937.

Peg married John Francis Cosgrove Jan. 24, 1942, and the happy couple shared 66 blessed years together before his passing in 2008. In addition to her husband, Peg was predeceased by her daughter Carol Cosgrove and grandson, John Demars.

Those left to treasure her memory include her son and his wife, William and Patricia Cosgrove of Marlborough; grandchildren, Kimberly and Robert Richards of Granby, Tammy Felker of Sussex, N.J., Jacqueline and Michael Phillips of Mount Pleasant, S.C., Jonathan Cosgrove of Washington, D.C., and David Cosgrove of Royal Oak, Mich.; great-grandchildren, Robert and Nicholas Richards, Marissa and Margaret Felker, and John, Jessica and Katie Phillips. She also leaves a family of caregivers and friends at Apple Rehab of Colchester as well as her beloved cat, Muffin, who now resides in Granby.

Marrying her husband just after the U.S. entered into World War II, Peg was a fearless and very spirited young woman with career ambitions. She was working at Travelers Insurance when she met her future husband John and later became a postal clerk with the Granby Post Office, retiring in 1983. She then furthered her career an additional 10 years working for CIGNA from which she retired several times.

Peg was a lifetime member of the Eastern Star, attended South Congregational Church in Granby, and enjoyed gardening, knitting, golfing, dancing, and attending a good party. The most important part of her life was her family, of which she was the center, the rock.

Her family will receive friends on Sunday, June 22, from 1-3 p.m. at Hayes-Huling & Carmon Funeral Home, 364 Salmon Brook St., Granby, with a private graveside service to be held at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, please make donations to the Apple Rehab of Colchester Recreation Department, 36 Broadway St., Colchester, CT 06415.

To sign her online guestbook and send notes of condolence, visit carmonfuneralhome.com.

Colchester

Terrance Martin Ellis

Terrance Martin Ellis, "Terry," 71, of Colchester, passed away Thursday, June 12, at home, with his loving wife, soulmate and best friend of 28 years, Judy (Scacciaferro) Ellis, at his side after a valiant battle with cancer.

Born July 1, 1942, in Kenduskeg, Maine, to the late Robert and Theo (Mace) Ellis, he was the youngest of nine children. The family moved to Hartford in the 1950's and he graduated from Bulkeley High School in 1962.

Terry was an Ironworker for Locals 15 and 424 (Hartford) for 33 years before his retirement.

An avid golfer, he could be found watching golf on television when he wasn't out on the course - especially proud of his first "hole-in-one," made on Oct. 19, 2007. Terry was a member of the Chantclair Mens Club, the Colchester Farmers Club (since 1979) and the Ironworkers Local 15 Retirement Club.

Terry was also a fan of the Boston Red Sox and New England Patriots, rarely missing a game...

Most importantly, time spent with his family was the happiest of all; always bringing out a smile on his face that could light up any room.

In addition to his loving wife, he leaves two daughters, Cyndi and Mark Duprey of Woodstock, Ga., and Diane Buttimer of South Windsor; seven grandchildren, Derek, Kyle and Brianna Duprey, Nicolas and Alexis Buttimer, Danielle Owens and Kelsey Schools; two great-grandchildren, Gavin and Myles; three siblings, Kelly Hawkes of Portland, Maine, Robert Ellis of Lehigh Acres, Fla., and Audrey Emerson of Bangor, Maine; and numerous nieces, nephews, extended family members and friends.

He was predeceased by a daughter, Debbie Schools; a grandson, Jason Schools; and five siblings.

The family would like to extend a special thanks to Dr. Dennis Slater and his team, as well as Masonicare Hospice and Terry's nurse, Noah White, for their care and support.

Per his wishes, care of private funeral arrangements (with scattering of his cremated remains in Maine) has been entrusted to the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home of Colchester.

For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

Marlborough

Stephen Batchelder

Memorial Service

Friends of Stephen (Tito) Batchelder, formerly of Marlborough, are invited to come to Gilman Pond North, New Portland, Maine, to celebrate his life Saturday, July 5.

Batchelder, 77, of Canaan, Maine, passed away Sunday, Nov. 10, at his home, surrounded by his family, after a courageous battle with cancer. He lived in Marlborough for almost 40 years, where he owned and operated Holden Graphics, while also serving as a town police officer for 25 years.

For more information, accommodation and directions, call Susan at 860-853-8590.

Marlborough

Paul Joseph Giansanti

Paul Joseph Giansanti, 70, of Marlborough, passed away Saturday, June 14, in East Hartford. He was born in Hartford Dec. 28, 1943, son of the late Paul F. and Philomena (Scavetta) Giansanti.

Paul graduated from barber school. He owned and operated the King's Klipper. Paul enjoyed many vacations with his family to Hampton Beach and Cape Cod. Paul had a passion for golfing and cars (especially his Mustang) in which he attended many car shows. He also loved and had a passion for baseball and enjoyed attending his grandson's games and giving his support.

He was also a lifetime member of the Elks Club as well a member of the Knights of Columbus. He was a recent graduate of the East Hartford Police Academy to obtain CERT training, which he was very proud to receive and to volunteer in the community.

He leaves his companion of 12 years, Barbara Cyr of East Hartford; a son, Paul L. Giansanti of Oklahoma City, Okla.; four daughters, Lisa M. Giansanti of Plainfield, Ofelia M. Santini and her husband Dino of South Windsor, Loretta A. Sullivan and her husband Gregory of Stafford Springs, Enilda T. Sliski and her husband Richard of Suffield; three sisters, Ann Marie Langenfeld and her husband Raymond of East Hartford, Rosemary St. John of Glastonbury, and JoAnn Denning and her husband Daniel of East Hartford; seven grandchildren, Deanna M. Gilmore, Kristen V. Gilmore, Bryan D. Gilmore, Nicholas J. Santini, Anthony P. Santini, Christian M. Sliski and Andrew R. Sliski; a great-grandson, Nicholas M. Beauregard. Paul also leaves many nieces, nephews, great nieces and great nephews, and his former wife of 28 years, Teresa J. Giansanti of South Windsor.

He was predeceased by a nephew, Daniel Denning Jr.

A funeral service was held Wednesday, June

18, from the Rose Hill Funeral Home, 580 Elm St., Rocky Hill, followed by a Mass of Christian Burial that morning in Corpus Christi Church, Wethersfield. Burial will be in Rose Hill Memorial Park, Rocky Hill. Family and friends called at the funeral home Tuesday, June 17.

Andover

William Breadheft

William "Bill" Breadheft, 75, of Englewood, Fla., formerly of Andover, died Thursday, June 12, at Tidewell Hospice in Florida. Bill was born Oct. 8, 1938, in Indiana to Abe and Dot, and grew up in Manchester, where he fell in love with photography.

His hobby became his profession working at the University of Connecticut for 26 years in charge of Photographic Services Department. Additionally, he served as an EMT and volunteer fireman in his hometown of Andover for 35 years before retiring to Florida. During this time he was also an EMT instructor.

His photography, EMT service and fire department involvement he enjoyed immensely and found fulfilling and gratifying. He is well remembered for his big heart and huge grin.

Bill leaves behind his beloved wife Nancy of 50 years; three children, Lauren and husband Ed Cooney, Marc and wife Andrea Breadheft, Tamme Arasimowicz; also, his five grandchildren, Alexandra and husband Mason Propst, Sydney and Jared Cooney, Naideen and Natalie Breadheft; and niece Carla Witmer. He also leaves many friends in Connecticut, Florida and in between.

A memorial service was held Thursday, June 19, at the Englewood Community Funeral Home with Private Crematory, 3070 South McCall Rd., Englewood, Fla.

Memorial contributions may be made to Tidewell Hospice, 5955 Rand Blvd., Sarasota, FL 34238; Andover Volunteer Fire Department, 11 School Rd., Andover, CT 06232, or the Englewood Firefighters Benevolent Fund, 516 Paul Morris Drive, Englewood, FL 34223, in memory of Bill Breadheft.

You may share a memory with the family at englewoodfh.com.

Colchester

Anna Kupczak Koc

Anna Kupczak Koc, 89, of Colchester, passed away Saturday, June 14, with her loving family by her side. Anna was the widow of the late Dimytro Kupczak and Wladyslaw Koc. Anna was born Dec. 31, 1924, in Kolomea, Ukraine.

Anna and her husband Dimytro along with their two oldest children immigrated to the United States from Germany in 1951. She worked at the American Thread in Willimantic and retired from the Levine and Levine Coat Factory in Colchester in 1985.

She was an accomplished seamstress, an avid gardener and excellent cook and well known for her homemade pirogues and galumkies. Anna was a member of St. Mary's Ukrainian Catholic Church.

She is survived by her loving family members: her daughter, Maria Goding and her husband Clyde and Grandson Kevin Goding; two sons, Stefan Kupczak and Peter Kupczak and wife Frances Deegan; and granddaughter Nicole Kupczak Evans.

She was predeceased by three granddaughters, Kelly Jean Goding, Kathleen Ann Kupczak and Jessica Marie Kupczak, and her son Nickalaus Kupczak.

Visitation was held Tuesday, June 17, at the Belmont Sabrowski Funeral Home, 144 South Main St., Colchester, with a Panahyda prayer service included. On Wednesday, June 18, her funeral started at the Belmont Sabrowski Funeral Home, followed by her Service of Devine Liturgy that morning at St. Mary's Ukrainian Church, Linwood Avenue, Colchester. Burial followed in Linwood Cemetery, Colchester.

Those who wish may make donations to her church in her memory.

Colchester

Loretta L. LePage

Loretta L. LePage, 92, of Norwich, died Thursday morning, June 12, at Harrington Court in Colchester. She was born in Norwich Aug. 1, 1921, the daughter of the late Daniel and Nancy (Vitti) Leone.

Loretta was employed for 15 years as a cloth inspector at the former John Meyers Co. in Norwich before retiring. She was a member of the Cathedral of St. Patrick in Norwich.

On Jan. 3, 1942, she married Joseph A. LePage at the Cathedral of St. Patrick in Norwich, who died Oct. 3, 2011.

She is survived by one son, Albert D. LePage and his wife Sally of Green Valley, Ariz.; one daughter, Linda Jackson and her husband Harry of Norwich; four grandchildren, seven great-grandchildren and three great-great-grandchildren.

Funeral services and burial will be private. There are no calling hours.

Guillot Funeral Home, 75 South B. St., Taftville, is in charge of arrangements.

From the Editor's Desk

Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

A month or so ago, one of my fellow employees here at the office came in with a collection of cookbooks. They were all the same cookbook – a publication put out by Rockville Bank in 2008, which consisted of recipes submitted by customers. The recipes were all submitted for a contest entitled “150 Years and Still Cooking” – but the winners and the runners-up were all included.

Apparently, Rockville Bank was giving copies of the cookbook away. My co-worker didn't know why, but I suspect it's because Rockville Bank doesn't really exist anymore. The “merge” with United Bank (whenever these bank or store mergers happen, it's usually one company that gets to keep its name, while the other one gets put in mothballs – so I have a hard time calling those true merges) that was announced last year finally became effective this spring. Rockville is now officially a division of United, and later this year all the references to Rockville Bank – on everything from bank statements to signs – will be replaced with United Bank.

And that's kind of a bummer. I worked at Rockville Bank during a couple of breaks from college, and I know there are a lot of good people down there, but moreover, I hate seeing local, community banks become no more. Of course, I imagine many people reading this probably originally started banking with a bank that no longer exists – my first post-college bank was good ol' Savings Bank of Manchester, which then became New Alliance, and then was gobbled up altogether by First Niagara out of upstate New York.

So I will say that for the Rockville-United deal. At least the bank's new corporate headquarters are in Glastonbury; United was originally out of Springfield, Mass., so I assumed its headquarters would be there, but nope – they're closer to Rockville's home base than United's. So at least whenever former Rockville customers have to deal with the entity known as “corporate,” they'll be dealing with folks over in Glastonbury – not in upstate New York.

Overall, though, I was sad to see the merge – although, hey, I got a free cookbook out of it, right? Which brings me to why I'm writing about this. (You should know by now there's always a reason to my rambling. It may not always be a good reason, but it's a reason.)

Flipping through the book, I came across several entries from people in the *Rivereast* towns – recipes from Hebron, Colchester, etc. I'll be honest – most of the names I didn't recognize. But then, the book is six years old. Who knows how many of those names have moved? But then I came across a blast from the Marlborough past: Riva Clark.

Riva was, in 2008, smack in the middle of her first year on the Marlborough Board of Selectmen. She stayed on the board until 2011, when she opted not to seek a second term in office. During her four years as a selectman, Riva was a good friend of the *Rivereast*'s, always being very helpful and cooperative when it came to stories. I remember meeting her in person at a Marlborough Memorial Day parade, and she just struck me as a genuinely nice person. So it was neat coming across her name in the cookbook.

Riva had no fewer than three recipes printed in the cookbook – which I thought I'd share. The first, in the “Appetizers” section, was for “Martha's Salsa.”

Ingredients: 1 can whole kernel corn; 1 orange bell pepper, diced; 1 can red kidney beans, rinsed and drained; 1 can crushed pineapple, reserve liquid; ½ red onion, diced; 3

tbsp. olive oil; 5 tbsp. lime juice; 1 tsp. salt; hot sauce, to taste.

Directions: Mix together first five ingredients in a large bowl. Stir together oil, lime juice, salt and hot sauce, and pour over salsa. Add reserved pineapple juice, if desired, for a wetter salsa. Good to make ahead so flavors blend and hot sauce develops a good kick.

Her second entry in the cookbook was for beef soup.

Ingredients: 1.5 lbs. cubed stew beef; 3 tsp. flour, seasoned with salt and pepper; 1 pkg. Knorr Oxtail soup mix; 8 cups water; 1 cup short cooking rice, approx.; 1 head of bok choy or small curly cabbage, washed and rough-chopped.

Directions: Dredge stew beef in flour and place in hot, oiled large Dutch oven. Sear until browned on all sides. Add Knorr Oxtail soup mix and eight cups water. Stir well, cover and bring to low simmer; cook until meat is fork-tender. Add rice and cabbage. Cook 10 minutes, stirring occasionally until rice is cooked. If desired, add more rice for thicker consistency. Cabbage will cook down tremendously. Mix well and serve.

For her third dish, Riva – having provided an appetizer and an entree already – offered up a terrific-sounding dessert: cranberry orange cake, which she said was handed down from her mother, who had made it every holiday for decades.

Cake Ingredients: 2 ¼ cups all-purpose flour; 1 ½ cups oats, quick or old-fashioned, uncooked; 1 cup sugar; 1 tbsp. baking powder; ½ tsp. baking soda; ½ tsp. salt; ¾ cup (1 ½ sticks) softened margarine or butter; 1 cup milk; 3 eggs; 2 cups chopped cranberries, fresh or dried; 2 tsp. grated orange peel.

Glaze Ingredients: 1 cup powdered sugar; 4-5 tsp. orange juice; ½ tsp. grated orange peel.

Directions: Pre-heat oven to 350 degrees. Grease 12-cup bundt or 10-inch tube pan. Combine flour, oats, powder, soda and salt, and set aside. In large bowl, beat sugar and butter until creamy. Stir in milk, eggs and orange peel. Gradually add flour mixture and mix well, beating for one minute. Fold in cranberries. Spread into prepared pan and bake for 55-65 minutes until wooden pick comes out clean. Cool 10 minutes, remove from pan and cool on wire rack. Glaze when completely cool.

Now, being a lazy bachelor, I'll probably only make the salsa – it seems the easiest – although all three of those dishes Riva submitted sound absolutely delicious. I'm glad she shared them with Rockville Bank – and that the bank shared them with us.

* * *

Lastly, there was a lot of pomp and circumstance in the air in the *Rivereast* towns this week, as the Portland, East Hampton, Bacon Academy and RHAM high schools all held their graduations. Stories about the Portland and East Hampton commencements are in this week's paper; Bacon and RHAM graduated last night, after press time, so you can look for those stories next week.

As is annual tradition here, all the graduation photos – and our reporters take a lot, many more than we have space to publish in the paper – will go up on our website. The PHS and EHHS pictures are already there. To see them, go to g1citizen.com/rivereastphotos.html.

And congratulations to the Class of 2014!

* * *

See you next week.