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East Hampton resident – and *Rivereast* columnist – Hugo DeSarro accepts a certificate from Town Council Vice Chairman Kevin Reich, officially naming him the town's poet laureate. DeSarro, who has been published internationally, has been writing poems, short stories, essays and plays for over 75 years.

East Hampton Names DeSarro Poet Laureate

by John Tyczkowski

East Hampton's Town Council honored local poet and writer Hugo DeSarro, 95, last week by proclaiming him the town's poet laureate.

In a ceremony during the March 24 council meeting, council vice chair Kevin Reich read from a proclamation before presenting a certificate to DeSarro, who's lived in town since the late 1950s with his wife, Marietta.

"The East Hampton Town Council, on behalf of the citizens of East Hampton, do hereby name Hugo DeSarro as the poet laureate for the Town of East Hampton," Reich said, reading from a proclamation.

"Congratulations, Hugo," he said.

After accepting the certificate to applause, DeSarro then read from a few poems, including what he called the first one he ever submitted, and said a few words.

"I just don't know how to thank you," he told the council. "This means a lot to me."

Afterward, DeSarro said he felt "really surprised" and "very pleased" about being named to that position.

"It really is an honor to be selected for something that you've done most of your life," DeSarro said.

In fact, he said he was going to talk to the town manager to find out more about the position, but "they beat me to it."

"I felt I was being recognized, which is what you want; you want people to appreciate your

writing," he said.

DeSarro grew up on Barbour Street in Hartford's North End, and it was on that very street he was inspired to write and submit his first poem at the age of 13, to a magazine in New York.

"I wrote about the circus coming to town," he recalled. "And it was a grown-up magazine; a real literary magazine."

DeSarro said his numerous experiences have informed his writing over the years.

These included, he said, his Army service during World War II, working as a horse groomer throughout Connecticut and Westchester County, N.Y., in between school years at the University of Connecticut, working for the City of Hartford and teaching English as an adjunct instructor at the University of Hartford.

These key experiences also included points later in life such as spending time on the reservations with his wife, daughter and son-in-law in northern Arizona, a three-week road trip with his wife to all the national parks, and substitute teaching in East Hampton.

"I think it's very important that I write about real things, from real experiences," DeSarro said. "I've been a writer for most of my life, I really have. I had to express myself, so I did it in writing."

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Crossing 'The Pond' with Pam

by Geeta Schrayter

Scotland and Ireland have always been on the radar of former state Rep. Pam Sawyer. The rolling hills, the culture, the history, lore and more have beckoned Sawyer and her husband Ric for years, but a trip never happened.

That is, until now.

Come September, the Sawyers will journey across the pond for a "Taste of Scotland and Ireland Tour" – and the adventure is open to anyone else who might like to join.

"We have talked for years about going to Ireland and Scotland," Sawyer shared this week. "We were going to go, and then we were going to go, and of course the little things in life got in the way and you postpone and you postpone."

But, she added, "We decided that this was the year."

After all, this is the first year in two decades Sawyer has no state office obligations in her way. Sawyer was the state representative for the 55th Assembly District – which covers Andover, Hebron, Marlborough and Bolton – from 1993 until her retirement this past January.

Sawyer said that when she began talking about her plans with people she knew, a common response was "wouldn't that be a great trip" and "I'd love to do that," which got her thinking.

"I suddenly had this idea; I thought 'wouldn't it be great to go with a lot of people!'" she stated.

And it just so happened that Marlborough resident Richard Denno, whom Sawyer got to know through Marlborough events she attended over the years, had a connection with a tour company.

So through CIE Tours International, Sawyer said the best option was selected for their desired trip, and now, their dream is coming true.

Speaking on the draw to the area, Sawyer shared, "Using an imagination of castles, the Loch Ness Monster and a visit to the more recent past to see the Titanic Museum – the new Titanic Museum in Belfast – added to the thought of seeing the coastline, sipping Guinness in a real pub, a visit to a real Scottish wool mill as well as a horse drawn carriage ride in Killarney" which all appealed to her.

And all of the above – and more – is part of the tour, which will take place Sept. 7-18. The trip costs \$3,999 per person for a double occupancy room (an additional \$638 is required for a single room) and includes airfare, all local taxes, 10 nights in various hotels plus hotel service charges and portage, daily breakfast, one lunch and six dinners. The dinners include a Scottish evening in Edinburgh, a Canal Cruise dinner with live music, a medieval banquet in

Bunratty Castle in Clare, Ireland, and three table d'hote dinners.

The tour gets underway in Glasgow, Scotland and ends in Dublin, Ireland 11 days later. And during that time, a plethora of events are planned, beginning with a tour of central Glasgow and a welcome get-together drink. There will also be sightseeing tours of Edinburgh and Dublin – all by luxury coach and with a professional tour director.

Also included is a stop at Blair Athol Distillery for a whisky tasting and tour, ferries from Scotland to Ireland and across the River Shannon and visits and admission to such sites and attractions as Provand's Lordship, a medieval-period house and museum in Glasgow; Edinburg Castle; the Book of Kells in Trinity, Ireland; Blarney Castle; the Skellig Islands; the Cliffs of Moher and the Clonmacnois Monastic Site.

"I think there's something there for everybody," said Sawyer. "One of the great parts of the tour, I think, is that breakfasts are included along with six dinners and a lunch and how about this: a farmhouse tea and scones with a sheep dog display."

Sawyer was referring to a planned stop at a farmhouse in the midlands of Ireland after a visit to the Rock of Cashel. There, guests will enjoy tea with scones and watch sheep dogs



Pam Sawyer

herd sheep. From that point the tour continues south to Blarney Castle where the "Stone of Eloquence" can be kissed, and a trip to Blarney Woollen Mills for some Irish-made goods. The day ends in Killarney, where, after check-

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But he said, besides the large events in his life, smaller ones have also inspired him. A particularly salient example he gave was a poem inspired by when, “in grammar school,” he saw a dog starving to death on the side of the road and tried to find its owner.

“When the school bell rang the other kids ran to class, but I tried to find the dog’s owner,” he said. “It really left an impression.”

DeSarro also said he’s written “pretty steadily” over the decades, starting with his high school yearbook. His work has encompassed numerous magazines and journals. Since 1982, DeSarro has also written a weekly column for the *Rivereast*.

He said the sum total of that lifetime of writing has included hundreds of poems, several plays and essays, as well as two unpublished novels.

In an interesting story, one of those unpublished novels was a collection of stories DeSarro wrote in place of a thesis for his master’s degree in English at Trinity College.

“It was the first time they ever accepted a work of fiction in place of a master’s thesis,” he said. “And I understand there’s only been one other person since who’s also done that.”

He also said he’s open to looking into how to publish the short stories from that collection as a book.

In addition, DeSarro said he’s written several plays, two of which were staged in town at Epoch Arts and one of which had a reading in Middletown.

The first one, called *The Timekeeper*, was staged in 2009 and dealt with the social and personal challenges surrounding a single woman’s unwanted pregnancy, set in Hartford during World War II.

DeSarro said the setting was inspired by his work as a timekeeper at Fuller Brush Co., and his memories of a home for unwed mothers on Barbour Street.

“I talked with Beth [Namen, artistic director at Epoch Arts] and said to her ‘Are you still looking for plays?’ and she said ‘I’ll take anything you’ll give me’,” he said. “So we started with *The Timekeeper*.”

Actors also read his poems between scenes, he said.

DeSarro also provided the piano music for that production, as playing piano is another one of his big hobbies, he said.

“I regularly go over to the [East Hampton] Senior Center and play, and I go to the Cobalt Lodge and play there too,” he said. “It’s another thing I like to do.”

DeSarro has also submitted poems to reviews, magazines, journals and more, located in countries all over the world, first by snail mail, and now by email.

“I’ve been published in the U.S., Canada, South America, Europe, Australia,” he said. “All over.”

Some journals he’s been published in include the *Snowy Egret*, the *Black Bear Review*, the *Christian Science Monitor*, the *Colorado Review*, the *Oklahoma Review* and *Poetry Depth Quarterly*.

DeSarro said the most important thing he wanted to impart upon aspiring writers was that poetry can “say the obvious, and what otherwise could not be said.”

“That’s a line from a poem I wrote,” he said, reiterating, “I also think it’s important that I write about real things, from real experiences. And not only the pleasant things, but the unpleasant things; all parts of life.”

Crossing cont. from Front Page

ing into the hotel and having dinner, the flyer for the tour says participants “may like to explore some of Killarney’s famous ‘singing pubs.’”

And that’s just one of 10 event-filled days planned as part of the tour.

Sawyer said “the time of year [for the trip] should be spectacular, with comfortable weather.” She said she was hoping about 40 people would join her on the trip. That amount, she explained, would make it easy to get a coach to bring everyone to the airport, making travel more convenient.

In addition, she said, “another thing is how fun it is to go with a group from the area.”

Sawyer added while she was in office, there

were certain state laws that prohibited her from forming close relationships with anyone.

But “there’s freedom now that I am not in politics to explore friendships with people I’ve met along the way - and have fun not work!” she said.

“Add ‘adventure’ to the fun instead of ‘work,’” she said, and that’s what’s anticipated during September’s excursion across the pond for the “Taste of Scotland and Ireland.”

* * *

For more information on the tour, contact Kathy Petkunas of Cruise Holidays at 800-772-0847 ext. 4908 or kathy@cruiseholidaysus.com.

Portland Police News

3/23: Brittany Lamarr, 23, of 325 Main St., was charged with third-degree burglary, third-degree larceny and third-degree criminal mischief, Portland Police said.

3/27: Santo Carta, 41, of 9 Meadow Brook Ln., Moodus, was charged with driving while intoxicated and failure to drive in the right lane, police said.

Hebron Police News

3/25: State Police said James Mulligan, 51, of 34 Old Colchester Rd., Amston, was arrested and charged with DUI, possession of cannabis and failure to drive in proper lane.

3/30: State Police said Michael Johnson, 27, of 45 Congress Dr., was arrested and charged with altering a firearm and possessing a large-capacity magazine.

3/30: State Police said Shannon Barbero, 41, of 290 Old Colchester Rd., was arrested and charged with violation of probation.

Colchester Police News

3/24: Colchester Police said they are investigating an overnight car break in on Meadow Drive at Country Place Apartments. Police said an unknown person broke the front passenger window on a gray Acura SUV and took a woman’s red purse between 10:30 p.m. on March 23 and 7:30 a.m. on March 24. Police said the purse contained paperwork and various charging cords and was later recovered with all of its contents in a trash bin behind the Backus Health Center on Broadway. Anyone with information can call Officer Bryan Kowalsky at 860-537-7270.

3/30: State Police said Mario Braga, 48, of 303 New Park Ave., Hartford, was arrested and charged with two counts of violation of probation.

Observations & Ruminations

by **Mike Thompson**

Geeta Schrayter had a very interesting story in last week’s *Rivereast* about the fight of Colchester resident Christopher Passera to get a stoplight at the intersection of routes 66 and 316 in Hebron to be fully-functional year-round.

It’s a fight Passera ultimately won – a victory I was glad to see.

As you read in Geeta’s story, Passera’s son, also named Christopher, died in February when his car collided with a box truck at that intersection. The crash occurred at 4:30 in the morning and – as is unfortunately the case at far too many intersections in Connecticut – the stoplight at that intersection wasn’t functioning as it normally does. During the overnight hours, the light at that intersection became a flashing “caution” light.

However, in this case the “caution” light clearly wasn’t enough. The snowbanks at that intersection were quite high at the time of the crash, leading to what Hebron Town Manager Andy Tierney called an impaired sightline. And a stoplight that, hours earlier, would have provided Passera’s son with some guidance was essentially useless.

I’ve never been a big fan of intersections that feature stoplights that suddenly start flashing just because the clock passed a certain time at night. It seems a little dangerous.

And it’s especially dangerous when you’re dealing with sightlines as inhibited as the ones we dealt with this winter. I mean, I know how I felt going through just a four-way stop during the height of our snow-crazed February – inching out basically into the middle of the intersection just to see if any cars are behind that mountain of snow. Turning onto a busy main street – and it’s been my experience many stoplights involve at least one main road, where people tend to travel at a higher rate of speed than, say, a side street in a neighborhood – with basically nothing to guide you can be a recipe for disaster.

That’s why I’m a fan of Passera’s greater goal – which is to see stoplights function 24-7 during the winter months. No more flashing.

Even though I’ve never been thrilled by normal stoplights that start flashing after, say, 10 or 11 at night (it just seems dangerous to me), I get that there’s a reason why this is done. NBC Connecticut, which did its own story on Passera’s battle, quoted state DOT officials who warned that federal traffic guidelines state “unjustified traffic signals can result in ... disobedience of the signal indications and significant increases in the frequency of collisions.”

In other words, people will get fed up and run red lights. It’s a real fear; nearly every day, I see examples on the roadways of people who are just in too much of a hurry, sometimes carelessly so.

But that doesn’t mean we have to kowtow to the speed demons all year long. Having those stoplights function in the wintertime,

when several-feet-tall snowbanks can severely impact one’s ability to turn safely, just seems to make sense.

* * *

Hat’s off to Governor Malloy, who Monday signed a bill making Connecticut the first state in the union to prohibit any state-funded travel to Indiana. The bill is in protest to Indiana’s new “religious freedom” law.

The new Indiana legislation, in case you haven’t heard, prohibits state laws that “substantially burden” a person’s ability to follow their religious beliefs – and the definition of “person” includes religious institutions, associations, even businesses. Not surprisingly, people have taken this to mean that, come July 1 when the law goes into effect, businesses can discriminate against gay and lesbian customers on the grounds of religious beliefs.

The new law has prompted an outcry across the country – and quite understandably so. The whole thing makes me think of those hateful “whites only” signs that would hang in restaurant windows back in the days of segregation.

And Malloy was the first of the nation’s governors to publicly call Indiana out for its gross backward thinking, labeling the act “disturbing, disgraceful and outright discriminatory.”

“When new laws turn back the clock on progress, we can’t sit idly by,” Malloy said Monday. “We are sending a message that discrimination won’t be tolerated.”

Of course, some have noted that Connecticut is one of 20 other states in the country that have their own “religious freedom” laws on the books. Fox News, for example, reported Malloy “may have found himself in a pot-meets-kettle situation” after issuing his Monday edict.

There are a couple of key differences between Indiana’s new law and “religious freedom” laws in other states – a fact even Fox News acknowledged.

For example, Indiana’s law explicitly allows *businesses* to assert “free exercise of religion.” Also, and this is a big one, Indiana (somewhat shockingly) does not have a law on the books prohibiting discrimination based on sexual orientation.

Over in the Hoosier State, supporters of the new law are adamant it does not advance discrimination. And, for the record, on Tuesday Republican Gov. Mike Pence, while continuing his ardent support of the bill, said he wants additional legislation on his desk by the end of the week “making it clear the law does not allow businesses the right to deny services to anyone.”

It’ll be interesting to see what that new legislation is, and how indeed it does clarify things. But until any clarification takes place, the new law will continue to look like discrimination to me – and, once again, kudos to Malloy for saying he won’t tolerate it.

Finance Board Balks at RHAM Increase

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

The Board of Finance Tuesday decided to send a letter to the RHAM Board of Education to ask them to keep its overall increase at or below 3 percent.

RHAM Superintendent of Schools Robert Siminski has proposed a \$28.22 million budget for the regional high and middle schools – a 5.12 percent increase over current year spending. Of that amount, Marlborough would be responsible for \$8.37 million, or \$575,872 more than what it's currently spending for RHAM. This increase is partly driven by Marlborough's levy rising from 29.03 percent to 29.65 percent for the 2015-16 year. (The levy is the percentage of the budget Marlborough pays, and is based on the percentage of students at RHAM that live in Marlborough.)

The RHAM budget is voted on at referendums in each of the school district's three towns – Andover, Hebron and Marlborough. The boards of selectmen and finance in each of the towns can offer their thoughts on the school district's spending, but have no control over its

budget.

While she said "Siminski knows Marlborough wants to see the budget reduced," Board of Finance Chairwoman Evelyn Godbout still suggested the finance board send an official letter, to make its stance clear to RHAM board members.

Godbout's fellow finance board members were on board with the idea – though they noted they can ultimately only do so much.

"As far as RHAM goes, the most we can do is take a position," Board of Finance member Ken Hjulstrom said.

"RHAM is going to do what RHAM is going to do," board member Cliff Denniss said.

Siminski gave a presentation on the budget to the finance board last Thursday, March 26, and said he was going to make reduction recommendations to the RHAM board for deliberation; the recommendations would have brought the budget down to \$28.06 million, a 4.5 percent increase over the current year. The regional school board met Monday, March 30, where Siminski also supplied a list of reduc-

tions that would lower the budget to 3 percent; however, due to a lack of quorum, no action could be taken. The board is slated to discuss and possibly make budget reductions after the public hearing next Monday, April 6, at 7 p.m. in the RHAM High School auditorium.

And as a result, at Tuesday's finance board meeting, things were still unclear.

"At 4.5 percent, the Marlborough impact is still 6.6 percent [of the current RHAM portion Marlborough pays]," Hjulstrom said at last Thursday's meeting.

But Siminski stressed 4.5 percent is just a step in the budget-reduction process. "It's an incremental thing," Siminski said.

Board of Finance member Doug Knowlton stressed that even at 4.5 percent, the RHAM budget is still a "heavy impact."

"I'm having trouble with almost 7 percent," Knowlton said. "That's over 8 percent of the increase in our budget. It's our obligation to take care of people and their ability to pay for this.

"A 2.3 percent [increase in the RHAM budget] might fly," he added. "I'm not sure even if

3 percent might fly."

But Hjulstrom said 3 percent would be a "good starting point."

Siminski said the 5.12 percent increase budget includes a one-to-one laptop initiative for eighth graders, a career counselor, a full-time IT person, increased hours for accounting after RHAM's recent audit and a special education head at the middle school. Special education alone has increased \$755,539.

Siminski explained he had been told to first put all department requests in the budget, and then start making reductions – which is how he arrived at the \$28.06 million figure.

"My direction was to include all department requests then whittle down," Siminski said.

The superintendent stressed he appreciates Marlborough's budget situation.

"I'm trying and understand the difficult times," Siminski said.

The RHAM Board of Education's 2015-16 budget will head to referendum May 5. Marlborough's town budget vote is scheduled for May 11.

Marlborough Finance Board Considers Cutting Trooper

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

In what it has labeled a difficult budget year, the Board of Finance is considering a savings of more than \$100,000 – by cutting one of the town's two full-time resident state troopers.

The overall proposed 2015-16 budget is \$23.27 million, an increase of 4.69 percent, or \$1.04 million, over current year spending. The spending package also calls for a 2.01 mill increase, from the current mill rate of 31.45 to 33.46; this would translate to a 6.40 percent tax increase.

The budget proposal includes \$4.70 million for town operations spending, an increase of 1.89 percent, or \$87,191, over the current year. The rest is RHAM and local Board of Education spending.

Tuesday, finance board member Susan Leser suggested reducing by a resident trooper. Currently the town of Marlborough has two full-time troopers and one part-time constable.

"There's not too many other areas we can cut," she said.

"That's where I would be starting," board vice chair Cliff Denniss said.

Denniss made the motion to eliminate one full-time trooper; however, after mixed feelings on the board, he withdrew the motion at the end of the meeting.

Currently, the town is responsible for 70 percent of the two troopers' salaries and benefits; this puts the cost to Marlborough at \$231,000. The state pays for the other 30 percent. However, the state has proposed dropping its resident state trooper funding altogether, and instead having towns pay for them. First Selectwoman Cathi Gaudinski said this would add nearly \$100,000 to the budget, if the town kept its two full-time troopers.

"I have mixed feelings," board member Doug Knowlton said of making the reduction. "It's a tremendous cost if the state goes to 100 percent."

Denniss asked if there's anywhere else in the budget the board can find that kind of savings.

"You're asking to reduce less than this year's budget?" Gaudinski asked.

"Heaven forbid we actually reduce something," board member Ken Hjulstrom quipped.

The finance board was due to meet last night, after press time, and Knowlton said he'd like to hear about the impact to the town of cutting a full-time trooper. The board agreed to pick up the conversation again at the meeting.

Also Tuesday, the Board of Finance kicked around the idea of cutting \$100,000 from the local Board of Education budget. Superintendent of Schools David Sklarz has proposed a \$7.48 million budget – a 2.91 percent increase, or \$211,682, from the current year.

Board of Finance Chairwoman Evelyn Godbout said one thing she's having a hard time understanding is an increase in technology ex-

penses at both the local and RHAM school boards – specifically singling out the purchase of laptops for the entire eighth grade at RHAM.

"The business community is going toward bring your own device," Godbout said. "I'm not sure why we're buying devices for every single student.

"We're maintaining them, fixing them and replacing them," she added. "I have a difficult time looking at the budgets and amounts."

At Marlborough Elementary School, kids can use Chromebooks and iPads; however, the school supplies them, and they are on carts for the students to use. Marlborough Board of Education Vice Chairman Wes Skorski said that, when doing research on the board's technology subcommittee, he learned hardly any schools make students bring their own devices – due to security and maintenance issues along with software licensing issues.

"There are ways to secure that section of the device without it mattering if the school or students own it," Godbout countered.

Leser commented, "Everyone would love to have the technology, but I don't think it's feasible" in difficult financial years, such as the one Marlborough is facing, for school systems to continue to purchase new technology for the students.

Denniss said he wondered if the school could do more with the REAP grant (the district received \$50,000 in 2014-15 to purchase technology and piloted an after school program).

But Godbout noted that, at the end of the day, all the finance board can do is cut the school board's budget – it can't tell the board how to spend the money.

"We can only decide on an amount," Godbout said. "We can't tell the local Board of Ed what to do."

Denniss said he felt whatever the finance board cut would be poorly-received by the school board.

"Any decision we make is going to be very difficult and unpopular," Denniss said, and added, "If I was on the BOE and had to make cuts, I would look at the purchase of devices, the duct cleaning and SMART boards."

"Are there things [to cut] that might not hurt the school as much?" Godbout asked.

Hjulstrom said he would like to give the local Board of Education "a number they can live with without too much pain."

Knowlton said he did some hypothetical figuring with the numbers, and said that if the RHAM schools budget came in at a 3 percent increase (it's currently at 5.12), and the town government and local school budgets were untouched, there would be a 5.5 percent overall tax increase. Meanwhile, if RHAM were at 3 percent and there were no increases at all for the town budget and the local school board budget, there would be a 3.77 percent increase in

taxes.

Leser asked what the board believed was a reasonable tax increase for the town.

"Getting a number not as bad as [6.40 percent]," Hjulstrom quipped.

Denniss suggested the finance board cut the increase to the local Board of Education budget by \$100,000.

"Keep in mind that \$140,000 of that [\$211,682] is kindergarten," Hjulstrom noted. "I think a \$100,000 cut would be high."

However, Leser said she felt a \$100,000 cut was reasonable – while adding "no one will like it."

Denniss suggested the board consent to the \$100,000 cut from the Board of Education budget, but not officially approve it until the finance board sees what it can cut from the town operations budget.

The Board of Finance was due to revisit the issue at last night's meeting.

Also Tuesday, finance board members kicked around several other possible reductions. Hjulstrom brought up funds that are set aside for elected officials if the official is not reelected. The funds in the compensated absence account are to pay out sick time if the official were to not be reelected or leaves.

In the 2014-15 budget, \$45,552 was put in the line item. In the proposed budget, \$68,764 is in the line item.

"When we negotiate again, this sick time [should be] the first thing," Godbout said.

Currently non-union workers in the Town Hall including the selectmen (Six people in total) are under contract to receive 15 sick days a year and up to five weeks of vacation, depending on how long they have been working. If they don't take the sick days, the person can get paid out for up to 500 hours of sick time.

Leser was decidedly unimpressed by the amount of sick days and vacation time. "That's got to go," she said.

Hjulstrom also suggested cutting a \$49,000 capital request for a new Public Works utility truck, to replace the current 2006 Ford F350.

Gaudinski told the board the truck is taken home by one of the employees at the end of the work day, in case any emergency situations arise. She stressed the vehicle isn't used for personal use.

However, the employee who takes the truck home lives in New Britain – which proved a sticking point with some board members.

"The utility truck is running back and forth to New Britain," Hjulstrom said.

"That's a long way to go," Godbout said.

Hjulstrom said he's "concerned with vehicle wear and tear," but Gaudinski said the wear is not all from highway miles, since the truck is also used for plowing and other work.

Police cruisers also go home with town

troopers, although they live in town. Also, Hjulstrom said, "I understand you need the response [for public safety vehicles], but public works vehicles I don't understand."

Denniss said the policy about letting Public Works employees take vehicles home can be addressed in the future, but it's not helping the finance board address the current matter – how to reduce the budget.

Hjulstrom suggested scrapping the new truck purchase – and also changing the policy so that the current truck wouldn't be heading to New Britain every day. "If the truck breaks down, it breaks down here," he said.

Leser also wasn't thrilled with the out-of-town truck. "I would have an easier time approving [the new truck] if he wasn't driving it home," Leser said.

Selectman Dick Shea stressed the importance of the truck, though; he told the finance board the truck is the only one that can plow some of the streets in town due to the size of the streets.

In the end, the finance board voted against removing the new truck purchase; Hjulstrom was the only board member to vote in favor of it.

The board did, however, reduce the amount slated for security upgrades at Town Hall from \$30,000 to \$12,500. Shea and Gaudinski said the upgrades could be rolled out rather than all at once.

The board also removed \$45,000 pegged for a reserve fund for future capital expenditures. That vote was 5-1 with Leser voting against.

Assistant Treasurer Hayley Wagner delivered some good news to the board, saying revenue in the "betterment assessments" line – a line reflecting the fixed costs residents pay for the sewers increased from \$225,000 to \$265,000, due to phase two of the sewer project.

The finance board ran some tentative numbers to get a handle on the percent increase for taxes.

Factoring in the changes in capital spending the board made Tuesday, if RHAM decreased to a 3 percent overall increase, the town budget would call for a 5.02 percent tax increase.

If the board kept the second trooper but cut the local Board of Education by \$100,000, the tax increase would be 4.42 percent. And if it cut the trooper and cut the school board by \$100,000, the tax increase would be 3.82 percent.

However, all of these numbers are dependent on the RHAM board cutting its budget to a 3 percent overall increase.

In addition to last night's meeting, the Board of Finance is set to tackle the budget again at a meeting next Wednesday, April 8, at 7 p.m., at MES.

Hebron Board Seeks Input on Superintendent's Position

by Geeta Schrayter

At a special meeting last week, the Hebron Board of Education decided to seek input on the superintendent's position, after concerns were raised that not enough information had been taken into consideration when making their decision.

Prior to its meeting next Thursday, April 9, the board is looking for community input on the position and whether to keep the position fulltime or change it to part-time.

The board decided at its February meeting to leave the superintendent's position full-time, as it goes through the process of finding a replacement for superintendent Jeff Newton, who departed the school system March 31 (an interim superintendent, Mark Winzler, will finish off the school year).

But school board chair Maryanne Leichter explained last week she had some concerns after attending a March 23 community forum. At the forum, she said, many of the individuals present said they wanted to see a part-time superintendent.

Leichter said it "became apparent" that "people wanted to have more discussion on the superintendent topic."

"The public was concerned about how we were proceeding, so I wanted to get together and express – I wanted everyone to have an opportunity to talk to the issue," she stated, adding the decision in February to keep the position full-time was "hurried," so "I don't know if people felt satisfied and that we had a good opportunity to speak enough about it."

But board members Ray Bieri and Erica Bromley expressed some concern over revisiting an issue they had already voted on.

Bieri said, "I for one did not feel it was rushed. So I don't know who did feel rushed – it's important to understand that. I believe that

the board made a deliberate decision based on the data that we've been given and consideration of what the needs are for the district, the students, the staff and all the supports necessary, and I had made that decision based on that decision."

He added, "I don't know if other board members had done that as well, but so I have not changed my position in regards to the requirements that I feel are needed."

Bromley, meanwhile, said she was "a little bit concerned about just sort of the notion of making a decision and then going back to revisit."

She said she didn't want that to become "common practice."

"We voted," she stated. "And it's difficult to then start to trend on questioning that. And if there were concerns during the time of voting then I would certainly have hoped we could have figured out if there was a way to postpone that [vote] or whatever," she stated.

Board member Carol Connolly shared her own thoughts, saying she felt the board needed to improve on its processes – calling the current process "broken."

"I think we have to look at the process of how we set agenda items, how we collect the data and how we move forward to vote, and I think that process right now is broken," she stated.

She added that when the superintendent's position was placed on the agenda the last time the board voted, "there was also an issue of 'did the board have enough data to make the decision?'"

Connolly said after the vote had been made, some other people also questioned whether the board had enough information. She said she'd

like to know the position of the district's administrators as well as the teacher's union and parents.

"I personally don't want to go forward making decisions without having all the data," she stated.

But Bromley said these thoughts should have been shared before the board's previous vote.

"I certainly think that as board members we [should be] saying that at the time we're voting on something that's potentially important – because we all voted. So at some point we have to also take responsibility on our own for saying 'hey wait, should we do this now or should we get more info?'"

Bromley also wondered at what point the board should decide they have enough information, and said it was often difficult to get input from the public.

But Connolly mentioned the community forum where concern was raised had been on a Monday, and the meeting was scheduled just three days later, which didn't give people much time.

Leichter said she was "trying to see: are we still willing to go forward with a full-time superintendent? Or do we want to look at other things?"

Member Amy Lynch-Gracias was in favor of the latter. She said she wanted a part-time superintendent and "my decision has not changed."

"I think this is an opportunity that we have for us to look at the structure [of the administration] and consider options," she said, adding she was going to ask any decisions planned for the evening be tabled "so we can discuss it at the next board meeting so the public can have a little more time to hear about what we're talk-

ing about and let us know what they're thinking before we actually make a complete decision."

She added she felt the haste in making a decision was unnecessary because, if needed, they board could extend Winzler's contract into the summer.

"I feel it was a hasty addition to the agenda and I think the entire community voice should be heard," she said.

Member Abe Krisst added his thoughts as well, and said he thought the full-time position would be best to ensure the district found the best candidate – someone who would keep the district moving forward.

However, he also said, "I feel kind of rushed, to be honest with you. ... Let's take our time and make a good decision."

Krisst furthered, "I say we wait a minute here – but I do think I support a full-time superintendent until I hear otherwise. [And] I do think I'm willing to listen to others in the neighborhood, whether parents, teachers, administrators in the district."

And in the end, that's exactly what the board decided to do; it voted unanimously to revisit the superintendent's position as full-time or part-time at its April 9 meeting and, in the meantime, to solicit input from administrators, the teachers unions, and the public.

Views on the topic can be submitted to the board via phone or in writing. Contact information for the board is available on the Hebron Public Schools website, hebron.k12.ct.us, by clicking on "Board of Education Members and Committees."

Those interested can also attend next week's meeting at 7 p.m. in the Gilead Hill School music room.

Colchester Finance Board Adopts \$53.86 Million Budget

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

After two public hearings earlier this week, the Board of Finance Wednesday voted unanimously to approve the proposed town and school budgets for 2015-16, and send them to the Board of Selectmen to schedule a town meeting.

Combined, the budgets total \$53.86 million, an increase of \$862,935, or 1.6 percent, from the current year. The Board of Education budget totals \$39.995 million, a \$333,575 increase from the current year, while the town operations budget is \$13.86 million, a \$529,360 increase from current year spending.

Together the proposed budgets reflect a 0.47 mill rate increase from 30.55 mills to 31.04.

"I thank you for a great budget process," selectwoman Rosemary Coyle said Wednesday.

Before they voted, finance board chair Rob Tarlov asked his fellow members if they wanted to revisit anything that came up during the public hearings.

"There was no part of the discussion that warranted a revisit by me," board vice chair Robert Esteve said.

"I didn't hear anything I want to revisit," member Tom Kane concurred.

At Monday's public hearing, citizens again brought up the issues with the director of special education, and also wondered whether there was enough money for the roads. Residents also commended the town on adding hours to the library.

The hearing began with Superintendent of Schools Jeff Mathieu, Board of Education Chairman Ron Goldstein and school board member Don Kennedy presenting the proposed school budget. First Selectman Stan Soby then presented the proposed town operations budget.

During public comment, resident Maggie Nolan-Thibault questioned Mathieu when he stated there were no retirements for the school district.

"There is a retirement," Nolan-Thibault said of the director of special education. Kathy Shaughnessy, director of pupil services and special education, put in a notice for retirement in November; however it is contingent on the continuation of her contract for two years.

"The way I see it is that's double-dipping," Nolan-Thibault said, and later added about the matter, "An employee can say I will retire if you extend my contract? That seems crooked as all daylight."

Nolan-Thibault also said "there's the huge issue in the Board of Education [regarding parents' complaints about Shaughnessy]. You reduced legal. Do you need to increase legal?"

Mathieu responded by telling Nolan-Thibault that the reduction in legal is because there are no union contracts up for negotiation.

"If I was one of those parents, I would have a lawyer and bring the Board of Ed to court," Nolan-Thibault said of the parents' complaints that have garnered a lot of attention recently. These complaints include rude behavior by the director along with allegedly illegal actions including changing IEPs (Individual Education Plans) and misconduct during PPTs (planning and placement teams).

"In regards to the retirement, it is not official," Goldstein said. "In regard to extending the contract and the notion of getting paid twice, the retirement is not paid by the local district. You don't end up paying twice."

Goldstein explained the amount in the budget is any sick time that is paid out when someone retires.

And when it comes to money set aside for legal expenses, Mathieu said he looks at historical data. "I don't have a crystal ball," Mathieu said.

Carl Swanback, another resident, questioned how many of the out-of-district placements the district pays for are a direct result of the issue with Shaughnessy.

"Those placements are through a PPT process," Mathieu said.

"The determination of out-of-district is made by the entire PPT team," Goldstein agreed.

One of the questions town officials fielded Monday asked if the amount of money in the budget for roads is enough, after the winter beating the roads took this year.

"We had proposed bonding for roads, but it didn't get approved," Director of Public Works Jim Paggioli said. "The same work [as proposed for bonding] would cost \$1 million a year. We are not there."

Paggioli said the department is doing the amount of work they can do with the funds they have.

"In some cases, it's chip sealing," Paggioli said. "That's what we have to do to maintain passability."

"We're trying to do things incrementally," Soby said. "We're utilizing reserves to smooth the ups and downs and do more with the money available."

Soby said the town is putting a reasonable amount in the budget to catch up and position the town to build up reserves, plan and be in better shape on an ongoing basis.

Another resident also wondered why expand-

ing Colchester Police to 24 hours a day, 7 days a week was not in the budget. Initially, the idea of expanding the coverage was put in the current year's budget, but it was taken out during the budget process last year.

"It was brought forward and not supported," Soby said. "We want to better provide data on overnight activity."

Soby said currently town officials do not have a good handle to make the case for needing 24/7 town police and are planning on doing that research.

However, there was some praise tossed around Monday as well. When one resident asked how much the first selectman's salary is – to which Soby replied \$80,955 – another said that amount should be left alone.

"He's in charge of a \$10 million budget, endless hours, phone calls, all of these meetings," resident Jim Kelly said of Soby. "Keep the money where it's at."

"In this budget, there has been no change," Soby said. "It's fair compensation. We tend to in general be below comparable towns."

Mike Egan, a member of the Board of Education who said he was speaking as an individual, commended Soby on one aspect of the budget: adding Saturday library hours during the school year.

"It's a service to students who may not have it at home," Egan said.

At a meeting last night, after press time, the Board of Selectmen were expected to advance the budgets to the annual town meeting later this month. That meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 22, at 7 p.m., at Town Hall.

Wyatt Chosen as Acting Colchester Tax Collector

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

The Board of Selectmen appointed an acting tax collector March 24 to replace Don Philips.

Michele Wyatt of Colchester started March 30, to begin training under Philips' guidance before he departed yesterday, April 2, to become executive director of the Connecticut Bar Foundation. Philips announced his resignation at the end of February.

"I actually recruited Michele to apply," Philips said. "She's a neighbor of mine and I've known her for a number of years."

Philips said he also met with a number of the other applicants and that they were "really good applicants." Philips said he was "very pleased" that the board chose Wyatt.

First Selectman Stan Soby said Wyatt was chosen out of four candidates for her transfer-

able skill sets which include experience in the business world and customer service.

"What set her apart was Michele's interpersonal skills, customer service skills, work with the Colchester Business Association and a leadership role in the Lions Club," Soby said. "That's the kind of stuff you earn."

"She's got the right personality to work in a tax collector's office," Philips said. "She's fair, she's friendly and she has good customer service skills."

Philips said Wyatt has lived in Colchester for numerous years and is very involved in the community.

Wyatt was first employed by IBM 20 years ago in its finance office, and handled purchasing for the tri-state area of Connecticut, New Jersey and New York. Eleven years ago, she

became a stay-at-home mom to her son, David, and then took on the position of services coordination with the CBA.

During her time with the CBA, Wyatt worked for Suburban Home Medical, running and managing their Colchester and Vernon locations, and dabbled in Mary Kay Cosmetics as a consultant.

"I became more involved with the CBA, the school PTOs and became first vice-president of the Colchester Lions Club," Wyatt said. "Coming from the area of finance, I thought the job was intriguing."

She said what attracted her to the position of tax collector is serving the people of Colchester. "It really drew my attention," Wyatt said.

Soby said Wyatt showed a demonstration of skills, abilities and attitude that the selectmen

were looking for.

Soby said part of the importance of the tax collector is customer service.

"I can't imagine anyone who likes to pay their taxes, but you have to," Soby said. "[The collector] makes sure it's explained well."

"Colchester was fortunate there were a number of folks who were interested in the job," Philips said.

"Obviously we are going to miss Don, but as he said, he had the opportunity for a dream job," Soby said.

Wyatt said she's going through training with Philips and will take a few weeks to get acclimated to the position.

"Don has done a phenomenal job and I have big shoes to fill," Wyatt said.

East Hampton Robbery Suspect Extradited from Arizona

by John Tyczkowski

Vincent Tedesco, 25, who East Hampton Police said they have no known address for, was arrested in Tucson, Ariz., Wednesday, March 25 as a fugitive from justice and returned to East Hampton.

Upon his return, he was charged with first-degree robbery, conspiracy to commit first-degree robbery, second-degree larceny and conspiracy to commit second-degree larceny.

He was the third man arrested in connection with an October 2014 incident. Two other men, Evan S. Ogren and Scott E. Jackson, had been arrested on the same charges within hours of the incident and are awaiting trial.

According to an affidavit from East Hampton Police Officer Matt Hanlon, each of the three offered differing accounts of the initial incident.

Tedesco allegedly robbed a then-17-year-old who was attempting to buy marijuana from him Oct. 25, 2014.

Police also said they were familiar with

Tedesco from "numerous prior professional encounters."

According to police, the transaction took place on a deserted section of Mott Hill Road inside a black Jeep, with Tedesco and associates Ogren and Jackson, a convicted felon.

Tedesco grabbed the buyer's wallet, who struggled to get it back. Upon Ogren telling him "I will cut you," the buyer let go of his wallet, though he stated he never saw a knife. The prospective buyer was robbed of \$700, the total amount of money in his wallet.

The prospective buyer said Ogren then threatened to strip off his pants if he did not hand over his cell phone, according to the affidavit. The prospective buyer was then able to escape the Jeep and ran down the road, screaming for help, before calling 911.

A homeowner he contacted told him to call the police, and the homeowner said as he attempted to calm the prospective buyer, a black Jeep drove by and the driver yelled out "Don't

believe him," according to the affidavit.

Afterward, Tedesco, Ogren and Jackson, allegedly used the \$700 in the wallet to buy drugs in Hartford, including heroin and cocaine, police said.

After calling police, officers responded and took the prospective buyer to the police station to issue a statement. He then called a friend to drive him home; on the way home, he saw the same black Jeep, and he called police, who stopped the vehicle in Marlborough.

Police brought Ogren back to the station, where he confirmed the buyer's story, implicating Tedesco and Jackson. However, Ogren stated it was Tedesco who threatened to cut the buyer and said he didn't know Tedesco was planning to rob the buyer, according to the affidavit.

Later that day, police went looking for Jackson at a home on East Main Street. Jackson confirmed Ogren's and the buyer's story, though

he insisted he wanted to "get out of [the car]" after the robbery, which police said in the affidavit was unsubstantiated by other parts of Jackson's own statement.

Both Ogren and Jackson were charged with the same charges as Tedesco.

Ogren has numerous prior convictions over the past five years, including possession of narcotics, third-degree assault, criminal impersonation and sixth-degree larceny.

Jackson was previously arrested in 2011 and charged with first-degree criminal mischief, first-degree criminal trespassing and intimidation based on bigotry/bias for spraypainting obscenities at Center School.

Upon being brought in on March 25, Tedesco was held at Middletown Police headquarters and appeared in Middletown Superior Court that afternoon. According to court records, his bond was set at \$250,000 and he has not been released from custody.

RHAM Public Shows Support for the Arts

by Geeta Schrayter

There was a full house at the RHAM Board of Education meeting Monday, and most of the individuals present were there for the same reason: to show their support for art at the school.

It was a proactive showing, as the regional school board has not put the art program on the budget chopping block.

Nonetheless, at the meeting, which was held at Andover Town Hall, parents, current students, alumni and residents all spoke about the program. Some shared their own experiences with art at the school, while others talked about family members, read letters from other students or expressed general thoughts. But everyone said the same thing: that the board should not make any reductions to the program.

Hebron resident Mary Cafro began Monday by reading a letter from her son Charles Woods.

"I want to share just how much of an impact the staff and the arts at RHAM High School have had on me," she read.

Her son explained high school had been a roller coaster, and "art was the one thing in particular that got me through it."

"For me the art department was not just a relief from every day academia it was my safe haven: it was a place I excelled and a place I could create my own path confidently," he wrote.

Art, he said, provided ways for him to think and solve problems "in fun and interesting ways."

He added he had gone on from RHAM to attend one of the top three colleges in the world for animation, and now works full-time at Universal Studios in Orlando, Fla., as a digital designer. He shared he's worked on such movies as *Despicable Me* and the *Harry Potter* and *Transformers* films.

"Today I believe more than ever that art, de-

sign, and creative knowledge in classes are some of the most valuable things a student can have," he added.

Similar sentiments were shared by RHAM senior Trisha Edwards, who said art was a way for students to find themselves, to round themselves out, and help pay for college. She added she had numerous friends who had received scholarships from their art skills, and "they wouldn't have these opportunities if we didn't have an amazing art program like we do."

She added, "And there's a high demand – it's not like we're paying for empty art classes."

Samantha Dienst, who graduated from RHAM in 2012 and is currently pursuing her master of fine arts at the Massachusetts College of Art and Design, drove to the meeting from Boston to show her support.

"I wouldn't be who I am or where I am without that program, and the thought anything could happen to it really breaks my heart," she said, choking up slightly.

Other RHAM alumni were also present, including 2007 graduate Kelsey Strom who has since earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree and is applying to graduate school to become a certified art therapist.

"High school was rough," Strom stated, but through art, "I learned how to cope with my problems and make rational and responsible decisions."

Like Woods, she also called her art classes a "safe haven," where she became comfortable in her skin and a more positive person. Art at RHAM, she furthered, made her "an advocate for art and the therapeutic benefits it can bring to one's life."

James Boyle, who graduated in 2008 and is currently a teacher, said "I can attribute almost all the success I've seen in my later adult life to

the art program."

He added, "I attribute what I learned about being a successful teacher to [art teacher Shelly Osowiecki] – and all the art teachers," he stated.

RHAM senior Sam Boushee said "people really find themselves in art classes. I didn't like to do anything before getting into theater and art."

"We praise artists for all they give us but don't want to have to pay for it," he stated. "We're told 'follow your dreams,' but we don't want to pay for it if it's not math or science."

He concluded, "math and science, that's just not what all these students do... we want to make things."

Meanwhile, sophomore Alexandra Grafton said, "I do not think we can continue to ignore that photographs, buildings, the clothes on our backs and the shoes on our feet are all designed by artists."

"I've seen amazing talent in this school," she continued, "and I've only been here two years."

Grafton added she was recognized nationally for her art last year, and she received a letter from state Senator Chris Murphy, in which he wrote while people who score well on tests are regularly recognized, "too often we ignore" the arts. And "to create highly developed learners we must focus on arts."

The comments continued, as over 20 individuals spoke, attributing the art program at RHAM for their success, growth, happiness – even for saving their lives by giving them a positive outlet – and pleaded with the board to stay away from the program when making budgetary cuts.

But on Tuesday, Superintendent Bob Siminski said he was unsure where the concern stemmed from, since he hadn't proposed any cuts related to the arts.

"I don't know where the whole thing started from, but I guess rumors have a way of starting – especially at this time of year" he stated, adding "I think some of it may be attributed to the fact [Kenneth Giella, RHAM's music and art coordinator] is retiring, so that could have been some of the genesis."

Siminski added "there are no staff cuts at all" in any of his proposals. "If I was going to do something or propose something, that's where it would have come from, but my goal is to preserve teaching positions."

High School Principal Scott Leslie elaborated, explaining, "I think where [the concern] arose from was that we have an art teacher [Giella] retiring this year and I think a couple of board members during board meetings had mentioned that one way to save money would be to not fill that position."

But like Siminski, he added, "There's nothing in any of the formally-proposed budget discussions to eliminate any art courses or any part of the program; it was during discussions I think, that a couple comments were made to that effect."

* * *

As for what, if any, reductions *will* be made to the budget, that's yet to be seen; there was no quorum at Monday's meeting, which meant no action could be taken.

The proposed RHAM Board of Education budget for 2015-16 will be presented at a Public Hearing scheduled for next Monday, April 6, at 7 p.m. in the RHAM High School Auditorium.

After the hearing, board chairman Danny Holtsclaw explained the board will hold a budget meeting, during which time any cuts will take place and the budget will be finalized.

East Hampton Budget Proposal Drops Despite Added Initiative

by John Tyczkowski

The proposed East Hampton town budget for 2015-16 was decreased by \$583,000 or 1.38 percent this week, bringing the number to \$41,706,395 from \$42,289,329.

But on Monday evening, more than 30 residents showed up to the Board of Finance's public budget meeting to show their support for the budget before the reductions were made.

Ann Fielding, a self-proclaimed "grey-haired resident" was in particular support of the proposed education portion, which totals \$29,222,785. She said she wanted to make it clear not all such residents are opposed to education budget increases.

"We can afford \$15 more a month toward our children's education," she said. "I just want to implore you; you need to vote in favor of our budget."

Meanwhile, William Dinunzio said he found the town and education budget proposals to be "reasonable."

"I believe the increases are modest, and I would like to see our town progress," he said. "I urge you to put forward both budgets as presented."

But rather than moving forward with the budgets as they stood, a change was actually presented at the meeting when finance board member Dean Markham, along with fellow member Alan Hurst and chair Ted Turner, submitted a proposal to add a \$750,000 Technology Infrastructure Initiative for Memorial School and the middle school (to be offset with a lease/purchase proposal).

Center School was not included due to its unsettled status, Markham said. The building is currently being studied as a possible replacement for town offices and, under some proposals, the police station as well.

"This could be a 'game-changer' for our community," Markham said of the initiative.

The lease/purchase proposal would cover most of the cost of the initiative, he said, which

would allow the town to reduce its proposed mill rate from 1.77 mills to 0.91 mills.

Markham also stressed the initiative was "not just a 'hand me the money' [project]."

"It will take a comprehensive plan that the major boards – education, finance and town council – must agree to," he said, reading from a statement.

Markham also mentioned how this initiative fits in with upgrading the town's infrastructure, which he called "an overriding theme which permeates almost every message."

"That infrastructure takes on many forms – roads and bridges, an environmentally-sound lake; facilities such as a police station, town hall, schools, fire or public works equipment," he said. "And finally, an infrastructure of a different sort: our students' ability to excel."

Markham said this initiative would be helpful in combating the trend of parents choosing to place their children in magnet schools outside the district.

"The immediate implementation of this Technology Infrastructure Initiative will put East Hampton ahead of our [peer] communities – maybe into the elite school systems in our state," Markham said. "And to our many parents who have struggled with a decision to send or not send their children out of district to a magnet school for instance, we are proposing the changes for excellence."

During a subsequent meeting held Wednesday evening, the finance board voted unanimously to integrate the \$750,000 initiative into the budget, submitted to the town council, as a capital project.

Superintendent of Schools Diane Dugas broke down what the \$750,000 would entail in terms of technology infrastructure for the schools:

Network infrastructure support at Memorial and the middle school would consist of \$170,000 from the initiative. Another \$190,000

would cover the cost of 115 laptops and docking stations for teachers at Memorial and Center schools, and the middle school.

Fifty new classroom desktop computers and monitors at Memorial and the middle school would cost \$47,000. Also, 350 Chromebooks at those schools would cost \$108,000, plus \$16,000 for 12 carts to charge and transport the Chromebooks.

The initiative would cover 62 new desktop computers and monitors to upgrade aging computer labs at the cost of \$110,000. Also covered would be a \$70,000 wireless network expansion at Center and Memorial schools, as well as a 3D printer for the middle school and phone systems for teacher communication at the schools.

"This is very preliminary, but this is what we've been working on anyway to move [the town's three to five-year technology improvement plan] forward and begin to put a replacement cycle [of computers] in place," Dugas said.

The full need of the Board of Education to address technology needs at all schools except the high school would be "about a million and a half" dollars Dugas said.

"But this initiative certainly catapults us forward, and then we can use operating budgets to begin a replacement cycle," she said.

In addition to integrating the initiative into the budget proposal, the board also approved a number of other changes to the overall budget, including several changes to the town's operating budget and capital improvement budget; the education budget however, was left as initially proposed.

These changes actually reduced the the proposed town budget; it now totals \$41,706,395 which represents an overall decrease of nearly \$583,000, or 1.38 percent.

The specifics of those changes were to be discussed more in depth at a town council meeting on the proposed budget scheduled for Thurs-

day evening after press time, and will be included in next week's *Rivereast*.

From preliminary figures discussed at Wednesday's meeting, if the proposed budget was approved, the mill rate would rise by 1.25 instead of the originally proposed mill rate increase of 1.77. That would result in a mill rate of 28.39 compared to the original 28.91.

Despite the change in budget number, not everyone on the board was pleased with how the Technology Infrastructure Initiative was proposed. Finance member Mary Ann Dostaler cautioned the board about how the Technology Infrastructure Initiative was proposed during Monday's meeting with no prior notice.

"The method by which this capital project is being added...the precedent is very concerning," she said. "That this could be the way future capital projects of this magnitude could be added is very concerning."

Chair Ted Turner said he felt things needed to be shaken up at the town government level in order to move forward.

"I think it's a progressive thing and something that our students in East Hampton deserve, and need," he said. "Now when they get to the high school, they won't be in a knowledge vacuum, because they've had exposure to these technologies before."

Board of Education chair Ken Barber said he was pleased with the outcome.

"The golden child of opportunity came through the side door and was almost rejected, having not had a formal invitation through the front door," he said. "I'm very glad they saw the opportunity and accepted her."

The proposed budget now moves to the town council for deliberation. The town council will consider the budget at a series of meetings, the remainder of which are scheduled for on April 7 and April 14 at times and locations to be determined.

Police Continue Colchester Homicide Investigation

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

State Police are continuing to investigate the death of a Hartford woman, whose body was found last week near a creek in the area of Cato Corner Road and Pine Street.

The woman, who was found March 25 at around 5 p.m., has been identified as Nicole Kummer, 28, of Hartford. Police have ruled her death a homicide, saying she died of stab wounds.

Police said Kummer had red dyed hair and two tattoos, one saying "Jayden" and another was a butterfly with "Nicole" under it. Police have said the death was an isolated incident, and the public was not in danger.

However, whether Kummer was killed in Colchester or how long the body had been there has not yet been released by the state police.

A search of court records showed Kummer was convicted of prostitution in 2008, 2011

and 2012 along with convictions for interfering with an officer, sixth-degree larceny, possession of narcotics, violation of probation and second-degree false statement. She also had an ongoing case for second-degree forgery.

According to her obituary, Kummer was a graduate of Newington High School. She acquired her CNA certificate and worked in various nursing homes in the state. Her parents were Lisa (Nowakowski) Millett of Dayville and Warren Kummer of Newington.

The Eastern District Major Crime Unit of the state police is handling the investigation. Anyone with any information regarding this homicide is asked to call Eastern District Major Crime at 860-896-3230 or the Connecticut State Police Message Center, 24 hours a day, at 860-685-8190. All calls will be kept confidential.

Woman Pleads Guilty in Murder of Hartford Man

by John Tyczkowski

A New Britain woman charged with killing a man and leaving him to die in Portland has pleaded guilty to murder, and was sentenced to 35 years in prison.

According to Hartford Superior Court records, Madelyne Martinez-Mercado, 23, pleaded guilty in late February to the murder of a Hartford man who was shot in the head and then dumped into the Connecticut River in Portland.

In September 2013, Martinez-Mercado and co-defendant Talib Shaheer, 33, of Waterbury, set out to conduct a transfer of marijuana in the back seat of their car with Christopher "T.J." Jefferson, 26, of Hartford, police said in a release at the time.

Instead of conducting the transaction, Martinez-Mercado and Shaheer attempted to

rob Jefferson of his marijuana, the release said. Martinez-Mercado held a gun on Jefferson and fired a single shot that fatally struck Jefferson in the head. The two then drove Jefferson to Portland where they abandoned him.

Jefferson was found partially clothed and lying on his back on the side of the road near St. Mary's Cemetery, Portland Police Sgt. Scott Cunningham said in a press release at the time. He was then transported first to Middlesex Hospital and then to Hartford Hospital where he was pronounced dead the following morning.

Charges against Shaheer, who drove the car which transported Jefferson, are pending, according to Hartford Superior Court.

New Manager Chosen for EHHS Project

by John Tyczkowski

Last Thursday, March 26, the East Hampton High School Building Committee selected Strategic Building Solutions of Agawam, Mass. to oversee the town's \$51 million high school renovation project, after interviewing representatives of three firms the day before.

Charles "Chuck" Warrington, Jr., the project manager from SBS, said he was "excited" to be on board.

"We look forward to working with [Downes Construction] and [the] SLAM [Collaborative] to right this ship," he said at the committee's Thursday meeting.

The previous project manager for the EHHS renovation, the Capitol Region Education Council, was dismissed in late February. A letter from Town Manager Michael Maniscalco explaining the dismissal specifically addressed missed state deadlines for filing documents critical to the renovation project reimbursement process.

After hearing rumors for months, the "renovate-as-new" reimbursement status for the EHHS project was officially rejected by the state in January, leaving \$7 million of planned reimbursement up in the air.

After dismissing CREC, the building committee put out a request for proposals in March. Five firms responded, three of which were in-

terviewed.

Committee members Cynthia Abraham and Steven Karney served on a subcommittee in charge of the project manager search.

Abraham said she and Karney kept their own scores of the firms, but the two of them were "remarkably consistent" in their ratings of the firms, and "very unanimous" in their decision on SBS.

Each firm was given 45 minutes last Wednesday night to present to the committee in a closed session, with town manager Michael Maniscalco in attendance as well.

"Everyone interviewed very well," Abraham said.

SBS has a Connecticut office in Madison, and has handled similar construction projects throughout southern New England and New York. Some Connecticut construction work included Bloomfield, Bridgeport and Hartford public schools projects.

SBS also has experience with government, corporate, health care, hospitality and residential, and sustainable building construction across the U.S.

"They appear very solid in terms of project management experience," Abraham said. "Especially with K-12 [school projects] and with working with the state."

Obituaries

Colchester

Frank R. Slade

Frank R. Slade, 72, of Colchester, beloved husband and best friend of Mary Jane (MacKay) Slade, passed away Monday evening, March 23, at home, surrounded by family after a long battle with cancer. Born in Attleboro, Mass., he was a son of the late Frank R. Slade, Sr. and Miriam (Skinner) Slade Palmer.



He graduated from North Attleboro High School in 1960 and attended Pfeiffer College in North Carolina.

Frank always introduced his wife Mary Jane as his "bride." They grew up on the same street and were married on July 21, 1962, moving to Colchester in 1970. Frank worked as a mechanic in Colchester before finally finding his dream job as owner/operator of the Snap Shack in Glastonbury, fulfilling his love of cameras and photography, until he retired in 2003. Frank was a former member of the Colchester Hayward Volunteer Fire Department, where he served as secretary, photographer and Captain of the Fire Police. He was a constable in Colchester in the late 1970s, prior to establishment of the Colchester Police Department. He was a member of the Westchester Congregational Church, where he served on several committees, including chair of the Prudential Committee.

Frank created and maintained the original website for the church. His passion for fishing, camping and his motorhome led to several trips across this beautiful country with Mary Jane. Frank had a keen knowledge of country music and the oldies and often could name a song in just a few notes. Frank also had an amazing gift to make people laugh and set them at ease and was known for his big hugs.

He will be sadly missed, but always remembered by his beloved wife Mary Jane of 52 years; four children, Jeffrey and wife Lisa Slade of Oakdale, Gregory of Foreston, Minn., Stephen and his wife Melissa of Tolland and Elizabeth Ann and her husband Dennis Kessler of Colchester; eight grandchildren, Emily, Tanner, Sarah, Taylor, Spencer, Parker, Kelly Ann and Kyle; a brother, Barry Slade and his wife Susan of Hickory, N.C.; two sisters, Patricia and her husband William Chadwick of North Attleboro, Mass., and Karen and her husband Peter Fontaine also of North Attleboro, Mass.; and several extended family members and friends.

The family would like to give a very special thank you to Dr. Peter Schauer and the entire staff at The Helen and Harry Gray Cancer Center. He loved all of the nurses at the center, but had a special fondness for Donna Rioux.

Calling hours will be held today, April 3, from 5-7 p.m., at Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. Funeral services will be held Saturday, April 4, at 11 a.m., at the Westchester Congregational Church, 449 Westchester Rd., Colchester. Burial will be private.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the Westchester Congregational Church, 95 Cemetery Rd., Colchester, CT 06415.

For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

Colchester

Robert Y. Wassell

Robert Y. Wassell, 99, of Wallingford, formerly of Bloomfield, Killingworth and Colchester, went home to the Lord and his beloved wife, Virginia, Thursday, Feb. 19, at Masonicare.

Robert is survived by his son, Jeffrey Y. Wassell, and his wife Sally of Hebron, and his daughter, Carolyn W. Barnes and her husband Stephen of Colchester. Robert also leaves his grandchildren, David Y. Barnes and his wife Pamela of Colchester, Nicole A. Wassell of Chicopee, Mass., and Chad S. Barnes of Lincoln, R.I.

Robert was predeceased by his three brothers, George, William and Wilmot.

A memorial service will be held Saturday, April 11, at 2 p.m., at the Masonicare Chapel, 22 Masonic Ave., Wallingford. Memorial contributions in Robert's name may be made to the Killingworth Congregational Church Memorial Garden, 273 Route 81, Killingworth, CT 06419.

Arrangements by the Robinson, Wright & Weymer Funeral Home in Centerbrook. Visit www.rwwfh.com to share a memory of Robert, send a condolence to his family, and view additional obituary information.

East Hampton

Christopher J. Hetrick

Christopher J. Hetrick, 56, of East Hampton, formerly of Portland, beloved husband of Colleen (Witherell) Hetrick, passed away Friday March 27, at home, after a long, courageous battle with cancer, surrounded by his loving family who will miss him greatly. He is the son of Barbara (Orgenek) Hetrick of West Hartford and the late James O. Hetrick Jr.



Born on July 14, 1958, in Middletown, he lived in Portland for most of his life until moving to East Hampton six years ago.

Besides his wife and mother, Chris leaves his daughter Jessica and her husband Christopher (Garvin), his grandson Kyle, son Benjamin and his wife Susan (Scully), his granddaughters Alexis and Brooklyn, and daughters Molly and Grace. He is survived by his brothers James and Terrence, stepmother Joanne Hetrick and stepsisters Kimberly, Karen, and Kristin Smith, and mother and father in law Maureen Witherell and Richard Witherell.

He worked as the quality control manager for Airex Rubber Products, proudly served as the chairman of the Portland Board of Education, was a member of both the Portland and East Hampton Democratic town committees, taught CCD classes and served as a Eucharistic minister for St. Mary's Parish. He coached the Orioles in the Portland Minor League Baseball and was a die-hard New York Mets fan, and an avid gardener who loved spending time with his family.

The family wishes to thank Dr. Elizabeth Mariano for her thoughtful and caring approach, Cassie Yaiser for keeping him smiling during his difficult journey, and the nurses at the Connecticut Oncology Infusion Center.

Funeral services were held Wednesday, April 1, with a Mass of Christian Burial at the Church of St. Mary, 51 Freestone Ave., Portland. Burial was in the Swedish Cemetery, William Street, Portland. Relatives and friends called Tuesday, March 31, at Portland Funeral Home, 231 Main St., Portland.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Middlesex Hospital Cancer Center 536 Saybrook Rd Middletown, CT 06457.

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

Colchester

Russell David Page

Russell David Page, 65, of Willimantic, formerly of Colchester, passed away Wednesday morning, April 1, at home, surrounded by his beloved family. Born Sept. 19, 1949, in Hartford, he was a son of the late Wilford and Elizabeth (Chismark) Page.

He married Charlotte Williams Jan. 25, 1970. Soon after, the couple moved to Colchester where they lived and raised their family for more than 30 years before moving to Willimantic.

Russell retired several years ago after running a successful contracting business known as Page Asphalt Services.

He took great pride and meticulous care of his trucks; he loved music sung by Elvis and most importantly, he was ever devoted to his wife, children and grandchildren. He will be remembered fondly for his saying to them, "I love you up to the moon!"

He will be sadly missed but always remembered by his beloved wife Charlotte of 45 years; four children and their spouses, Tammy and husband Thomas Cooper of West Hartford, Dawn and husband Paul Soucy of Colchester, Russell and wife Holly Page of Westbrook, Gloria Page of Willimantic; 10 grandchildren; four great-grandchildren and numerous extended family and friends.

In addition to his parents, he was predeceased by a sister, Sandy Thorsenson, and two brothers, Allen and Richard.

Calling hours will be held Saturday, April 4, from 4-6:30 p.m., at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. A memorial service will follow immediately at the funeral home at 6:30 p.m. Committal services will be held Tuesday, April 7, gathering at the funeral home at 10:30 a.m. and processing to Hillside Cemetery in East Hartford for the burial at 11:30 a.m.

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

Colchester

Willard John Miles

Willard John Miles, "BJ," 50, of Lake Hayward, East Haddam, formerly of Colchester, passed away Thursday, March 26. Born in Hartford July 22, 1964, he was the son of Willard Miles of East Haddam and Margaret (Porter) Miles O'Brien of East Windsor.

In addition to his parents, he leaves his step-parents, Alice Miles and Robert O'Brien; his sister and brother-in-law, Roxanne and Richard Roy of East Haddam; nephew, Joshua Roy and niece, Chelsea Roy. BJ had numerous aunts, uncles and first and second cousins. He was especially close to his cousin, Scott Banta, with whom he spent countless hours while working on their cars.

BJ had a quirky sense of humor that was enjoyed by those who knew him well and he had a quick but sometimes dry wit that will surely be missed by all those whose lives he touched. He grew up in Colchester and moved to the tight-knit Lake Hayward community in East Haddam in 1983.

BJ truly paid it forward. With family and friends, he was always generous with his time and money. He was the best son a dad could ever have as he helped his father and stepmother out immensely. He had many friends, but especially enjoyed the company of a small group of friends—all nicknamed "Louie." The Louies sometimes went for afternoon motorcycle rides and made an annual bike trip in June to Loudon, N.H., for Bike Week. The best Louie/friend in BJ's life was Dave Haggerty. Close to the very end, Dave and BJ were always there for each other.

Since 1986, BJ owned and operated Miles-Standish Auto Body on Standish Road in Colchester, often working seven days a week and sometimes through the night to get a customer back on the road. His many faithful customers were like an extended family. His most loyal customer was good friend and family member Richie Verrill. BJ kept Richie's fleet of vehicles running, almost like a personal mechanic.

BJ had a knack for fixing cars and he was a genuine do-it-yourselfer. His first restoration was a 1965 Volkswagen Beetle. He learned his craft at a very young age from his father, Bill, and later at Windham Regional Vocational Technical School, graduating in 1982. At his tech school graduation, he drove his second restoration for the first time, a 1956 cherry-red Ford pickup, much to the delight of his classmates.

BJ was an avid fan of the UConn Huskies men's basketball team. He also watched NASCAR racing, lately following the career of local driver Joey Logano. BJ enjoyed saltwater fishing on his brother-in-law's boat and on Lake Hayward whenever he had the opportunity, often having too much work to take the time off. Just happy to be out on the water, he sometimes appeared to be a hapless fisherman but often landed the catch of the day.

BJ survived a horrific house fire in December of 2013, and, although he valiantly saved his dog, Nick from the fire, he was burned on over 50 percent of his body while trying to save his home. He spent three months in the burn unit and several weeks on the physical therapy floor at Bridgeport Hospital. He endured many skin grafts and other operations but persevered through the pain. Recently, he completed seven weeks of chemotherapy and radiation treatments for a rare form of thymus gland cancer. Through all of this, BJ was a real trooper, never wanting to be a burden to others.

All those who knew BJ are truly blessed and he will be remembered dearly.

Please consider organ donation as BJ would not have survived the burns had it not been for the skin grafts and other donations from others.

The family will receive guests starting at 10 a.m. Saturday, April 4, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. A chapel service celebrating his life will be observed at 12:30 p.m. at the funeral home, followed by a repass at St. Joseph's Polish Society, 395 South Main St., Colchester. Burial will be private at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to benefit the Burn Center, c/o the Bridgeport Hospital Foundation, 267 Grant St., Bridgeport, CT 06610.

For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

Colchester

Richard V. Hutchins

Richard V. Hutchins, 82, of Carthage, N.Y., formerly of Colchester, died Tuesday, March 17, at the Samaritan Medical Center. Richard was born Dec. 29, 1932, in New Bremen, N.Y., to Arthur and Adah (Vary) Hutchins. He attended Carthage High School.



He served in the United States Army from 1950-53. He married Phyllis Shaw January 30, 1954 at St. James Catholic Church in Carthage. He worked at Pratt & Whitney Aircraft, for 30 years in East Hartford, as a pipefitter/plumber. He retired from Pratt & Whitney in 1996 and then the couple moved back to Carthage.

He is survived by his wife of 61 years, Phyllis, of Carthage, N.Y., and six children, Donald R. and Janice Hutchins of Colchester; David W. Hutchins and his companion Ann-Marie Langley of Portland; Laurie and Mark Winter of Port Charlotte, Fla.; Ronald L. and De-Anne Hutchins of Colchester; Elaine and Gary Tredor of Colchester; Sally and Jean Fauteux of Lebanon; one brother, Gary Hutchins of Carthage, N.Y. He is also survived by 14 grandchildren, 17 great-grandchildren and numerous nephews and nieces.

He was predeceased by a daughter, Linda Dickey and three brothers, Robert, Arthur Jr. and John.

Richard was known for his quick wit, playing pranks, telling jokes and his smiling face. He loved fishing, hunting and riding his ATV with his family and friends.

Richard was a lifetime member of the Colchester Fish and Game Club, a member of the Black River Riders (ATV Club), Blue Rock Hunting Club and Aldridge Fish and Game Club.

Calling hours were held Friday, March 20, at the Lundy Funeral Home & Cremation Service Inc., 500 State St. Carthage, NY. A funeral service with military honors will be held Saturday, March 21, in the chapel of the funeral home, with Deacon Staab officiating.

Donations in his memory can be made to the Colchester Fish and Game Club, P.O. Box 257 Colchester, CT 06415.

East Hampton

Dorothy Mattegat Kalloz

Dorothy (Dottie) Mattegat Kalloz, 90, formerly of Fairfield, the beloved wife of the late Charles M. Kalloz, passed away peacefully Friday, March 27. Born in Bridgeport, she was a lifelong Fairfield resident prior to moving to East Hampton four years ago.



Dottie loved to travel, entertain and specialized in Hungarian cooking. She enjoyed crafting and sewing. In her early years, she sang with the Yankeemaids and the Harmonettes. She also enjoyed spending time with her family, laughing and playing games.

Dottie is survived by her loving and devoted daughter, Nancy Schempp and her husband, Robert of East Hampton; her three grandchildren, Patricia Williams and her husband Thomas of East Hampton, Dody Valk and her husband Thomas of Portland, and Suzan Kalloz of Derby; her brother, George Mattegat and his wife, Carol of Florida; five great-grandchildren, Katie, Heidi, Kelley, Ally and Amanda; her former daughter-in-law, Sheryl Tucker of Derby; and several nieces and nephews.

In addition to her husband, she was predeceased by her son, Charles W. Kalloz and her sister, Ada Bevans.

Funeral services were held under the direction of the Shaughnessey Banks Funeral Home, 50 Reef Rd. in Fairfield Center. To send an online condolence, visit shaughnesseybanks.com.

She will be forever in our hearts.

Colchester

Anne Klusek

Anne Klusek, 82, of Colchester, passed away Wednesday, Feb. 18. Mrs. Klusek had been a resident of Colchester since 1970. Previous to that, she resided in Glastonbury.

She was a caring and loving wife, mother, grandmother and great-grandmother. She was married to Julius Klusek for over 30 years, until his death in 1981.

She was mother to six children, John, Stephen, Michael (who predeceased her), Joel, Daniel and Julianne. She was the grandmother to four, Jasun, Jeremy, Matthew and Nicole, and she was also the great-grandmother of nine children.

She, along with her husband, were children of the Great Depression, which instilled in them much gratitude and appreciation for life's necessities. They both cherished their family and friends, always willing to help those in need. She treated all those she met as if they were a part of her own family and always had room at the table for one more. There were many people that called her Mom or Nana throughout her life. She always looked for a way to be of service to others.

Anne dedicated her life to her family and the care of others. She was a kind, compassionate, understanding individual that contributed to many charities and always had time to listen.

Mrs. Klusek worked in health care. As a young mother, she provided daycare to children. From 1967 forward, she worked tirelessly taking care of the sick and elderly until 2014. She provided service and support to all that were in need her entire life.

Anne loved seafood, the seashore, lavender and especially doughnuts! She will always be loved and missed by many. In honor of Anne, if you so choose, please donate to an organization that supports the well-being of others.

Burial will be Saturday, April 11, at noon, at Saint Andrews Cemetery on Gillette Lane (off Route 16) in Colchester. There will be a graveside service.

Colchester

Anna Lewit

Anna Lewit of West Palm Beach, Fla., and Norwich, formerly of Colchester, passed away Saturday, March 28, at the age of 94, surrounded by her loving family.

She was born May 8, 1920, in Dzialoszyce, Poland, daughter of the late Szaja and Ita Bejska. She married Abraham Lewit in 1946 in Linz, Austria, immigrated to Israel after World War II, before coming to the U.S. in 1966. She lived in Colchester, followed by Norwich and West Palm Beach, Fla.

Anna and her husband both were Holocaust survivors. She was a speaker at many schools educating them about the holocaust. She loved to sew and made many of her own clothes as well as her children and grandchildren's clothes when they were young. She loved to cook and feed others. No one went hungry when Anna was around. Her greatest passions were her grandchildren and great grandchild.

Anna is survived by her daughter, Judi Appleman and husband Jack of Irvine, Calif.; son, Alan Lewit and wife Ilene of Oakdale; grandchildren, Sarah Lerhaupt, husband Gary, and great-grandchild Mae of San Francisco, Calif., Michael Lewit of Oakdale, Ari Lewit of Davie, Fla.; sister Fay and husband Abe; as well as several nieces and nephews.

A graveside service was held Thursday, April 2, at Ahavath Achim Cemetery in Colchester.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to Hospice of Palm Beach County Foundation Inc. (hpbcf.org/donation) or mail to 5300 East Ave., West Palm Beach, FL 33407.

To leave an online condolence, visit churchandallen.com.

Andover

Arthur D. Cashman Jr.

Arthur D. Cashman Jr., 83, of La Vernia, Texas, formerly of Andover, passed away Wednesday, March 25. He was born Jan. 2, 1932, in Plattsburgh, N.Y., to Arthur Sr. and Grace (Mayette) Cashman.

Arthur is survived by his loving and devoted wife of over 55 years, Joan (Wallan) Cashman; son, Arthur Cashman III; daughters, Catherine McGuire and husband Kevin, Sharon McCarthy and husband David, Michelle Cummings and husband James; brothers, Gilbert Cashman and wife Louise, Alan Cashman and wife Diane; sisters, Nancy Niedzwiecki and husband Daniel, Carol Aylward and husband Thomas, Janet Pichette and husband Gerald; grandchildren, Ashley, Juliann and Rene Cummings, Lindsay, Tyler and Kyle McGuire, Karl and Anna McCarthy.

Arthur was a veteran of the United States Navy. He was employed for 34 years at Pratt & Whitney as a carpenter in both Rocky Hill and East Hartford locations, retiring in 1996. Throughout his life, many aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces, nephews, friends and pets brought him much joy. He was an outdoorsman who enjoyed hunting, fishing, camping and hikes through the woods with family and friends. He was a handyman, collector and backyard farmer who was quick-witted and always had an amusing story to share with others.

A memorial and celebration of his life will be held at Church of the Assumption Saturday, April 18, at 10 a.m., at 29 South Adams St., Manchester.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to The Alzheimer's Association, 225 N. Michigan Ave. Flr 17, Chicago, Illinois 60601 or at alz.org, or to the New Century Hospice, 8207 Callaghan Rd., Suite 353, San Antonio, TX 78230 or at newcenturyhospice.com.

You are welcome to sign the online guestbook at finchfuneralchapels.com.

Colchester

Angelina Chotkowski

Angelina "Angie" Chotkowski, 103, of Colchester, passed away on Friday, March 27, 2015 at Matulaitis Nursing Home in Putnam. She was born in Seneca Falls, N.Y., on Feb. 7, 1912, to the late Bennie and Christina Zannelli.

Angie was the beloved wife of the late Frank Chotkowski. Angie was a devout catholic and communicant of St. Andrew Church. She was a loving wife, mother and grandmother.

Angie is survived by her children, Roger, Kathryn, Angelina and Carol, as well as numerous grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

In addition to her husband Frank, Angie was predeceased by four children, Thomas, Eddie, Barbara and Alice.

Calling hours were held at the Belmont-Sabrowski Funeral Home, 144 S. Main St., Wednesday, April 1, followed by a Mass of Christian Burial that morning at St. Andrew Church in Colchester. Burial immediately followed at Old St. Andrew Cemetery.