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Scarlett Lewis (right), mother of Sandy Hook victim Jesse Lewis, shows her appreciation to Lisa Barrett, designer of a Portland fountain memorializing the 26 victims of the Dec. 14, 2012 school shooting in Newtown.

Sandy Hook Memorial Dedicated in Portland

by John Tyczkowski

A project to honor the victims of the Sandy Hook school shooting more than two and a half years in the making saw its culmination Memorial Day weekend.

More than 100 people turned out last Saturday to take part in the dedication ceremony for the project: a memorial fountain that currently sits at AquaScapes of Connecticut on Williams Street. Among those present was First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield, state Rep. Christie Carpino and Scarlett Lewis, mother of first-grade victim Jesse Lewis.

Before the ceremonies began, visitors were able to inspect the fountain up-close, which was the result of donated materials and time from 35 companies across the country.

"It's really been humbling to see so many people open up their hearts and just give," Lisa Barrett, the fountain's designer, said. "Without those co-creators, my vision would not have become a reality."

Also the owner of Touched by Art, a Glastonbury arts company, Barrett said the idea for the fountain's design came to her the morning after the shooting.

The structure contains six metal iris flowers as a representation of the six adults who died Dec. 14, 2012, and 20 coneflowers for the 20 children.

The fountain also contains a quartz base. "Quartz itself has healing properties, and transforms and energizes," she said. "It empowers the chakras and amplifies prayers."

Finally, the water in the fountain is signifi-

cant as well as it symbolizes purification, Barrett said.

After about an hour of perusing the fountain last weekend, people gathered at a stage set up on the property to hear words from several invited guests, as well as to help thank those who made the fountain a reality.

Bransfield began by thanking all of the parties involved.

"Lisa has been able to weave together many different groups and different people to make this such a beautiful day," she said. "Without your energy and your ability to reach out, we wouldn't be here today."

Bransfield talked about how fountains bring a sense of pride to a community.

"This fountain is a symbol of peace and a memorial to life, in memory of those beautiful souls from Sandy Hook," she said.

Next, Carpino offered remarks.

"We all remember that fateful day that brought tears of sorrow to every man, woman and child not just across Connecticut, but across the world," she said. "And it's very appropriate that here we're turning those sorrows into an appreciation of life, and that those tears we shed have become a fountain, where we can experience solace and hope."

Carpino presented Barrett and Townsend with a state flag flown over the capitol in honor of the 26 people killed in the school shooting.

Sacred Dove celebrant Judy Thompson then offered a ceremonial blessing of the fountain.

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'First Lady of Andover' Remembered

by Geeta Schrayter

Incredibly kind, intelligent, respected, dynamic – even "a hot ticket." Those are just some of the words used to describe Andover resident Jean Gasper, who has been called the "First Lady of Andover" and a town matriarch. She and passed away last week at the age of 93.

Gasper, who was born in New Haven and moved to Andover in 1939, lived in a big white house at the intersection of Boston Hill and Hebron roads that was known as "The Corner House."

She married Andrew F. Gasper in 1943 and raised four children in the well-known home, which, during election time, had a lawn often filled with political signs since she allowed members of both parties to use her yard to support their chosen candidate.

Gasper was extremely active in town and the surrounding area – right up until her passing. She served as the Andover town secretary for 16 years and spent three terms as first selectwoman. In addition, she played the or-

gan for St. Columba Church in Columbia for 32 years, was a member of the Andover Library Board, a member of the Sunshine Stampers and Townsend Cemetery, and was an active member of the Andover Congregational Church, currently serving as church historian. She was also involved in the initial structure of the Andover Red Cross, and the Mother's Club during World War II.

Speaking about Gasper this week, Andover Congregational Church Rev. Ray Kostulias said he had admired her since he came to the church about two years ago.

"I heard somebody say she was a matriarch in town but she was also a matriarch in the church." He stated. "The best thing I can say is that she was gentle and kind but she was no pushover. She had opinions and she had ideas and thoughts and she was, right up until the end, incredibly intelligent and alert."

He added, "She was feisty but she never used her strength to hurt anybody or put anybody down. It was always done with kindness, and

when I came here she kind of took me under her wing. ... She knew everything about the church and so if there was anything I needed help with, she was always the one who could help me."

Kostulias concluded, "We're all going to miss her terribly. She was in church every Sunday and she had a history in this church, doing just about everything. She sang in the choir, she played the organ... she was much, much loved."

And, in a sign of respect this week, a message was put on the board out front of the church. It read "10:4 Jean Gasper you will be missed!"

Gasper's granddaughter, Lisa Dunnack, explained Gasper was known for ending her phone conversations with "10-4," which is police code for message received.

Dunnack shared this week the death of her grandmother was like "the end of an era" – which is also something Gasper would say when those she knew who were close in age

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Jean Gasper



Barrett's memorial fountain features six iris flowers for the six adult victims of the Sandy Hook school shooting and 20 coneflowers for the 20 children. One hundred percent of the materials and time used to create and install the fountain were donated.

Memorial Fountain cont. from Front Page

After, Barrett spoke about her motivations for creating the memorial fountain.

"I knew instantly that I wanted to honor and celebrate those at Sandy Hook," she said. "But I realized there was also a more personal meaning for me."

She said when she was 15, she experienced her own "personal horrific trauma," and "knew what it was like to have your world ripped out from under you."

"I knew what it was like to fight to come back, and to deal with post-traumatic stress for many years," Barrett addressed the audience. "I knew from the depths of my soul that I could not give you my sadness, but could give you my love" – and it's that love that led to the memorial fountain.

"From that came the determination to keep moving forward, which brought us to this day," she said.

Barrett then presented plaques to business owners and representatives in attendance at the event.

Following that, she introduced Scarlett Lewis, who founded the Jesse Lewis Choose Love Foundation in honor of her son. The organization's goal is to spread the message of "Nurturing. Healing. Love." Jesse had written the message on a chalkboard at home three days before his death.

Lewis said she was "overwhelmed with love" when attending the ceremony.

"I learned the meaning of compassion from you all," she said. "I think sometimes in society we think about compassion in the empathetic sense, we think about feeling another person's pain."

"But true compassion has two components:

identifying with someone's pain, and actively doing something to help ease another's pain."

Lewis said the fountain perfectly exemplified that second part of compassion, with all the people coming together to show their love to the victims and their families.

"I completely appreciate it, and there are no words for me to describe my gratitude for all of you and for everything you've done," she said, to everyone involved with creating the memorial fountain.

Rob Townsend, the owner of AquaScapes, spoke next. He said the fountain was designed as a gift for Newtown, and that he would be happy to transport and install the memorial in that town, if the Sandy Hook Permanent Memorial Committee desires it.

"However, if they decide they want another water feature instead, we will provide them with one for 100 percent for free, no charge," he said.

Several musical performances followed the ceremony. Performers from Melissa Mulligan Vocal Studios out of Fairfield sang "Seasons of Love" from *Rent*, and Townsend, a U.S. Marine Corps veteran, played patriotic tunes, ending with the national anthem on electric guitar as a way to observe the coming Memorial Day.

Barrett said she was very satisfied with how the fountain turned out, and with the dedication ceremony.

"My heart is so full, and it was meant to be," she said. "I feel very honored to have been able to do this for those families."

For a gallery of some of the photo highlights from the fountain dedication, visit [facebook.com/rivereastnewsbulletin](https://www.facebook.com/rivereastnewsbulletin).



A glimpse of the impact left by Andover resident Jean Gasper, who passed away May 27, can be seen at the First Congregational Church, where the sign out front bares a message to the longtime resident and congregant. The "10:4" is a reference to the way Gasper would end her phone conversations – police code for "message received."

'First Lady' cont. from Front Page

passed away.

"It's just amazing to me," Dunnack said of Gasper's life. "It's hard to put into words. But it's special. And a lot of people agree."

Dunnack laughed and said her grandmother "had a busier social schedule than I do and I'm in my 40s!"

She furthered, "My uncle and aunt and I would touch base with grandma but then if she wasn't home we'd be calling each other saying, 'Where in the world is Jean?' And she'd be off at a meeting, or out to dinner – and that went up to her last day."

"What a gift she has been," Dunnack concluded. "To the family, but to the town as well. She was just a hot ticket. She really, really was."

Gasper's daughter, Marylin Sylvester, said her mom "has always been a part of the town's structure, part of the congregational church in town [and] involved with the Red Cross when she was young."

As first selectwoman, Sylvester said her mother "worked very closely with the town crew that worked on the roads. She would go out on the job sites and look at things. She really liked it – she really liked her job. When she died last week she was still a member of the library board [and] still involved with the church."

Sylvester added her mother was "a very smart woman. She was very likable, and very opinionated but in a very subtle way."

"People liked her very much and I see that just by their phone calls and the notes that you get in the mail, and I'm sure her funeral and calling hours will be immense. She was very well known in the town."

Sylvester concluded her mother "lived a nice life. She really did. And for her sudden demise, it was just the way she wanted; she had talked about it a lot. She didn't want to suffer and she didn't. It was very quick."

Gasper passed away at home May 27.

Also sharing thoughts about her this week was First Selectman Bob Burbank, who said Gasper "was always there helping out whenever they had activities at the church and whenever somebody died she was always the first one to prepare food and organize all the food and the reception for all the guests for the funeral."

He added "she'd been doing this for over 50 years probably. Right up to last week she was actually driving around and helping out. She was a very amazing woman; I would probably say the most respected woman in town."

And, as a mark of that respect, Burbank said he put flags at half-staff last week.

Town Clerk Carol Lee, who has known Gasper for the 16 years she's been working for the town, also commented on how active Gasper was.

"She was still very active with everything. This year, for the Friends of the Library auction she baked two pies for us again. So she's been very active in everything and always a pleasure to work with. She always had a smile on her face and a positive word regardless of anything."

Similarly, Julie Victoria, who served on the Library Board with Gasper for 20 years, said this week Gasper was "active right up until the last minute."

"She was just a fantastic lady," she added. "I can't believe she's gone. The thing that I love most about Jean is she was friends with all different ages. I considered myself a friend, and I'm 30 years younger. We were all going to go out to eat Friday."

Victoria added Gasper was "very dynamic" and someone who "enjoyed life" and was involved with life "right until the very end which was great. That's how we all should want to be. Everybody loved her."

Resident Dianne Grenier also had pleasures to share about Gasper, calling her "a wonderful woman of great character who enjoyed life and deeply loved her family, friends and community."

Grenier said Andover "was a better place because of Jean Gasper" and called her "a pillar of the community who made a positive difference."

Grenier called Gasper "a modest and unassuming lady who was respected and loved by all."

She furthered, "She was an inspiration and a source of great wisdom to all who knew her. Jean Gasper is someone to whom residents of Andover owe much. She serves as a great role model for all to emulate."

Gasper was predeceased by her first husband in 1990, and married her longtime friend Brian Minalga in 1995. They spent 17 years together, according to her obituary, enjoying "sailing, traveling and family gatherings."

Minalga also predeceased Gasper, along with her sister Margaret, son-in-law Douglas Griswold, son Andrew F. Gasper Jr. and daughter-in-law Lillian Gasper.

But Gasper is survived by three children, eight grandchildren, six great-grandchildren with two more on the way, as well as nieces and nephews – plenty of people to relish in the stories of her life and share memories of who she was and all she's done across 93 very active years.

Gasper's family received relatives and friends Thursday, June 4 at Potter Funeral Home, 456 Jackson St., Willimantic. Her funeral is scheduled for today, Friday, June 5, at 11 a.m. at the First Congregational Church, Route 6, Andover.

Marlborough Voters Approve \$23.06 Million Budget

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

It was a dark and stormy night Monday, but 183 taxpayers turned out anyway at the elementary school to vote on – and ultimately approve – the town’s \$23.06 million 2015-16 budget.

The spending package passed 126-57 and included \$4.68 million for town operations, a \$70,000, or 1.52 percent, increase over the current year; \$8.23 million for RHAM; \$7.40 million for the local Board of Education, a \$125,000, or 1.71 percent, increase; \$20,000 for contingency; and \$2.52 million for town debt.

Overall, the approved budget is \$831,860, or 3.74 percent, more than current year spending. The budget calls for a 4.6 percent tax increase.

That tax increase became official, when, after the town meeting, the Board of Finance set the mill rate to 32.89. The mill rate is used to determine residents’ taxes; a resident can determine their taxes by multiplying the mill rate by their total assessments. One mill is equal to \$1 in tax per \$1,000 of assessed property and under the proposed mill rate of 32.89, a resident with a home assessed at \$250,000 would pay \$8,222.50 in taxes.

While turnout was much higher than it was at last year’s town meeting – when just 50 people showed up to vote – the 183 in attendance Monday still represented just 4.6 percent of the 3,978 registered voters in town.

Also passed Monday night, by a 156-27, tally, was \$256,189, for capital projects. A motion to place in the town’s general fund \$2,126 of unexpended money from the purchase of a backhoe that cost less than expected was approved 174-9.

“It is good the town has an approved budget for July 1,” First Selectwoman Cathi Gaudinski said Wednesday. “The Board of Selectmen continue to have a concern on the tax impact to property owners not only presented in the upcoming year’s budget, but those in outlying years. Residents are encouraged to attend meetings and continue voicing their opinions.”

Gaudinski told her fellow selectmen at their meeting Tuesday, “I’m pleased to say we have a budget,” and added, “The tax collector can begin preparing tax bills.”

Gaudinski added that, with the approvals,

capital projects can get started and “the tax collector can begin preparing tax bills.”

Gaudinski jokingly said to the selectmen that, when tax bills come out, the entire town will realize the budget passed.

“No recall” of the vote, selectmen Dick Shea quipped.

Shea also said he was surprised at how large of a margin of approval the budget received Monday night.

After the budget was passed Monday and the mill rate set, selectman Denis Soucy thanked the Board of Finance members “for all of your hard work.”

Board of Finance member Ken Hjulstrom said Monday, “In spite of the town budget passing by a wide margin, there were a lot of people who expressed concern about the budget increase, which is primarily the result of increase

in costs for RHAM. Marlborough’s portion of the RHAM budget is projected to continue to increase significantly over the next several years.”

Hjulstrom also expressed that after the RHAM budget vote last week in Marlborough was a split vote in town, the RHAM board “needs to work harder next year to make sure that their budget is scrutinized so that the final product includes only absolutely necessary expenses.”

The town meeting on the budget was originally held May 11. However, residents at that meeting voted to postpone the budget vote to June 1, since, at that time, the RHAM schools budget hadn’t passed yet. The RHAM budget was ultimately approved, at a second referendum, on May 26.

Marlborough Students Raise 505,140 Pennies for Nepal

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

After learning about teen activism, sixth-graders at Marlborough Elementary got the entire school involved in raising money to help the people of Nepal.

The school managed to raise \$5,051.40 (or 505,140 pennies) through their “Penny War” held for a week in May.

The April 25 earthquake, a 7.8 magnitude, killed over 8,000 people, injured more than 20,000 and destroyed countless historic buildings. Its aftershock, a 7.3 magnitude earthquake, hit May 12 and killed more than 200 people and injured more than 2,000 people.

Tina D’Auteuil, a sixth-grade social studies teacher, headed the efforts.

“It all started with their informational writing,” D’Auteuil said of the sixth grade. “First [the students] were going to adopt a village then the Nepal disaster happened.”

D’Auteuil said the students became excited to help the people of Nepal and began researching organizations to make a donation to including what percentage of the money raised goes directly to the people.

That was when they chose Save the Children, which donates 89.4 percent of the donation to the people.

Originally, D’Auteuil said, the fundraiser was going to be a coin drive; however, the idea of the penny war began taking shape.

The penny war worked like this: students brought in pennies and could also bring in silver coins (nickels, quarters, dimes, silver dollars, half dollars) and cash. The pennies would increase a classroom’s amount of points, but students could “sabotage” other classrooms by putting in silver coins or cash, which deducted points from the class.

“The whole school got excited,” D’Auteuil said. “[The students] would come in and check the bulletin board.” One bulletin board near the

front of the school displayed a classroom’s points. “It went all the way down to kindergarten and preschool.”

Of course, a penny war wouldn’t be complete without a prize. For the highest point-winning individual classroom, the classroom would be able to duct tape Kim Kelley, the assistant principal, to the wall on June 12. Even the prize has an educational purpose. D’Auteuil said the duct taping of Kelley would be a science experiment for the kids.

“It raised competition within each grade level,” D’Auteuil said of the prize. “The sixth grade collected the jugs each day and counted them.”

D’Auteuil said it would take the sixth grade almost the entire day to count the change.

With the \$5,051 collected, \$120 would enable three families to receive kitchen sets. Ninety dollars would get four families emergency shelter kits. Sixty dollars would get four families hygienic kits and \$40 would get five jerry cans to transport water.

Kelly Cooper’s fourth grade class ended up winning the Penny War with 20,486 points.

“One of [Cooper’s] students brought in a hand truck with rolled pennies and jugs,” D’Auteuil said. “There was over \$200 of pennies.”

The student had waited until the last day, D’Auteuil said, to bring the pennies.

“The bank was wondering what was going on,” D’Auteuil quipped.

Throughout the process, students in the entire school were learning about Nepal and its people.

“They learned how to help and what it’s like,” D’Auteuil said of the students. “They learned about developing countries and how Nepal is a really poor country. [People in Nepal] live on less than \$1 a day.”

“Some parts are developed and some are



The sixth grade at Marlborough Elementary School recently got the entire school involved with raising money to help the people of Nepal through a “Penny War.” Pictured from left are sixth-graders Jessica Parks, Jayna Baran, Sara Egazarian and Sydney Waddell.

developing,” sixth-grader Fenna Lacourciere said of Nepal. “The developed parts are for tourists, which is unfair.”

Sixth-grader Dana Chmielewski said most of the country’s money comes from the tourists – and noted, “After the quake, there are not as many tourists.”

The students also pointed out how the historic buildings were destroyed and how the education in the country is poor.

“They have minimal schools,” sixth-grader Brody Swanson said. “Learning and education is not good.”

“Boys have more opportunities at school,”

sixth-grader Colby Vardanian said. “Girls stay home and do housework and help on the farms. Boys get careers.”

D’Auteuil said the students put up posters and educated the rest of the school as the school assembly before the penny war began.

“While doing research, we shared videos of the news broadcasts, the reading groups read about Mt. Everest, and it made it real to them,” D’Auteuil said.

D’Auteuil said she’s proud of her students.

“They saw something and acted upon it,” D’Auteuil said. “I’m amazed at what they accomplished. They came together for a cause.”

Two Hebron Scouts Receive Gold Award

by Geeta Schrayter

Along with graduating from RHAM High School in two weeks' time and heading off to college in the fall, two Hebron residents have something else to be proud of: receiving the highest achievement in Girl Scouting.

Lauren Escott and Samantha Marinelli have each been members of Girl Scout Troop 65091 for over 10 years. And recently, the two received the Girl Scout Gold Award after completing a seven-step project that helped solve a community problem.

Escott's project was titled "Hospital Improvement," and included the creation and distribution of activity bags in hospital waiting rooms.

Escott explained this week she taught hospital volunteers how to make the bags, which are then distributed to bored children in the waiting rooms to keep them entertained.

In addition, Escott coached a local youth group who will continue donating items for the activity bags even after she's finished with the project to help with its sustainability.

"I understand how scary it can be" sitting in hospital waiting rooms, Escott said. "I thought these activity bags would cheer up the children."

Escott explained the road to her Gold Award was a long one, sharing her first project proposal was denied by the Gold Award Committee.

That, she said, "was a major obstacle, as I had to rewrite and re-research my entire plan."

But once she got past that hurdle, "the process was much smoother."

Escott added the most rewarding part of the project was learning about the impact the activity bags were making through interviews she conducted with staff members who handed out the bags.

"They told me stories of children who became much happier once they had something to entertain them, and the parents were pleased their kids were content and distracted," she stated. "I was thrilled that my project had improved the experience these kids had at the hospital."

Meanwhile, Marinelli's project revolved around suicide awareness for the sophomore health classes at RHAM.

"The sophomores complete a program called Power of Words that targets bullying in schools, and I thought it would be a good idea to take the [program] a little further," she explained, and discuss suicide as well as bullying.

"I had a personal experience with suicide

from attempting it myself [and] hearing from friends how much they dislike each other and no longer want to be alive," Marinelli shared. "I remember feeling so negative towards myself and so alone, so I wanted these students to understand how they can find help for themselves and others."

To do that, Marinelli created a PowerPoint presentation with information on suicide and suicide prevention and helplines, as well as a link to a website she created, suicide-awareness.webnode.com. In addition, "A student that I knew also put together a heartfelt video for the classes to watch, which I really think impacted the students positively."

Marinelli also created an entrance/exit quiz to gauge how much students learned from the presentation.

"I was really excited to see how every single score improved, by an overall average of 30 percent," she stated.

The project took over three years to complete, and Marinelli said of its completion and her award, "it was the most satisfying feeling."

"Of course it always feels good to receive an award, but to know that I worked so hard to share knowledge with others about something I am so passionate about, knowing that they will learn something from me and then take the information and share it with others, made me really feel like I made a difference in the world," she explained. "It may have been a small community that I targeted, but knowledge travels forever and I am so glad to have started this conversation."

Similarly, Escott said of her accomplishment, "I am extremely proud of earning my Gold Award, as I know it is the highest award a Girl Scout can earn and is extremely difficult to accomplish, as very few girls in the scouts finish it. I had many obstacles, but I stayed determined and overcame them, which made the experience even more rewarding because I know I worked incredibly hard to earn it."

Troop 65091 is headed by troop leaders Liza Escott and Shannon Quesada, who were both proud of the girls' achievement.

"I'm incredibly proud of them," said Quesada. "They both had a passion [or] life experience that connected them to their Gold project. I think that was very important to their success."

Liza Escott (who is also Lauren Escott's mom) added, "I'm absolutely amazed and so proud that two of the girls in the troop were able to complete the award."



Samantha Marinelli (left) and Lauren Escott recently received a Gold Award – the highest achievement in Girl Scouting – following the completion of a seven-step project that helped solve a community problem.

She added "perseverance and determination definitely makes [the girls] stand out," and said they had the support of the entire troop to help them through their project.

Also proud of the girls was then-state Rep. Pam Sawyer, who was present when they received their Silver Award as Cadet Scouts.

At that time, "I said to them if they work hard and go to become a Gold Award recipient I will come to their ceremony. Little did I know they'd take me up on the offer!"

Sawyer was out of office when the girls received their award but, as promised, she made an appearance as their guest speaker along with Sawyer's successor, state Rep. Gayle Mulligan, who provided an official citation.

"They worked very hard – and two of them! That's an amazing number because it's a hard award to attain," Sawyer stated, adding that, as high school seniors, "it's difficult for most people to find the time to spend with scouts." Never mind time for a special project on top of

that.

"So it takes a commitment by the scout and by the supporting adults in her life to bring her skill level to the necessary point where she can complete the project."

Sawyer explained the Gold Award was comparable to attaining the rank of Eagle Scout in the Boy Scouts – but was achieved much less often.

"In the course of my 22-year tenure in the legislature I have been to over 100 Eagle Scout ceremonies across the four towns [Andover, Bolton, Hebron and Marlborough]," Sawyer said. "But for Girl Scouts, this is only the second one I've ever been invited to. These girls make the total number of three Gold Awards that I've ever been invited to. So it's a rare occurrence."

Which should be extra cause for Escott and Marinelli to feel proud of their achievement.

The two girls will be honored at a state ceremony this Sunday, June 7.

Murphy Named Top Dog in Hebron

by Geeta Schrayter

Murphy's certainly starting life out on the right paw.

Just five months old, he's already achieved an accomplishment in town: he's been named Hebron's Top Dog and will sport the No. 1 dog tag this year as his very first tag.

Each year, in anticipation of June when dog licenses are up for renewal, the Hebron town clerk's office asks residents to mail in or drop off photographs of their dog to enter into the contest. These photos are then displayed at the Russell Mercier Senior Center, where people can stop in, check out the furry mugs and vote for their favorite by paper ballot.

The contest provides an opportunity for residents to become acquainted with the senior center, while also reminding them it's almost time to renew their dog licenses.

"Every year people look forward to this contest," Town Clerk Carla Pompowicz said this week. "Some years we have more contestants than others, but the winners are always very honored to receive the distinction of Hebron's Top Dog."

This year's top dog is a tiny Havanese with a big personality who belongs to the Danaher family, including Laura and Matt and their three daughters Kailee, 17, Emily, 9, and Leah, 5.

This week, Laura said Murphy was "cute and fun," and described him as "energetic, lovable and playful."

But when he's snoozing – watch out. "He's grumpy when he's sleeping; we don't bother him then," she laughed.

In addition, Laura said Murphy was quickly become proficient at tricks.

"He's learning tricks quickly," she said, including spin, sit and fetch.

Murphy is the Danaher girls' first puppy and, apart from Matt, "he's the first boy in the family."

"The girls are really excited," Laura said of the win this week. She added their grandmother,

June Danaher, was actually the one to put Murphy in the running, so "she was super excited too."

Right behind Murphy is the No. 2 dog owned by Gladys Bryant. Sophie, a 3-and-a-half-year-old beagle, has made it to the top three for the past few years, but has yet to receive top dog.

"She was three last year and the year before and two this year" Bryant shared this week. She added she'd continue to put Sophie in the running in case she garners the coveted No. 1 spot, but added "she's still number one with us and always will be."

Bryant added "We've had her for two years. We got her from someone who put her up for sale on Craigslist. My cousin saw her and my dog I had passed away like 6 months before that. I wasn't sure if I wanted to get another dog or not but I saw her picture and I just lost it."

Bryant said Sophie loves kids, the family cats – even cows.

"She likes to go down and look at the cows and walk in the fields," Bryant said. "She is just one sweet little girl."

Finally, coming in third this year is a 10-month-old Border Collie named Chelsea, owned by Mary Schadtler.

"My husband has memories of his grandfather who had a dog like that when he was a kid and he always wanted one," Schadtler shared this week. "So we ended up getting one this past October."

Schadtler added, "What amazes us is the herding instinct that she has. We have cows on our property and she runs out there and runs around them in circles and will herd them into the corral area. It amazes us we didn't even have to teach her – it's just in her breed."

In addition, Schadtler said Chelsea loves to run around, is very friendly and loves children.

According to the town clerk's office, all dog



Leah Danaher, 5, and sister Emily Danaher, 9, pose with their first puppy, a Havanese named Murphy who was recently named Hebron's Top Dog.

licenses are renewed in June and become effective July 1. If a dog's rabies vaccination has expired since the last time they were licensed, documentation from the veterinarian must be provided showing the new expiration date.

Licenses will not be renewed without this information.

In addition, information must also be provided if the dog is newly spayed or neutered.

The town clerk encourages everyone to license their dog by mail. Send the documenta-

tion and fee (\$19 for unaltered dogs and \$8 for spayed or neutered dogs) along with a self-addressed, stamped envelope to the town clerk's office, 15 Gilead St.

To license a new dog by mail, include name, address, phone number, the dog's name, breed and color, along with proof of rabies and neutering. Puppies must be licensed within 30 days after turning six months old; new dogs must be licensed within 30 days of obtaining them.

EHHS Prom King and Queen

by John Tyczkowski

East Hampton High School seniors came together on their prom night to recognize two very important individuals among their number.

On May 16, at the EHHS prom in New Haven, Chris Guerin, a senior, and Nicole Race, a 2014 EHHS graduate, were named prom king and queen.

While there have been prom kings and queens before, what made this year's royal couple stand out is both have special needs. Chris has Down syndrome and Nicole is confined to a wheelchair and doesn't speak.

The two have known each other for over a decade, Kathy Race, Nicole's mom, said.

"Chris has always been such a good friend to her, forever," Race said. "He's such a gentleman."

Chris actually came to Race at work in order to ask for her permission to ask Nicole to prom, she said.

"That was completely unexpected," Race said. "And both of them being named king and queen unanimously was totally unexpected for me as well."

"I'm so thankful that the senior class thought to think of them and included them both," she said.

Race said her daughter was thrilled to go to prom with Chris, and to be named prom queen.

"She was so very proud and so happy," she said.

Nicole, who's been in school since she was 3, will soon be attending a day program where she will learn life skills, Race said.

"She's very aware and responds to people, but she doesn't really talk," Race said. "But if you hang around her long enough, you know by her actions what she's feeling."

"And Chris always gets laughs and smiles from her," she said.

Christina Guerin, Chris's stepmother, said she was "incredibly happy" about the crowning.

"The seniors are so kind, generous and thoughtful," she said. "It was a unanimous vote, I can't believe it."

Chris said he felt "very good" about his and Nicole's crowning, that he cried "happy tears" and that he made sure to say thank you.

"It was a surprise," he said.

Pearl Phelps, a fellow senior and longtime friend of Chris's for 15 years, was largely responsible for making that happen, Melissa Ackerman, Chris's mother, said.

"She's the one who got the school together and recommended that they vote for him and Nicole to be prom king and queen," Ackerman said. "And right from the get-go, it was going to be totally unanimously."

Chris said he also had a wonderful time with Nicole at the prom after they were crowned.

"I danced with her, I hugged her, I kissed her," he said.

Ackerman also noted that Nicole reacted the most when Chris was with her.

"They have a very special connection," she said.

Christina said she rented a convertible specifically to drive Chris to prom in style as well. "We wanted to make it special for him, he deserved it," she said.

Chris also participated in the pre-prom Grand March, walking with long-time friend and fellow senior McKenzie Caso. She's now an athlete partner in the Special Olympics because of Chris.

"She wanted to work with Chris on the sports level, and now she volunteers her time in general with the Special Olympics," Christina said.

"And then at the Grand March, he waited at the bottom step and held out his hand to help her off the step, and his classmates went nuts. He's such a gentleman," she said.

Christina said that while she was surprised by the unanimous crowning, it keeps with the character of Chris's senior class overall.

"He's always been looked after at school – he's always been included in things," she said. "These kids are the best; they've always treated him with respect, and they've taken him under their wing."

"These kids just don't think of themselves at all," she said.

Chris's father, Chris Guerin, also said that's true of the town in general toward Chris.

"Chris is the mayor of East Hampton," he said. "Anywhere I go in town, any store, any place, I hear 'Hi Chris!' They all know him. Chris goes to Stop & Shop for a gallon of milk, and he's easily there a half hour, he's high-fiving



Nicole Race, left, and Chris Guerin pose for photos before heading to Chris's EHHS senior prom in New Haven on May 16. Chris and Nicole were crowned prom king and queen in a unanimous decision by their fellow senior Bellringers.

everyone."

Chris has also been active with the town's Yellow Ribbon Committee, attending every single ceremony at the Yellow Ribbon Tree in the Village Center over the years. He's also an honorary Connecticut Patriot Guard member for his continual involvement with veterans.

"He's extremely patriotic," Christina said. "His father was in the Marine Corps, and he

admires the Marines."

After graduation, Chris will work full-time in town at a variety of jobs at several businesses in town.

But until then, Chris will be riding high while he finishes out his year with the senior class that has given him so much over the past four years and that has made him part of the Bellringer community.

East Hampton Budget Defeated a Second Time

by John Tyczkowski

As 1960s TV spy Maxwell Smart might say, the proposed 2015-16 town budget missed it by *that* much on Tuesday.

An 11-vote margin separated the 'nays' from the 'yeas' in Tuesday's town-wide budget referendum. The \$41.42 million spending package fell by a 1,102-1,091 – the second straight defeat for the 2015-16 budget.

Only 80 fewer people turned out to vote than at the first referendum on May 5, for a total of 2,193 votes this Tuesday.

Town Clerk Sandy Wieleba said there would be no recount.

Per state statute, to qualify for a recount, the margin between a 'yes' and a 'no' vote must be less than 0.5 percent, and the total number of votes cast must total less than 2,000.

The May 5 referendum results were also close, though not quite as close as they were Tuesday. Last month, the budget fell by 39 votes – a rejection that led to \$200,000 in reductions from the Board of Education proposal, bringing it to \$29.02 million, a 2.68 percent increase over the current year; and an extra \$82,374 from general government spending, bringing it to \$10.09 million, a 3.28 percent increase.

But the changes clearly weren't enough.

A third budget referendum is nothing new for East Hampton residents – indeed, just last year, it took three tries to get a 2014-15 budget passed.

Outside the auditorium on the drive leading to the middle school Tuesday evening, signs reading "Vote No to a tax increase" edged their way in alongside "Vote Yes" signs.

The budget proposal before the voters Tuesday featured a 0.99 mill increase, bringing the mill rate to 28.13. This would have translated to a 1.04 percent tax increase.

For reference, a mill is \$1 tax per \$1,000 of assessed property value. If the budget passed, under the new mill rate, if a house is assessed at \$200,000, then taxes paid on it for the 2015-16 fiscal year would have been \$5,626.

"It's very disappointing," Board of Finance Chairman Ted Turner said after hearing the results. "If I told you what I really thought, you couldn't print it."

Turner said he "wouldn't be in favor of any big cuts" with regard to creating a revised third budget proposal.

"Maybe a 0.75 mills increase, but even that's

a big cut," he said. "That might be a bit much."

Councilors Ted Hintz Jr. and Patience Anderson were also in attendance to hear the referendum results.

"I'm really not surprised," Hintz said. "I think the town's finally realized that the Board of Education pads their budget and that it needs to be cut again."

"Also, mid-year hires are not appropriate," Hintz said, referring to the new police officer included in the proposed budget, at a cost of \$47,000. The new officer would start in January 2016, and bring the total number of East Hampton police to 14.

Hintz said his goals for the third budget proposal include cutting \$200,000 from the Board of Education budget, and removing the mid-year police officer position.

Anderson said she was in favor of Hintz's proposed reductions.

"I'm not sure that's what will actually be achieved, but I would be in support of his motion," she said.

Town Council Chairwoman Barbara Moore, who was also at the middle school to hear the

results, said part of responsibility for the vote result may fall on the budget's advocates.

"Some of us may not have done a good job in setting the record straight, and explaining what the town won't have next year if we don't pass this budget," she said. "It's a very small increase, but it'll let us get things done this year."

The coming fiscal year could see major changes to town facilities, chiefly the creation of a new police station and clarification of Center School's facilities role, as well as the creation of a watershed-monitoring plan for Lake Pocotopaug.

Moore made it clear that she would not vote for a budget that would cut the mid-year hire police officer position.

"I will not vote to jeopardize public safety," she said.

The Board of Finance met last night, after press time, to deliberate on revisions to the budget. Moore said to expect more action on the budget at the Town Council's regular meeting on Tuesday, June 9, at 6:30 p.m. in the Town Hall meeting room.

Epoch Arts Play Shows Importance of Inclusiveness

by John Tyczkowski

Epoch Arts tackles the meaning of community and what it means to be inclusive of everyone in its latest Mainstage play.

The title of the center's 18th such play, *Ubuntu*, says it all; it's the word in several southern African Nguni Bantu languages that can be translated in a philosophical sense as "the belief in a universal bond of sharing that connects all of humanity."

Beth Namen, Epoch Arts' artistic director, said that concept describes perfectly the message the play, which took six weeks to put together, will convey to its audience.

"People are social and supposed to live in communities, but lately society has turned that upside down and turned the 'we' into 'me,'" she said. "We're trying to get back to the 'we' with this play."

In the play, there are three different groups – the shallow and seemingly cultured Haveits, the middle-of-the-road Tinkers and the universally-detested Monsters.

"We further drew differences between them with costuming," Namen said. "The Haveits wear bright neon and look like '80s chicks, the Tinkers wear a lot of patterns and the Monsters look dirty and wear darker clothing."

Trouble arises when a Haveit named Abella searches for a new friend, who happens to be Bartholomew, a Monster. She discovers how beneficial broadening her community can be, but it will take an intense struggle and all-out war for others in the three groups to have the chance to learn the same lesson.

"It doesn't have a happy ending; that's not life. It has a realistic ending," Namen said. "It's about how scary it can be to cross over barriers that divide different communities so that you can try to include everyone."

Namen said she kept the three groups broad enough so that audience members could personalize what they represented based upon their own experiences.

And without giving too much away, she said a key theme of the play is how acts of selflessness can have great, far-reaching, positive effects.

"A lot of people are in love with ideas, but you really need to make the first, terrifying step and do something," Namen said. "It's a simple act that starts things."

Danny Lee, a senior at East Hampton High School and four-year Epoch Arts member, plays Javin, the leader of the Monsters.

"My character wants to protect his people, who have been shunned. They live in the dump; no one wants to be around us, they throw trash at us, they ignore us," he said. "I protect my people through not the most nice ways: clubbing people, yelling and pretty much starting a war."

Lee said, however, that his character couldn't be farther from other characters he's played, who have been comedic, or his own personality, a self-described nice guy.

"Even my friends saw in school that once I started playing this mean character, I became meaner around them in school," he said. "I really had to try hard to get in character, and it filtered into my actual life."

"Then I realized I should scale it back a bit, because my friends were getting mad at me," he said, laughing.

Lee said he believes the ending will be "a shocker" for the audience.

"I can't say what, but the audience will not expect what goes down," he said.

Lexi Mcguigan, a homeschooled 11th-grader in her second Mainstage performance, plays the leader of the Tinkers, Sahalie.

"I'm a different kind of leader; the Tinkers are my friends, but I control them," she said. "I only beat people who I feel are weaker than me, with physical violence. That's how I do it."

"I'm a control freak and I want my Tinkers to stay the same," she said. "I don't want



Lexi Mcguigan, center, as Tinker leader Sahalie, stops Danny Lee, left, as the Monster leader Javin, from attacking one of her fellow Tinkers. The Tinkers and Monsters, along with the Haveits, are the three groups in Epoch Arts' new play *Ubuntu* who must come to terms with the fact that they share more than they differ on.

change."

Mcguigan said she also experienced some shock in learning the role as she "is the farthest thing from a mean person" in real life.

"It took me a long time to get super angry and into my character," she said. "I did that by thinking of the news and everything that's happening in the world, let it build up and became an evil, angry person."

"Last year I played a comedic role with some sarcasm, and this year I'm an abusive person," Mcguigan added. "It was quite a change."

She said her character comes to an under-

standing over the course of the play, though she doesn't fully redeem herself.

"I come to understand that what I've done isn't right, and that a community involves everyone, not just your small group," she said.

Ubuntu opens tonight, June 5, at 7 p.m., at Epoch Arts, 27 Skinner St. Tickets are \$7. Reservations are encouraged and can be made at 860-365-0337 or at info@epocharts.org.

There will also be performances on Saturday, June 6 and Sunday, June 7, also at 7 p.m. both nights.

Two New Principals Named in East Hampton

by John Tyczkowski

East Hampton Public Schools welcomes two new principals starting this summer – but one's a pretty familiar face.

At East Hampton Middle School, Jason Lehmann is moving from assistant principal to principal.

"I'm very excited about this," Lehmann said. "It's something I've been looking forward to for quite some time. It's a good fit."

To that end, Lehmann said his focus will be on continuity for students and staff.

"I think a lot of what we've done already; we should keep it in place," he said. "We want to use what's working to keep students moving forward."

Also, he said his technology background, from three years of majoring in computer science and professional work for several years as an automation consultant specialist with Officevision, an office automation company, has prepared him to advance the district's digital literacy goals at the middle school.

"I liked computer science, but I realized I really wanted to deal more with people," he said, explaining his move into education. "My background in technology has been a nice skill set to have to help people learn new digital skills."

Lehmann mentioned that includes not only students, but staff as well.

"A lot of veteran staff have not been exposed to newer educational technologies, such as Google Classroom," he said. "It's important for everyone to learn those, students and teachers alike."

Before East Hampton, Lehmann taught in Willington Public Schools, both as an eighth-grade science teacher and a seventh-grade math teacher, as well as in a team leader role.

"It's a very small district, so you wear a lot

of hats there," he said.

In addition, Lehmann has experience in building a curriculum around what students need to advance their skills and learning.

For example, he created and taught a content literacy course which brought science and language arts together.

"We tackled topics like awareness about going green, and ecological initiatives," he said. "Students learned science to understand those concepts, and then were taught language arts through communicating that information."

"It was really exciting to do," he said.

At the same time, Lehmann also pioneered a completely paperless classroom during his time in Willington – an initiative that, he said, "was a lot of fun for myself, the kids and the parents."

"We saved over 80,000 sheets of paper in that class," he said. "It was really a cool initiative, and great to be able show people that it can be done."

Lehmann just completed his sixth-year degree in educational leadership last month, which includes another important area of focus for the district.

"My dissertation was on special education, an area I wanted to learn more about," he said. "Now I feel comfortable with being able to speak about that with staff. We do very well in our district, but we can do better."

Overall, Lehmann said he's excited to begin as principal of the middle school.

"I've got a great staff here, wonderful kids and parents," he said. "I'm looking forward to many successful years here."

Mary Clark, who comes from the Capitol Region Education Council, returns to her native East Hampton as principal of Center School.

"I went through school in the district, from kindergarten to high school," she said – a journey that included a stop at Center School. "I'm excited to come home."

Clark, a 1994 East Hampton High School graduate, said she enters her principal role "with excitement; it's a very dynamic role."

Clark made sure to note outgoing principal Donna Turchi's efforts in engaging families, teachers and students together to create a supportive environment.

"She's done amazing work so far as a building leader," Clark said. "I'm humbled and excited to continue the work she's been doing, to continue to collaborate with all involved stakeholders."

Clark said it's important to continue and expand upon past successes, but she thinks a new perspective can only strengthen things as well.

And that begins with Center School's atmosphere, which she said makes it an especially wonderful place to lead.

"I find that it's an incredibly welcoming environment," she said. "Students feel really happy and engaged there."

Clark also said that's exactly what drew her to the position at Center School.

"That sense of community is extremely foundational for students, and it was foundational for me as an educator," she said. "I see it as something that needs to be continued, and expanded."

In addition, Clark brings experience with facilities and building construction to her new position from her role with CREC as director of learning and teaching.

"I've worked directly with building consultants to evaluate how facilities are helping to progress students according to state standards," she said. "The physical learning environment

plays a key role in making sure both students and teachers are learning and growing."

Along those lines, Clark said one of her goals for teachers at Center School would be to further professional development.

"I want to be someone who can support teachers as they engage in a cycle of continuous improvement," she said. "I want to emphasize continual professional development for teachers in a way that supports students."

"I'm a big believer in supporting teachers in order to support students. They are the ones who day in and day out work for our students," she said.

Clark said that's exactly what she plans to bring as Center School principal.

"I believe it's the role of the administrator to provide shared leadership to support students, parents and educators," she said. "That's the call to action."

Also, Clark said the fact that she is a parent with two children about to enter the district has brought another perspective to her role as principal.

"My 9-month-old son won't be starting for a while, but my 3-and-a-half-year-old daughter has started preschool," she said. "I have a strong personal investment as a parent in the community."

Finally, Clark said she believe East Hampton is very fortunate to have her and Lehmann in new principal roles.

"We've already had great leaders [Donna Turchi and Nancy Briere] at both schools, and we've benefited from their strong leadership for years," she said. "And now, I think myself and Jason [Lehmann] have an opportunity to be informed by their successes and to bring in a fresh perspective to continue their successes."

Police Dispatch Returning to Status Quo

by Geeta Schrayter

Things in dispatch will soon be returning to normal – that is, they'll be returning to the way things were prior to state-wide consolidation efforts that began in 2012 and saw, among other things, dispatch communication services move from Troop K in Colchester to Troop C in Tolland.

Consolidating dispatch services across the state was touted as a move that would improve efficiency, free troopers up from the barracks and put them on the road and yield cost savings (although the state backtracked from the "cost savings" part of the equation). However, as consolidation of dispatch operations began in the western part of the state, followed by the consolidation of Troop K (which includes in its coverage area the *Rivereast* towns of Colchester, Marlborough, Hebron and Andover), Troop D in Danielson and Troop E in Montville to Troop C in Tolland, questions arose as to whether or not those benefits were being realized.

Then, following the retirement of Commissioner Rueben Bradford of the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection – someone who was a proponent of the consolidation – Commissioner Dora Schriro stepped in and began a review of the consolidation efforts.

As part of the review, the decision was made in March 2014 to keep all of the barracks open 24/7 – something the consolidation had changed.

In a news release at the time, Schriro stated that "after careful review, I have determined that our state police barracks need to be open and accessible to the public 24/7."

The latest decision, to undo the consolidation in its entirety, comes from the conclusion

of Schriro's review May 18 after which she outlined a plan to move forward.

In addition to the previously announced 24/7 barracks coverage and redirecting administrative calls back to the troops, the plan includes reinstating dispatch and call taking functions at all troops in the Western and Eastern Districts and continuing dispatch and call taking from each troop in the Central District (which had not yet been consolidated).

"Specifically," reads the May 18 release, "Troops A and B will each resume operation of its own call center in the Western District and Troops D, E, and K will each resume operation of its own call center in the Eastern District."

Schriro stated in the release, "Our state police troops are critical to the communities they serve and this plan will yield optimal operational efficiencies at every troop." She added, "These adjustments, coupled with the previous improvements that we put into place, will significantly enhance our dispatch operations. The troops, their towns, local leaders and our stakeholders all contributed to the development of this plan."

Alongside reinstating dispatch services in their respective barracks, a new next-generation 9-1-1 system will be installed, with an expected completion date of this fall, according to the release.

This week, DESPP public information officer Scott Devico added "Commissioner Schriro conducted a top to bottom review over the last year or so and we feel that this will bring optimal efficiencies to dispatch."

He added there will be an initial cost of about \$380,000 to return everything to the way it was, a cost that will cover "things like facility im-

provements, equipment, telephone and radio equipment, telephone configuration – those types of things."

News of the decision to reinstate dispatch services elicited positive responses from various town and state officials.

"We think it's going to be a huge relief for troopers in the field," said State Police Union President Andrew Matthews. "I think our response times will improve and I think the backup for our troopers will also improve and we're very thankful that Commissioner Schriro and her command staff put the time and effort into it to see that we [the Police Union] were correct the whole time when we told the governor's office it was bad policy."

Matthews added returning to the status quo would be "a huge cost savings to taxpayers too. There's an initial expense to do it, but [prior State Police] Col. Danny Stebbins had always told the governor and the public that the consolidation would be more cost effective and run more efficiently but it did anything but."

Matthews went on to thank various state legislators who stood with the union from the get-go.

"They all really worked hard with us to make sure our voices were heard."

Among the legislators mentioned was state Rep. Linda Orange (D-48th District), who said in a release "this is the right decision."

"This rollback was going to happen either through the commissioner's office, or legislatively."

Orange was referring to the bipartisan legislation she had worked on to reinstate the dispatch centers and operations – legislation that

had the support of the police union and the Council of Small Towns.

"This was an expensive mistake that put troopers and citizens at risk," she stated.

Orange has opposed consolidation for more than a decade and concluded in her release "we won the fight."

Also happy with the decision was state Rep. Melissa Ziobron (R-34th District) who "lauded" the DESPP for their decision in a May 19 release.

"I fully support this decision," Ziobron, who co-sponsored Orange's bill, stated. "I commend the efforts of Commissioner Schriro for putting this important statewide review of state police dispatch centers and public safety responses at the forefront. As an advocate for the reversal of state police dispatch consolidation, I look forward to seeing the progress across the state."

State Rep. Gayle Mulligan (R-55th District) also shared her thoughts, saying, "I'm happy as can be that they're putting people back in Troop K. It was not a benefit to our towns at all, not having somebody in that station for emergencies."

She added, "I think it was a problem for us. They had dispatchers that weren't from our area, who didn't know the towns very well, and that makes it harder to dispatch people out if they aren't familiar with the area."

Mulligan concluded, "I'm happy the new commissioner recognized that regionalization in this situation was a problem and corrected it. Regionalization is all well and good in some cases, but if it compromises public safety, consideration should be taken."

And now, that's precisely what's occurred.



At Wednesday's Board of Selectmen meeting, business as usual was put on hold while the winners of this year's Top Dog competition were recognized. A 5-year-old Chihuahua named Lily (shown here with First Selectmen Bob Burbank and owner Grace Williams) garnered the top spot and will wear the no. 1 dog tag this year, while Otis, a 5-year-old Weimaraner (shown here with owners Elisa and Michela Hines) was named Deputy Dog.



Andover Top Dogs Announced at Selectmen's Meeting

by Geeta Schrayter

At the Board of Selectmen's meeting Wednesday, two audience members were not like the others – they were, in fact, dogs, there to be recognized as this year's Top Dog and Deputy Dog.

Lily, a 5-year-old Chihuahua, recently arrived in town, but she's already taking her turn in the spotlight; she was named the Top Dog Wednesday night, and received a No. 1 dog tag, a top dog bandana and a certificate from the selectmen.

Lily is the canine companion of the Williams family, including Dennis and Carrie as well as Grace, 6, Spencer, 2, and Martin, 11 months.

"I'm excited," Grace said about her dog's win.

Her father added, "We just moved here from Pennsylvania April 1, and it was a nice surprise for Grace to get picked."

Describing her four-legged friend, Grace said Lily "barks at animals" and "likes to play with us" – and their toys.

Carrie explained Lily likes to steal and play

with some of the baby's toys – and Grace added, "Mine too!"

In addition, Grace said Lily likes snacking on bacon strips "and another kind" of treat.

Deputy Dog this year, coming in second, was Otis, a 5-year-old Weimaraner owned by the Hines Family. Otis has been a part of the family, which includes Michael and Heidi and daughters Elisa, 10, and Michela, 5, for the last two and a half years.

Elisa shared Otis likes to sleep and play fight with his sister Blueberry, while Michela added "and he likes to chase squirrels."

In addition, Elisa said Otis "likes to eat stuff he's not supposed to – like gingerbread."

They added he enjoyed his Kong – a toy that can be stuffed with a dog's favorite treat – but apart from that, "he's not a big fan of toys."

Speaking on the win, Elisa said "I was pretty excited when I heard. I thought maybe he'd be tenth."

Meanwhile, Michela added "I thought he was gonna be in 11th!"

So being named deputy dog – and receiving

the No. 2 dog tag along with a bandana and certificate – was much better.

Also at the meeting Wednesday, the board voted unanimously to schedule a special town meeting for June 30 to discuss blighted property on Center Street.

In addition, the board moved to establish a committee to research the property and advise the selectmen and public at the town meeting as to the potential acquisition of the property by the town.

The blighted property has been the topic of numerous letters to the editor in recent issues of the *Rivereast*, as individuals have shared their thoughts on the "eyesore," as resident Jeff Murray called it, and what could be done about it.

Possibilities include purchasing the property, removing the existing building and, as resident Dianne Grenier suggested in a recent letter, turning the land into open space with parking and access to the nearby rail trails.

Other motions Wednesday included a vote to hire a consultant to review and evaluate the treasurer and bookkeeper's office prior to hiring new individuals to fill the positions that will be left vacant by the departure of treasurer Jill Collins and bookkeeper Charline Scott June 30.

A motion was also made to include all of the selectmen in the hiring process when it comes time to fill the positions following the consultant's evaluation.

Finally, the board voted unanimously to appoint a new Recreation Commission, including First Selectman Bob Burbank and Jeff Maguire, who steps into his role as selectman July 1, to oversee the use of funds awarded for the construction of playing fields in town – a project that has seen a number of postponements and issues.

The next Board of Selectmen meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, July 8, at 7 p.m. in the Town Hall community room, 17 School Rd.

Colchester Citizens Oppose Building Project

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

A group of residents has spoken up against the proposed William J. Johnston Middle School building project – and instead suggested reconfiguring the town’s other schools to accommodate the middle school students.

But school officials said the relocation simply wouldn’t work.

“Our enrollment is down, down, down,” said Joyce Maine, one of the citizens against the building project, which goes to town-wide referendum. The project carries a \$48.66 million price tag, although, due to state reimbursement, the cost to the town is expected to be \$20.66 million. The project combines renovating many aspects of the building, demolishing the older 1950s and 1960s wing, and building a new two-story main section for classrooms.

Maine and Tearice Peters, among other citizens, have worked to put together what they call the “Smart Choice Proposal” – which calls for reconfiguring grade levels at Colchester Elementary School and Jack Jackter Intermediate School to handle the middle school kids.

CES currently houses pre-kindergarten through second grade students. The 108,600-sq. ft. building can handle up to 883 students, according to figures provided by the Board of Education. The group said, if third and fourth grade were added into the school there would be 868 students there for the 2015-16 school year.

JJIS, which is for the town’s third-, fourth- and fifth-graders, is a 118,100-sq. ft. facility, and can handle up to 853 students. The “Smart Choice Proposal” states if the fifth to eighth grades are placed there, there would be a total of 805 students at the school for 2015-16.

“My son started in 2002,” Peters said. “JJIS was grades kindergarten to five. We had three schools and almost 1,000 more students.”

However, school officials balked at these proposed reconfigurations.

The students “just don’t fit,” CES principal Amity Goss said. “I can understand taking class size and dividing by the number of classrooms, but some rooms are for children’s individual needs and educational support.”

Goss said adding eight classes to her school would add another whole day for one specialist (music, art, reading, math, health). Therefore, Goss explained, you would need spaces for part-time music and art teachers. Goss said at CES the school would need to hold two gym classes at once in one gym.

“There isn’t space,” Goss said. “There are hidden pieces that don’t show.”

“The consolidation plan assumes eight classrooms per grade,” Superintendent of Schools Jeff Mathieu said. “There’s no consideration for

special education teachers with classrooms or reading or math specialists with classrooms.”

At JJIS, Mathieu explained, one art teacher teaches 600 students a week in a single classroom. The teacher uses an additional classroom for art to dry because there is no space in her other classroom.

“It’s not a mathematical problem,” Mathieu said.

Also, WJJMS Principal Chris Bennett said, JJIS’ square footage per classroom is smaller than WJJMS. This means that 25 bodies may fit in a classroom, but may not be able to move around and do other programmatic things such as work in groups.

School administration has said the team structure currently at WJJMS dictates the amount of classrooms needed. However, Peters isn’t so convinced this team structure is needed.

“The team structure was established because of huge student bodies,” she said. “It broke down [the students] into smaller groups to compete with.”

Once they get to Bacon Academy, Peters said, the students are all thrown together again.

“The team structure is BS,” Peters said. “Parents strive to get students into the better groups. The same kids are in the same groups.”

Peters said the school should be able to mix it up and teach everyone.

“The team structure began at Central Middle School [up until 1989, the town’s middle school], way before my time,” Bennett said. “It’s a small school within a school, or a learning community.”

Mathieu said the advantage of the team structure is a nurturing environment to go from being with one teacher to moving around to many in high school. In the current structure, five teachers all share the same kids.

“There’s always the perception of one team versus another,” Bennett said. “It’s different parent to parent and year to year. It’s usually based on a positive experience of a sibling on a team.”

Bennett said he personally hand places kids on a team and that every team has high kids and kids who need support.

Town officials have been trying for years to get a new WJJMS off the ground. In 2013, a project to renovate and expand the middle school, which also incorporated a new senior center and community center, was soundly rejected at referendum. The new project focuses solely on the school, which town and school officials have stated is in a state of disrepair.

But, Peters said, the current WJJMS building “ain’t that bad.”

Before the 2013 referendum, school admin-

istration “said there were leaky windows, a leaky roof and a broken heating system,” Peters said. “It was fine after this winter. You go into the school and it looks nice. It needs minor amounts of improvements.”

Bennett explained there are some positives about the facility, but it’s dated and not designed for current educational standards. The building is not handicapped-accessible and the electrical system cannot handle any more technology.

“It’s piece-mealed together,” Bennett said of the school.

Bennett said the building is actually exceptionally maintained, but many things such as windows or the furnace are at the end of their useful lives.

“The middle school is two schools – the middle school and middle Bacon Academy,” Mathieu said. “It was never designed to incorporate the middle school teaming structure. The school is sprawled out and doesn’t fit the educational structure.”

Peters said that, instead of rebuilding WJJMS, the town should use the building for other town purposes such as a senior center or youth center.

“Put the money in education for the children instead of a pretty building,” Peters said. “You would gain space in Town Hall by moving the Board of Education to WJJMS. It’s got a lot of room. Yes, things need a little TLC.”

Stressing that the town’s “senior population is increasing,” Maine said the town should “take a step back and take a breather” and discuss the schools and the senior center before building anything.

Maine said the end result after the current building project is nothing for the seniors or the veterans – and she said she will “die before [she] sees a senior center.”

Following the 2013 defeat of the WJJMS/senior center/community center project – which Maine was not in favor of, saying it was “not a good idea” to combine all those facilities on one campus – then-first selectman Gregg Schuster and his fellow selectmen created a committee to handle the relationship between the Bacon Academy Board of Trustees, which owns the senior center as well as Old Bacon Academy and the town.

“The committee spoke about what the terms of the lease were and made adjustments,” First Selectman Stan Soby said. “They talked about longer-term situations for Old Bacon and the senior center. They really looked at a series of potential options.”

Soby said he feels there is support on the

Board of Selectmen to, once the town budget and the WJJMS project referendums are passed, establish a senior center building committee to be moving forward once the school project referendum and education budget referendum are complete.

But the concerned citizens aren’t convinced. Peters said the idea of a new senior center has been “dangling” for 18 years.

“Then it was CES and the Bacon track instead,” Peters said. A new WJJMS is what the town wants, she added, “and they are not going to deviate from it even when it’s not needed.”

“I understand people may have the impression that the senior center is dangling, but it really hasn’t,” Soby said. “There’s been some work after the previous project failed.”

Soby said he has been approached by developers on options for the center and there has been some preliminary exploration, but the numbers have not been favorable for the town.

“I have been approached by three different people with three different ideas,” he said. “It continues to be an option for the town to form a building committee and build a senior center.”

Maine and Peters also expressed reservations about the financial impact of the current WJJMS project.

“The town wants to say no impact, but the money comes from the state which is our tax money,” Peters said. “We’re waiting on [\$28] million from the state. We may not see that money.”

Peters said the project bonds for the full amount and “hooks” residents for the money, even if the reimbursement doesn’t come through.

Town officials have stressed that, thanks partly to the reimbursement, the WJJMS project would have no impact on the mill rate. But, Maine said, this is “misleading,” saying there’s “still [\$21] million in bonding which residents pay.”

Soby said the town has never claimed the project is free.

“What we’re saying is we can accomplish the project and not have it have a negative impact on the mill rate,” Soby said, noting that, as other debt the town is currently paying comes to a close, the WJJMS debt would take its place. “We can maintain the same level of debt service payment.”

Soby encouraged people to come out and vote on June 16.

“It’s important for people to come out and vote to get the best sense of what people want,” Soby said. “Every vote counts. It’s how we get the best results for our community.”

Colchester Voters Say ‘Yes’ to Town Budget, ‘No’ to Schools

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

Last Thursday, Colchester voters took to the polls to decide upon the proposed town and Board of Education spending packages for 2015-16. Twenty-five percent of voters cast a ballot (2,523 voters out of 10,109 registered voters) May 25, with the majority – albeit a very slim majority – voting in favor of the \$13.76 million town budget.

The package passed 1,262-1,254 - a mere eight votes - which led to a recount by the town registrars Tuesday (the recount reduced the number of votes in favor of the budget by one, bringing it to the above eight). Overall, the town budget will increase 4.09 percent or \$541,000 from current year spending.

The education budget however, was defeated by a vote of 1,318-1,202, a difference of 116 votes. Out of the \$52.88 million total package put in front of voters last week, \$39.85 million – an increase of .46 percent or \$184,000 - was the education budget.

Back on May 5 during the first referendum, both budgets were shot down by voters; the town budget by a 1,236-1,125 tally, and the education budget by 1,285-1,075. After that initial defeat, the Board of Finance reduced the town budget by \$100,016 and the education budget by \$150,000. The board also realized \$22,300 of additional revenue on the municipal side.

Combined together, the budget presented at last week’s referendum would have been a 1.37 percent increase or \$724,000 from current year spending. The mill rate would have gone up to

30.81, up from the current 30.57, which would equate to a tax increase of .8 percent.

Board of Finance chair Rob Tarlov said this week passing only one of the two budgets in a referendum has not happened in his recent memory.

There’s some discrepancy in town as to whether or not it happened in 1998, but apart from that, approving only one of the two budgets has not happened for at least 20 years.

“I just think the school side is so big in proportion of the entire town that it impacts people more,” Tarlov said of why he thinks the vote turned out the way it did. “People see declining enrollment and say ‘why isn’t the budget going down?’”

On Wednesday night, the Board of Finance held a meeting to discuss potential cuts from the education budget to make it more palatable. Finance members had asked the Board of Education to bring an example of \$280,000 of reductions, which would mean no increase to the mill rate even with the town’s approved budget.

However, the day before, when the Board of Education held a special meeting and shared what those cuts would mean, a number of parents came out to express their displeasure at some of the recommended reductions.

The reductions proposed by Superintendent Jeff Mathieu to reach \$280,000 included a full-time English teacher at Bacon Academy, an eighth grade English teacher at William J. Johnston Middle School, a part-time eighth

grade English teacher at WJJMS, a part-time Math teacher at Bacon, a full-time resource paraprofessional at Jack Jackter Intermediate School, and a part-time resource paraprofessional at WJJMS. The plan also called for a reduction in technology purchases and establishing student parking fees at \$50 a car at Bacon.

Other proposed reductions went after sports and included middle school sports, freshmen basketball, freshmen soccer, indoor track at Bacon, and lacrosse at Bacon.

Parents came out again in droves Wednesday to ask the Board of Finance to approve a minimal cut on the education budget.

Megan Tartsinis, a parent in town, said kids need sports as part of their school life.

“It’s important for you to realize college looks for the whole package,” Tartsinis said. “Kids are playing sports and being competitive for college.”

Chris Faulkner, the girls’ lacrosse coach, said cutting lacrosse at the high school would destroy the youth sport in town.

“Over 250 kids play in the community,” Faulkner said. “It’s the fastest growing sport. You would decimate the youth program. Cutting it because it is the last one in is shameful.”

Resident John Consiglio said his concern was that the list seemed predetermined and it shouldn’t be. He urged the Board of Education to look again for other places to cut.

Multiple parents pointed out if sports are cut, students are more likely to look at magnet schools or other alternatives, which actually cost the district more than the sports program itself.

Mike Egan, a Board of Education member who was speaking as a parent, said he was done putting the future in the hands of those that nail in the ‘no’ signs.

“We have to do this, it’s us,” Egan said to the others in the room.

The Board of Finance went back and forth during their discussion over cutting \$183,000 (the education budget’s current increase) versus making a much lesser reduction of \$50,000.

Mathieu stated, after being asked if the list can change, that he can find \$50,000 in cuts elsewhere without touching programs or sports. But he said more than \$50,000 would result in cuts to sports and programming.

In the end, board member John Ringo motioned to reduce the education budget by \$50,000, which passed 3-2 with Ringo, Tom Kane and Art Shilosky voting for and Tarlov and Rob Esteve voting against.

The reduction brings the total education budget to \$39.35 million, for a \$133,000 increase over the 2014-15 budget.

The education budget now goes to the Board of Selectmen for them to set the referendum date for the third referendum on Thursday after press time.

Portland Town Park Set to Move Forward

by John Tyczkowski

Wednesday evening, the Board of Selectmen broke with their normal format to view, along with nearly 40 residents, a presentation on a public project a decade in the making.

Brian McCarthy of the Route 17 Recreational Complex Committee, along with project manager and landscape architect Dan Biggs of Weston & Sampson, presented on Portland Town Park, the proposed structure to be located at the Goodrich property at Route 17 and Strickland Street.

The proposed park would include such amenities as soccer and baseball fields, hiking trails and a picnic area on a 15-acre parcel of land.

The town purchased the 37-acre property a decade ago from Nelson Goodrich, a long-time resident. In 2013, the town received a STEAP grant from the state to help move the design and development process along.

Master planning began that year, and the town held a preliminary public meeting on the park in the spring of 2014.

The agricultural nature of the land also necessitates a brownfields evaluation and possible remediation due to pesticides that may have seeped into the ground.

The Route 17 Portland Town Park Committee itself was established when that planning process began.

Wednesday's meeting presented a finalized site plan that incorporated feedback from a larger public meeting held in mid-April on the project, with a preliminary proposed price tag of \$5 million.

The revised master plan, dated May 4, included two baseball fields as well as two grass athletic fields that could be used for football, soccer, lacrosse or other similar sports. The fields would be irrigated, and would include panels at their perimeters to buffer sound and

provide shade.

In addition, plans included a central plaza area that would contain a pavilion with a concession stand, picnic tables, restrooms and an 800-square foot recreation barn that could be booked in advance for use in activities such as summer camp events and private functions.

There would also be outdoor fitness equipment for adults, a playground for children ages six months and up, as well as a splash pad, which would include various directed water stream recreation implements.

A new addition to these plans from the April presentation, based on residents' feedback, was the inclusion of courts for bocce and horseshoes.

Plans also included a .75 mile walking and jogging path around the perimeter of the western section of the park, as well as a green space area on a hill at the western edge of the park which could be used for picnicking, passive recreation opportunities or cross-country skiing, sledding and snowshoeing during the winter.

Finally, the park would include 226 parking spots as well, and a total of more than 15 acres of open space.

There would also be plenty of shade areas around the playground and splash pad for parents as they watch their children, Briggs said, from resident feedback.

Also, another new addition from last month's meeting was the inclusion of a nature trail at the northwest edge of the park onto the undeveloped land on the Goodrich property parcel.

Finally, a large greenspace area at the southern edge of the park along Strickland Street could have multiple uses, Briggs said. A section of it could be developed into a basketball court, while another large section would be left as a wildflower meadow for passive recreation.

In addition, a portion of the property would be reserved as wetlands to help with drainage and other environmental concerns.

The design process is nearly complete, Biggs said. From here, all that's needed is to finalize the design, then acquire funding and secure permits; then construction can begin.

"The town will be able to review the site and design plan over the next couple of weeks as a tool to help secure funding," he said. "We're much further ahead than we were two years ago, from the town's perspective."

"I know I'm looking forward to the moment when I see bulldozers begin to push soil around," he said.

The floor then opened up for public comment and more than 15 residents, including representatives from Portland Little League, Portland Soccer and the Parks and Recreation Commission, voiced their support of the project, mainly noting the pros of the town owning its own fields.

Currently the town leases athletic fields, which include Tomasso Field and the Oakwood Soccer Park.

Rick Kelsey, director of public works, stated he was in favor of the project moving forward, but had a concern.

"I want to compliment Sean [Dwyer, parks and recreation director], Brian and the whole committee for such a well-thought out plan," he said. "But I did have a question about maintenance."

Kelsey said his staff of four men "struggles to try to maintain" the fields the town has currently.

"Now we also have to take into account expanding the Riverfront Park, and the Air Line Trail," he said. "That's a fair amount more infrastructure for us to maintain."

"I'm wondering how we're going to maintain all of these improvements. Perhaps we'll add people, but that involves cost," he said.

Five-year resident Chad Wilson said he was wholeheartedly in favor of the "new vision" promised by the park.

"I've got two small children, and I would entirely support this, we would definitely take part in and participate in this park," he said. "I think it'd be a wonderful thing for the community."

Michael Hernandez, commander of VFW Post 6121, said he spoke on behalf of the veterans in town to support the park.

"We all agree that we would enjoy this park greatly, we're very excited about it and we stand behind it," he said. "If there's anything that the veterans can do to help, we'll do it."

Karen Labbadia, a self-described 62-year resident of Portland, said she was glad to see a centralized park that would serve to bring sports families together.

"I know that I've definitely seen you have to be driving in 16 different directions to keep up with your kids' sports," she said, referring to the fact that the town's sports fields are geographically widespread. "This park would bring everyone to one place and help build that sense of togetherness in town."

Norman Ward, a member of several commissions in town, said he was happy to see the momentum the project has gathered and that it's "finally moving forward."

"This complex is fantastic, we have lots of support and it's a wonderful move into the future," he said. "It supports every age group in town, and every facet of family, from grandparents to newborns."

"Let's keep the momentum going and see this through," he said.

East Hampton Man Arrested on Child Porn Charges

Keith Haessly, 45, of East Hampton, was arrested Wednesday and charged by federal criminal complaint with possession, distribution and production of child pornography, Deirdre M. Daly, U.S. Attorney for the District of Connecticut, and Patricia M. Ferrick, Special Agent in Charge of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, announced.

The criminal complaint alleges that in January, the Federal Bureau of Investigation received information that Haessly was distributing images of child pornography over the Internet and had engaged in numerous sexually explicit chats related to the sexual exploitation of young boys.

The complaint adds that further investigation revealed Haessly has been posing as a female, using the name "Amy Finch," and used loop recordings of females to entice boys to engage in sexual activity over webcams through video chat programs such as Skype and Omegle. Haessly then made recordings of the boys engaged in sexual activity.

Investigators conducted a court-authorized search of Haessly's residence on Wednesday and seized a laptop computer. Haessly was arrested at his place of work.

Following his arrest, Haessly appeared before U.S. Magistrate Judge Sarah A. L. Merriam in New Haven and was ordered detained.

The charge of production of child pornography carries a minimum term of imprisonment of 15 years.

Daly stressed that a complaint is only a charge and is not evidence of guilt. Charges are only allegations, and the defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

This matter is being investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Connecticut Child Exploitation Task Force, which includes federal, state and local law enforcement agencies. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Ray Miller.

This prosecution is part of the U.S. Department of Justice's Project Safe Childhood Initiative, which is aimed at protecting children from sexual abuse and exploitation. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, visit justice.gov/psc.

To report cases of child exploitation, visit cybertipline.com.

Sklarz Receives Raise, Extension in Marlborough

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

The Board of Education last Thursday voted to give Superintendent of Schools David Sklarz a 2.5 percent raise – and to add another year onto his current contract.

The raise, which takes effect July 1, brings Sklarz's salary to \$68,547. The superintendent is part-time; he works two to three days per week, for a total of 110 days per year.

The extension will keep Sklarz in Marlborough through the 2017-18 school year.

The school board met in executive session during its meeting May 28 to discuss Sklarz' evaluation. After coming out of executive session, the board voted unanimously – member Theresa Bryssel was absent from the meeting – to the raise and extension.

"We are all very pleased with what's happened at the school this year," board chair Ruth Kelly said. "We're all in agreement he's done a wonderful job with preparing the budget and keeping the board information the entire year in a clear, transparent manner."

Sklarz said he's been "privileged and honored to be part of this school system."

Sklarz began six years ago as part-time superintendent of the Marlborough district. Since then, the board has renewed his con-

tract every year. Before coming to Marlborough in 2009, he was superintendent of West Hartford Public Schools and the Santa Cruz Public Schools system in California.

The raise is similar to what Sklarz received last year. His salary for the current year is \$66,875 – up \$2,000 from his 2013-14 pay.

"The board has come together and done some amazing things; all day kindergarten, Spanish," Sklarz said. "It's been wonderful to be part of a team of great board members, incredible parents, and amazing faculty and administrators."

Sklarz said he is excited to be continuing over the next three years.

"We're extremely happy with the administrators and how they've managed the school this year," Kelly said. "Each month we receive a financial statement and how things are progressing. We are also happy he's done a great job this year communicating with the public on what's going on with the school."

Since joining the district, Sklarz has hired two interim principals and one permanent principal, Dan White. He also promoted Kim Kelley, a former teacher at MES, to assistant principal.

Over \$50,000 of Lawn Equipment Stolen in Colchester

by **Kaitlyn Schroyer**

Over \$50,000 worth of lawn equipment has been stolen after an overnight break-in at D.H. Marvin & Son last weekend.

Police reported that sometime between 7:30 p.m. Saturday, May 30, and 8:45 a.m. Sunday, May 31, three trucks (a pick-up, flatbed and box truck), along with riding lawn mowers, tractors, push mowers, chains, grinders, hand tools, power tools, jacks, air compressors and generators, were taken from the D.H. Marvin lot at 359 South Main St.

By Sunday afternoon, owner Dennis Marvin said the three vehicles had been recovered. The pick-up truck was located in Colchester in the parking lot of a senior housing development. The flatbed was found in Dayville and the box truck was found in Putnam. All of the vehicles had the D.H. Marvin & Son logo on them.

But, Marvin said, “we didn’t recover any of the new equipment.”

Originally, the heist was estimated to have

taken over \$100,000 worth of equipment, including the vehicles. The lawn equipment was in crates, police said.

Marvin said the state police towed the trucks back to Troop K, but nothing was on the flatbed or in any of the trucks.

“[The police] have some people of interest, but no one local,” Marvin said of the investigation.

Marvin explained his store had surveillance cameras inside, but none outside. In light of the burglary, however, Marvin said, outside cameras were going to be installed this week.

Marvin said there have been thefts of items from the store in the past, but not in decades – and “certainly nothing of this magnitude.”

As of Wednesday morning, no one had been arrested in the case. The case was handed over to the Major Crime Division at Troop K.

Anyone with any information regarding the burglary can contact the Major Crime Division at Troop K at 860-465-5400.

East Hampton Woman Killed in Crash

by **John Tyczkowski**

An East Hampton woman died Saturday evening in a one-car accident on Tartia Road, police said.

Jeanne Urban, 47, was transported by Life Star to St. Francis Hospital where she later died from her injuries, according to an East Hampton Police Department press release.

Darin Hume, 47, who was driving the 2014 Chevrolet Camaro at the time of the crash at

5:30 p.m., and his other passenger, Al Souppa, 64, were injured in the crash.

The two were also residents in town.

No other details on the accident were immediately available.

The investigation is currently ongoing, police said, and witnesses with information may call EHPD at 860-267-9922.

Colchester Woman’s Car Goes Down Embankment

by **Kaitlyn Schroyer**

A Colchester woman was transported to the Marlborough Clinic after her car went down an embankment off Route 2 Wednesday morning.

Karen Gum, 52, of 2 Westchester Hills, was transported for precautionary measures after the accident.

State police reported Gum went off the road

between exits 13 and 12, swerving off the road and striking a cable barrier with her car’s front end. The car continued over the barrier and into the woods down an embankment where it struck several trees, police said.

Police said 100 feet of wire rope guard rail and posts were knocked down during the accident.

East Hampton Police News

5/11: Ellen C. Brunsgaard, 24, of 24 Tarragon Dr., was arrested and charged with DUI, failure to drive right and possession of drug paraphernalia, East Hampton Police said.

5/17: Brian Palmerick, 32, of 173 Lakeview Dr., Colchester, was issued a summons for traveling too fast and operating a motor vehicle under suspension, police said.

5/19: Noel Ortiz, 35, of 45 Cameo Dr., Willimantic, was arrested and charged with driving under the influence of drugs and failure to drive right, police said.

5/20: Karla Depietro, 29, of 693 Washington Ave., Middletown, was issued a summons for operating a motor vehicle under suspension, failure to obey a stop sign, operating a motor vehicle while on a cell phone in a construction zone, defective windshield and operating an unregistered and uninsured motor vehicle, police said.

5/21: Mark A. Lovely, 56, of 30 Whispering Woods Rd., was arrested and charged with DUI, police said.

5/24: Thomas L. Pritchard, 46, of 113 Mott Hill Rd., was arrested and charged with disorderly conduct and third-degree criminal mischief, police said.

Marlborough Police News

5/30: State Police said Roberta Ranciato, 61, of 10 Winding Brook Ln., Wallingford, was arrested and charged with DUI and failure to drive in the proper lane.

Andover Police News

5/30: State Police said a canoe was stolen from a boat rack on Lake Road. Anyone with information can contact Trooper Abigail Belcher at 860-465-5400.

Hebron Police News

5/28: State Police said James Fisher, 40, of 122 Olenick Rd., Lebanon, was arrested and charged with threatening, disorderly conduct and violation of a protective order.

5/28: State Police said Nicole Smith, 32, of 17 Bass Lake Rd., Amston, was arrested and charged with violation of a protective order.

5/30: State Police said Lindsey Roberson, 18, of 30 Lakewood Rd., East Hampton, was arrested and charged with DUI and improper parking.

From the Editor’s Desk

Observations & Ruminations

by **Mike Thompson**

First things first: Happy National Doughnut Day!

Yes, today, June 5, is National Doughnut Day. I’m not sure why exactly National Doughnut Day falls in June, when folks are trying to shed the last few winter pounds off them and get their summer bod ready – a day celebrating a fried ring of fat would probably make more sense in, say, January – but, here we are.

And it provides a perfect excuse to open up Ye Olde History Book and share the origin of doughnuts with you. (And you’ll note I spell it “doughnuts.” It’s the proper spelling. The alternative “donut” spelling has gained widespread popularity – thanks in part, I’m sure, to the popularity of Dunkin’ Donuts – but I’m something of a traditionalist. I hate the designated hitter, I’d rather own my music than stream it, and I prefer spelling “doughnut” the old-fashioned way.) Those lovely little treats, it turns out, have a disputed history.

For years, the doughnut was thought to have originated in 19th century America by Dutch settlers – and turned into the ring-shape form we know today by American Hanson Gregory in 1847.

Two years ago in England, however, documents were unearthed alleging the recipe for doughnuts was first recorded in 1800 by Baroness Elizabeth Dimsdale, the wife of a society doctor in Hertford, England. The baroness took the recipe from a local cook, known only as Mrs. Fordham.

Called “dow nuts,” Dimsdale’s recipe calls for sugar, eggs, nutmeg, butter and yeast. The ingredients are made into a dough which is rolled out and cut into “nuts.” The nuts are then deep-fried in hog lard before being covered in sugar and left by the fire to rise.

Except for the hog lard part, those sound pretty tasty.

Washington Irving’s mention of “doughnuts” in his 1809 satire *A History of New York* is commonly cited as the first published record of the word. In the book, Irving described “balls of sweetened dough, fried in hog’s fat, and called doughnuts, or olykoeks [Dutch for ‘oil cakes’].”

As for the alternative “donut” spelling, it was first seen in print in 1900 – but it remained rare until the 1950s. These days, it’s the more commonly-seen spelling – thanks, again, to Dunkin’ Donuts.

For me, while Dunkin’ Donuts were common sights when I was growing up (although not quite as common as they are now), the doughnut I associate with my youth isn’t a Dunkin’. Just up the street from the Thompson family house was a wonderful place called The Whole Donut. It’s a mostly-gone chain these days, but back then they were fairly frequent – and there were three in my hometown of Manchester.

What made Whole Donut so special? The doughnuts were big, for starters, and quite flavorful. The Dunkin’ Donuts doughnuts – while tasty – have this assembly-line look to

them, with everything perfectly portioned. Not Whole Donut. Each one was unique. You might get lucky and grab a doughnut with a little extra glaze build-up on it, or some extra chocolate dripping off.

And at Whole Donut they made the doughnuts, on site. Like a lot of kids back then, I had a paper route in my preteen years, first delivering the *Manchester Herald* and then, after it folded, the *Journal Inquirer*. Both were afternoon papers during the week, but on Saturdays, they were morning deliveries. So I’d get up at the crack of dawn, head outside, roll up the papers and put them in my delivery bag, and walk from house to house. In those early-morning hours, the closer I got to The Whole Donut, the more that delectable aroma permeated the air. There was nothing like it.

But Whole Donut’s trademark – the thing that made them call themselves “The Whole Donut” – was the fact you could get a glazed doughnut with the “hole” still inside. It’s tough to describe the look. There’d be a little indentation in the center of the doughnut, just enough so that you could pull out that sweet little glob of dough if you wanted to. Or you could leave it in, and eat the doughnut “whole.” I would go back and forth as to the way I liked mine best.

Alas, all good things must come to an end. About the time I was in college, a Dunkin’ Donuts opened just down the street from me (in what has, when I was growing up, been a steakhouse – I believe that’s what’s known as trading down). The Dunkin’ dominance was already prevalent then, and I knew that, being located just a block away from The Whole Donut, it would eventually swallow the superior doughnut shop. Somewhat surprisingly, The Whole Donut managed to hold its own for a few years, but eventually the inevitable came, and it – and, indeed, most of The Whole Donut outlets – closed its doors.

I still eat at Dunkin’ Donuts. It’s convenient, and their doughnuts, while not Whole Donut quality, are tasty. At most Dunkin’ stores, you can celebrate National Doughnut Day today by getting a free doughnut with the purchase of any medium or large beverage. So I’ll definitely be stopping by and getting mine – and you should too.

* * *

So here’s a quick joke, from comic Doug Stanhope: A guy’s driving down an old country road and he sees a farmer in his orchard feeding his pigs. But what the farmer’s doing is he’s taking one pig at a time, holding him up, letting him eat an apple out of the tree, and then setting him down before picking up another pig and letting him eat an apple.

So the guy pulls over and walks up to the farmer and says, “Wouldn’t it save time to just knock all the apples on the ground and let the pigs eat them all at once?”

The farmer, confused, looks at the guy and says, “What’s time to a pig?”

* * *

See you next week.

Colchester Police News

5/29: Colchester Police said they are investigating after an obscene picture was spray painted on a dugout at one of the baseball fields at the Recreation Complex on Old Hebron Road. Anyone with information can contact Officer Eric Watrous at 860-537-7270.

5/29: State Police said Nicole Klusek, 24, of 67 Park Ave., was arrested and charged with reckless driving, suspended license, and operating a motor vehicle without permission.

5/29: State Police said Tabatha Peltier, 23, of 38 Edgewood Dr., was arrested and charged with conspiracy to commit sixth-degree larceny, 11 counts of sixth-degree larceny and 11 counts of third-degree forgery. Police said also arrested in the same case was Shane Boulais, 23, of 77 Jones Hollow Rd., Marlborough. Boulais was charged with conspiracy to commit sixth-degree larceny, two counts of sixth-degree larceny, and two counts of third-degree forgery.

5/30: State Police said Colin Dino, 23, of 116 Barstow Ln., Tolland, was arrested and charged with third-degree assault and disorderly conduct.

5/30: State Police said Bradley Coffin, 47, of 720 Deep River Rd., was arrested and charged with DUI and following too closely.

5/30: Colchester Police said they are investigating after a car’s window was shattered with a rock on Birch Circle. The person stole a Louis Vuitton leather tote bag containing a Samsung tablet, police said. The incident happened between the late evening of May 29 and the early morning hours of May 30. Anyone with information can contact Officer Robert LaBonte at 860-537-7270.

5/30: Colchester Police said Jackie Baum, 37, of 181 Mack Rd., Lebanon, was arrested and charged with DUI, drinking while operating, and restricted turns.

Obituaries

Andover

Francis Henry Zuraw

Francis Henry Zuraw, 65, of Buffalo, S.C., formerly of Andover, husband of Linda L. Glidden Zuraw, passed away Sunday, March 1, after a long illness.

Frank was born Feb. 16, 1950, son of the late Henry F. Zuraw and Constance Zuraw Trask. He retired from Northeast Utilities in Connecticut. He was a member of the Bare Bones Biker Church in South Carolina. He was a member of the Patriot Guard Riders, where he proudly held the position of ride captain, member of the Korean War Veterans Association, Spartanburg Gun Club and the Colchester Fish & Game Club here in Connecticut.

Surviving in addition to his wife are two sons, Henry Zuraw and Jason Zuraw, both of South Carolina; two daughters, Shannan Baiocchetti of Andover and Nancy Baiocchetti of Pomfret Center; four brothers; a sister; four granddaughters, one grandson and a great-grandson.

A celebration of his life will be observed Saturday, June 20, at the Colchester Fish and Game Club, Old Amston Road, Colchester, from 12 noon to 5 p.m.

Donations may be made in his memory to the organization that he so proudly was a member of: SC Patriot Guard Riders, c/o Nancy Ward, P.O. Box 80265, Charleston, SC 29416.



Portland

Salvatore R. Storo

Salvatore R. Storo, 76, of Portland, beloved husband of 50 years to Karen (Nichol) Storo, passed away unexpectedly on Thursday, May 28. Born Aug. 2, 1938, in New Haven, Sal grew up in Foxon.

He attended East Haven High School, where he so enjoyed his years as a football quarterback, and a pitcher on the baseball team. Sal went on to attend the University of Connecticut, where he met Karen, and graduated with a bachelor's degree in history. For much of his professional career, Sal worked for Aetna Life & Casualty in Hartford, from which he retired as a systems analyst. Soon thereafter, he joined the La Malfa Agency in Portland, as a real estate agent for several years.

Sal delighted in spending his free time at home, restoring and maintaining the antique 1700s homes and gardens he shared with Karen. Ever the avid reader and history enthusiast, Sal loved to read from his personal library of historical biographies and literature. Classical music was a favorite of his, and summer theater at the Goodspeed Opera House was never to be missed. A natural athlete and lifelong sports fan, Sal was a dedicated runner.

Above all, Sal cherished his family and friends, delighting in the time spent together. He got a real kick out of his grandkids, who called him Pop-Up, entertaining them with his master storytelling, and always making time to play. He loved to meet people and to learn their personal stories, and he will be remembered by those who knew him for his warmth and sincerity, and genuine interest in others. Sal was a good, kind soul, and he is dearly missed.

Along with his wife, Karen, Sal leaves his daughters, Jennifer Storo of Boston and Rebecca Emerick of Arlington, Mass.; sons-in-law, Peter Leis and Marc Emerick; grandchildren, Garson and Jasper Leis. Sal also leaves behind a sister, Sandra Garitta of Ocala, Fla.

He was the son of the late Gerald and Genevieve (Zaremba) Storo, and was predeceased by siblings, Barbara, John and Gerald.

Services will be private. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Portland Library, where Sal was a regular: Portland Library, 20 Freestone Avenue, Portland, CT, 06480 (portlandlibraryct.org).

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



Andover

Jean Shepherd Gasper

Jean Shepherd Gasper, 93, of Andover, passed away at home Wednesday, May 27. Jean was born in New Haven on Aug. 5, 1921. She was the daughter of the late John and Anne Shepherd. Jean graduated from Hillhouse High, New Haven and MORSE College, Hartford.

She moved to Andover in 1939, married Andrew F. Gasper in 1943, and raised four children at the Corner House.

Jean played the organ for St. Columba Church for 32 years, served as Andover Town secretary for 16 years before being elected as first selectwoman of Andover, serving three terms. Jean was a member of the Sunshine Stampers, served on the Board of the Andover Library, Townsend Cemetery, and was an active member of the Andover Congregational Church; currently serving as the church historian. Throughout her life, Jean was known for her homemade apple pies, was involved in the initial structure of the Andover Red Cross, as well as, the Mother's Club during World War II.

In 1995, Jean married her long-time friend, Brian Minalga of Westerly, R.I. They spent 17 years together, sharing in sailing, traveling, and family gatherings.

Jean was predeceased by her first husband, Andrew F. Gasper, sister Margaret and husband William Andrews, son-in-law, Douglas Griswold; second husband, Brian Minalga, and her son, Andrew F. Gasper Jr. and daughter-in-law, Lillian Gasper.

Jean is survived by three children, Joanna Griswold (Peter Wass) of Andover, Robert and Peggy Gasper of Hebron, and Marilyn and Thomas Sylvester of Lebanon. She leaves behind eight grandchildren, Lisa Dunnack (Mike Emerling), Andrew Gasper, Heather Steffens (Todd), Sarah Costa (Mario), Zachary Sylvester (Karen), Kevin Gasper (Lindsay), Joshua Sylvester, and Andrea Sylvester (Matthew Parkinson). Great-grandchildren include Aiden, Blake, Logan, Ryan, Ashlyn, Taylor and two more this summer. In addition, she leaves behind nieces Jane Coryea (Robert) and Betsy Pensgen (Mark) and several more nieces and nephews.

She also leaves Brian's family, Mike Minalga (Marie) of Westfield, MA and Patricia Walbam (Carl) of Westerly, R.I., and their children and grandchildren.

Jean led an incredibly fulfilled and busy life until her very last day with us. Jean's home was always open to all, where you would be received with a warm hug, lively conversation, words of wisdom and sound advice. She will be greatly missed.It's the end of an era. "10-4!"

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to: The Andover Fire Department, 13 School Road, Andover, CT 06232; First Congregational Church, P.O. Box 55, Andover, CT 06232; Friends of Andover Public Library, P.O. Box 117, Andover, CT 06232.

Her family received relatives and friends Thursday, June 4, at Potter Funeral Home, 456 Jackson St. (Route 195), Willimantic. Jean's funeral will be held today, June 5, at 11 a.m., at the First Congregational Church, Route 6, Andover. Burial will be at the convenience of the family.

To sign the online memorial book, visit potterfuneralhome.com.

East Hampton

Marion Blais Wallace

Marion Blais Wallace, 86, of East Hampton, formerly of Manchester, died Thursday, May 28, at Middlesex Hospital. Born Feb. 9, 1929, in Bristol she was the daughter of the late Wilfred and Marion (Field) Blais. Before her retirement, she had worked in a factory in manufacturing.

She is survived by her husband, Robert H. Wallace of Manchester; her son, Robert B. Wallace of Manchester; her daughter, Patricia Messerschmidt of Andover; and her two granddaughters Ann Marie and Emily.

Funeral services will be at the convenience of the family.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the charity of the donor's choice.

To leave online condolences, visit spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.



East Hampton

Jeanne Marie Urban

Jeanne Marie Urban, 47, passed away unexpectedly at Saint Francis Hospital Saturday, May 30. Daughter of the late Evelyn Thorpe, she was born Oct. 25, 1967, in Middletown. She was a lifelong resident of East Hampton.

Jeanne graduated from East Hampton High School and from Morse School of Business. She was a faithful employee of Aetna Insurance Company for many years.

Jeanne leaves behind her best friend and beloved fiancé, Darin Hurne. She also leaves behind her loving siblings, John Kissinger and his wife Patty of East Hampton, Stephen Kissinger and his wife Rhonda of East Hampton, Paul Kissinger and Cheryl Kissinger of East Hampton, and Sharon Kissinger Heath and her husband Tom of Somers. Jeanne also leaves behind her many loving nieces and nephews and great nieces and nephews, John Kissinger, Amy DePatie and husband Pete and her children Nathan and Thomas Flynn, Elisha Kissinger, Adam Heath and wife Christina, Eric Kissinger and his wife Heather and their two children Mary Jane and Easton, Josh Kissinger and his fiancée, Mary Van Urff, Stephanie Schwartz and her husband Adam and daughter Emery.

She was blessed with many truly wonderful friends and enjoyed entertaining at her beautiful home. She was always up for a "girl's night out." Jeanne loved camping, going to the "Rail," playing pool, cooking, and romping with her beloved dog Lexie. Jeanne was always there for a friend in need. She loved and embraced life and lived it to its fullest. She leaves an empty space in our hearts which will always be filled with memories and our love for her.

Friends may call at the Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton, today, June 5, from 4-7 p.m. A memorial service will be held at 7 p.m.

Burial will be private at the convenience of the family in Lake View Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to Connecticut Humane Society, 701 Russell Rd., Newington, CT 06111, or to ASPCA at aspc.org.

To leave online condolences, visit spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

Colchester

Robert Martingano

Robert "Scott" Martingano, 56, beloved husband of Vanessa (Rood) Martingano, passed away at home on Tuesday morning, June 2. Born Feb. 8, 1959, in New London, he was a son of Robert J. Martingano of New London and the late Janice (Layden) Martingano.

Scott was a graduate of Bacon Academy in Colchester and served in the U.S. Marine Corps. He enjoyed sports; played as a third baseman in the Willi-Mac Softball league for many years, was an avid Redskins fan, despite their frequent and persistent losses, and loved the Yankees. He also took pleasure in riding his Harley. Mostly, Scott loved being outdoors, beautifying his home, and spending time with his family.

In addition to his father and his loving wife, he leaves behind four children, Robert of Norwich, Brandon of Scotland, Jamie of Willimantic and Mikaila Lamadrid and her husband, Jay, of Washington State; four stepchildren, Shareena Morrison of New Jersey and Cheyenne, Brandon and Brian Eldridge, all of Willimantic; four siblings, Michael of Niantic, Brenda Kniska and her husband, Edward of Colchester, Cynthia of Rhode Island and Michelle Urso and her husband Richard, also of Rhode Island; his parents-in-law, William and Karen Rood of North Windham; and numerous extended family members and friends.

He was predeceased by a sister, Colleen Sellick.

The family will receive guests Saturday, June 6, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester, starting at 10 a.m., until his Celebration of Life service beginning at noon. Burial will be private.

In lieu of flowers, donations in his memory may be made to the American Cancer Society, 238 W. Town St., Norwich, CT 06360.

For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

East Hampton

Joseph Lastrina

Joseph Lastrina, 68 of East Hampton, formerly of Portland passed away Friday May 29, 2015 at St. Francis Hospital. He is the son of June (Scranton) Lastrina and the late Andrew Lastrina.

Born on March 12, 1947 in Middletown, he lived in Portland for most of his life until moving to East Hampton. He worked for Phoenix Environmental Inc for over 30 years until his retirement and was a U.S. Army veteran during Vietnam. He was a member of St. Francis Hall in Portland and was an avid Nascar fan.

Besides his mother, he leaves his son, Donald Lastrina of Sebring, FL, a daughter, Jodi Rixon and her husband, Peter of East Hampton, a brother, Andrew Lastrina of Portland, a sister, Susan Lastrina of Middletown, grandchildren, Lea Lastrina, Donald and Taylor Rixon, great-grandchildren, Donavin, Samuel, Larissa and Daniel and several nieces and nephews.

Funeral services were held Wednesday, June 3, at Portland Memorial Funeral Home, 231 Main St., Portland. Burial will be in St. Mary Cemetery, Portland. There are no calling hours.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to St. Francis Foundation 95 Woodland St Hartford, CT 06105.

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

from courant

Colchester

Cornelius Paul McNamara

Cornelius Paul McNamara, 86, of Colchester, passed away Friday, May 29. He was born in Bronx, N.Y., Dec. 25, 1928, to Cornelius Paul McNamara Sr. and Helen Owen. He is predeceased by brother, Philip Owen McNamara.

He graduated from Norwich Free Academy Class of 1947 and served in the United States Army. He belonged to Friendly Sons of St. Patrick as past president, Knights of Columbus 4th degree, Rose City Chorus, Barbershop Harmony Society of Norwich as past president and Colchester AARP 4019. He volunteered over the years at both Backus Hospital and Gardner Lake Fire Department.

He enjoyed watching the New York Yankees, UConn basketball and Connecticut Sun Women's basketball team. He was part of the only championship football team at NFA in 1945. Paul had a passion for the water and enjoyed many memories at Gardner Lake and Beach Pond with friends and family over the years.

Paul McNamara is survived by wife of 33 years, Elizabeth Ann Parkhurst; three daughters, Kim Seaberg (Lewys) of Oakdale, Eileen McNamara of New Britain and Dawn McNamara of Oakdale; six step-children, Doreen Rabideau of Colchester, Lynn (Rabideau) Semmelrock (Edward) of North Franklin, Allison (Rabideau) Terpe (Fred) of Preston, Kenneth Rabideau of Charlestown, New Hampshire, Thomas Rabideau of Danielson and Carolyn (Rabideau) Gorman (David) of Milton, Ga. He is also survived by four grandchildren, Gina Hutchings (Corey), Brooke Forbes, Shannon Sadlon and Carly Forbes; 10 step-grandchildren, Cindy, Beth, Jennifer, Tyler, Andrew, Brandon, Ryan, Jason, Samantha and Timothy; and eight great-grandchildren. He was an uncle to Kevin McNamara, Kate Russo and Brian McNamara. Mother of his children, Joan Sherwood, remained a close friend throughout his life.

Calling hours were held Wednesday, June 3, at Labenski Funeral Home (107 Boswell Ave., Norwich), followed by a memorial service that night.

Donations may be made in his memory to Alzheimer's Association at alz.org/join_the_cause_donate.asp.

Paul's family would like to extend their sincere appreciation to Middlesex Hospital of Middletown and their hospice care unit for their exceptional support and compassion during Paul's last days.

Visit labenskifuneralhome.com to leave an online tribute or condolence.



from courant
East Hampton

Diane Cusson

I, Diane (Hanson) Cusson, 72, grew up in East Hampton, a small rural town, and died Wednesday, May 27.

I met my husband, Kenneth "Ken" Cusson, in Manchester. I graduated from Manchester High School, Class of 1960. While Ken was home on leave in 1963 from the Air Force, he called me. We started dating and I wrote daily letters. I dedicated "Since I Fell for You" by Lenny Welch to him on radio station WDRC in Hartford. He could pick up the station while at Loring Air Force Base in Maine. I got a phone call on New Year's Eve of that year and he proposed marriage. We got married on June 13, 1964 and have been partners and friends for 51 years. We went back to Maine for our honeymoon in my 1954 red Chevrolet with \$50.

Besides my husband, I leave two sons, Mathew and Mark of Southington, and three granddaughters, Theresa, Sydney and Stephanie and a grandson, Nicholas. I also leave two sisters, Suzanne Paracino of Manchester, and Paulette and brother-in-law, Fred Sherman of New York, and several nieces and nephews.

I became involved with PTA, scouts and sports. I always sent my sons to school with homemade lunches and attended their sport and school events. I was involved with the area voc tech school and served as vice chair of the PTA. I helped with the family income by working for an eye doctor and other jobs, including personnel director at Cheney Brothers and payroll at Manchester Memorial Hospital. I was the last person working when Cheney Brothers closed its doors.

In 1994, after Ken retired from the Manchester Fire Department, we moved from Connecticut to Hardwick, Mass. We cleared land, built a barn and house. Together, we moved rocks on our StoneyField Farm. We raised chickens and cows, grew vegetables and berries. When I heard about the Barre Farmers' Market, we joined other local farmers, producers and crafts people every Saturday morning during spring through early fall on Barre Common. I loved meeting all the people at the farmers' market. It was more about the socialization than the money. I also worked at the Hardwick Post Office and other post offices as postmaster relief and as a poll worker. I got to know many people and remembered their names, weddings, children's name and even grandchildren's names.

I grew up as an Episcopalian, but I converted to Catholicism 10 years ago. I served Christ as a lectern, on the parishwide committee, Eucharistic minister, worked on suppers and church fairs at St. Thomas-a-Becket Church in South Barre. Here, I found my church family. A highlight of my life was a pilgrimage to Rome with a South Carolina Diocese. I had the privilege of giving the first and second readings at St. Peter's Basilica. Ken and I had a private audience with Pope Benedict. We tried to take two trips a year and traveled to Europe, Australia, New Zealand and Hawaii for one of the trips as well as on many cruises. We loved to visit churches and chapels. Our most recent cruise, this year, was to the Caribbean. It was one of the best. I loved meeting new people on the trips and kept in touch with many.

I also loved gardening, animals, baking and sharing homemade cookies, jams, eggs and vegetables with people. I believed in sharing and did the little things like clipping coupons for a friend or baking cookies for someone.

I want to thank my doctors especially the team at Dana Farber in Boston and the Barre Health Center for their wonderful care, the hospice staff, my church for its support, Father James Callahan, Deacon Bill Ferrarone and his wife, Karen and of course, my soulmate, Ken.

The funeral Mass for Diane will be held Saturday, June 6, at 10 a.m., in St. Thomas A. Becket Church, Vernon Aveue, S. Barre, Mass. Burial will follow in Hardwick Center Cemetery. Calling hours will be held today, June 5, from 6-8 p.m., in Pillsbury Funeral Home 96 S.Barre Rd., Barre, Mass.

Donations may be made in her name to the St. Francis of Assisi Capital Fund Drive, P.O. Box 186, S.Barre, MA 01074.

from courant
Marlborough

Eladonis S. Hill

Eladonis S. Hill, 66, of Tolland, and formerly of Stafford Springs and Marlborough, passed away Sunday, May 31, after a brief battle with cancer. She was the daughter of the late Robert Hill and Lorna Hills. She recently retired from the Department of Correction after 18 dedicated years of service.

Ela leaves behind three daughters, Susanne Messier and her fiancé, Don Ward, Laura Tarkowski and her husband, Keith, and Jennifer Cavanna and her husband, David; six grandchildren, Ashley, Jenna, Leah, Jacquelyn, Rianna, and Dylan; and also many other family members and friends. She was predeceased by her sisters, Bonnie Hill and Charlotte Welton; her brother, Caverlee Hill; and longtime friends Allan and Sandra Desilets.

She loved all of her family and friends very dearly. She was always helpful with a clever wit, loving to smile and laugh. Among her many activities she enjoyed hunting, fishing, sewing, genealogy, reading and gardening.

Calling hours were held Thursday, June 4, at Introvigne Funeral Home, 51 East Main St., Stafford Springs. Burial in Century Cemetery, Marlborough, will be held privately.

For online condolences, visit [introvigne funeralhome.com](http://introvigne.funeralhome.com).

courant, and a wbn
Colchester

Debbie Wasylishyn

Debbie Wasylishyn, 60, of California and Colchester, passed away Sunday, May 24, peacefully at home. She was born Jan. 14, 1955, in Windham. She was the daughter of the late William and Emma (Orzulak) Wasylishyn.

Debbie was a 1973 graduate of Lyman Memorial High School. She loved her family, friends, church and pottery. Her passing is mourned by her daughter, Angela, son-in-law Joseph, granddaughter Stephanie and four siblings, Vicki, William, James, and Steve; and numerous family and friends.

She was predeceased by her twin, Dawn Wasylishyn, and sister-in-law, Gail Wasylishyn.

Calling hours were held Thursday, May 28, at Belmont Funeral Home, 144 S Main St., Colchester. Burial followed at New Lebanon Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Praise Christian Fellowship or Mary's Place by the Sea.

Colchester

Services for Margaret Curtis

Services for Margaret "Marge" Curtis, 95, who passed away Sunday, April 26, are as follows:

Calling hours will be from 6-8 p.m. Friday, June 12, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. The funeral liturgy will be celebrated at 10:30 a.m. Saturday, June 13, directly at St. Andrew Roman Catholic Church, 128 Norwich Ave., Colchester. Burial will follow in the Ponemah Cemetery, River Road, No. Westchester.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks you to consider donations in her memory to one of the following: Friends of Cragin Memorial Library, Homewood at Crumland Farms Benevolent Fund, or Saint Peter Church Bell Fund.

from courant
Andover

Kenneth E. Guillow

Kenneth E. Guillow, 87, of Vernon, loving husband of 58 years to June (Lord) Guillow, passed away peacefully Friday, May 29. Born in Newport, N.H., the son of the late Harry and Frederica (Magee) Guillow, he grew up and lived in Newport, Manchester, and Andover before moving to Vernon over 40 years ago.

He earned his undergraduate degree in accounting from Westfield State College. Kenneth retired in 1988 after 38 years of service at The Hartford as a senior methods analyst within the Financial Services Division. He was a Life Scout and a true outdoorsman, who enjoyed fishing, hunting, camping, skiing and skeet shooting. He loved animals, and enjoyed woodworking and dancing. Kenneth loved his grandchildren and great-grandchildren very much, and was also very involved in their lives and activities. He was also a member of Rockville United Methodist Church and Rockville Fish and Game Club.

Kenneth was a past treasurer and secretary of the National Association of Internal Auditors, former president of the Toastmasters Club, past treasurer of Branford Hospice, and past president of the South United Methodist Church Men's Club. He was a member of the Connecticut Chapter, St. Andrew's Society.

In addition to his wife, he is survived by his beloved daughter, Joanne Colletti and her husband, Tony, of Vernon; three grandchildren, Erin Culvey, Ryan Culvey and his companion, Lisa DiBenedetto, and Eileen Culvey and her fiancé, John Machnicki III; three step-grandchildren, Ashley Colletti, Chelsea St. Pierre and her husband, Michael, and Anthony Colletti III; three great-granddaughters, Rayana Culvey, whom he adored, Selena Colletti, and Lily St. Pierre; and two nephews, Robert Brown, of Killingworth, and Robert Guillow, of New Hampshire.

In addition to his parents, he was also predeceased by a brother, Harold Guillow.

A memorial service was celebrated Wednesday, June 3, at Rockville United Methodist Church, 142 Grove St., Rockville. Interment will follow in Valley Falls Cemetery in Vernon.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations in his memory may be made to the American Cancer Society, 825 Brook St., I-91 Tech Ctr., Rocky Hill, CT 06067.

Ladd-Turkington & Carmon Funeral Home in Vernon is caring for the arrangements. For online condolences, visit carmonfuneralhome.com.