

RIVEREAST

# News Bulletin

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**Walking in a Winter Wonderland...** Marlborough residents Jeff Gorman and Gracey trek through the snow on the Blackledge River Greenway Trail off of West Road. The trail is one of several being developed in town under the direction of the Sidewalk and Nature Trails Commission. For more information about trails or the commission, visit [marlboroughct.net/index.php/nature-trails-a-sidewalks](http://marlboroughct.net/index.php/nature-trails-a-sidewalks).

## State Trooper Killed in Texas

by Geeta S. Sandberg

A Hebron resident and Connecticut State Trooper described as “one of a kind” died last week following a hunting accident in Texas.

Trooper Stephen Davis, 50, who worked out of the state police Troop C barracks in Tolland, was shot and killed Saturday, Feb. 6, in Maverick County, Texas, southwest of San Antonio next to the Mexican border.

According to a release from the Maverick County sheriff’s department, deputies were dispatched at around 6:30 p.m. CST to the Cinco Ranch, described on its website as “a true operating South Texas ranch with hunting and cattle operations,” which provides guided deer, turkey and hog hunts.

Upon arrival, Davis was found unresponsive, laying face-up in the brush with an apparent wound to the left side of his torso.

Deputies spoke with Alvin Chase of Warren, Maine, who told them he shot at a wild hog while hunting and accidentally struck Davis, according to the release.

Davis was pronounced dead less than an hour later.

According to Criminal Investigator Robert Sifuentes, Davis and Chase were hunting together when they decided to separate. Davis, he said, had moved off into the brush “trying to spook the hogs in the direction of [Chase]” who was on the main dirt road.

Sifuentes explained a group of hogs “came out, then took off in the direction of the brush” where Davis was making his way back; a fence separated him from the main road, and Davis apparently decided to crawl through it.

Davis “was crossing on all fours through the fence, trying to get back, so [Chase] saw what he thought was a hog but was his friend” and fired.

Sifuentes said when speaking to Chase about what had transpired, “he was very devastated.”

The autopsy report, Sifuentes furthered, “coincides with the story,” and the death was ruled accidental.

Davis was a 27-year veteran of the state police, graduating from the Police Academy in 1988. Along with serving most recently as a Tolland resident trooper, Davis had also served as a DARE (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) instructor and field training officer for new troopers, and was actively involved with the Troop C Explorer Post, an experience program geared toward students thinking about a career in criminal justice. During his career he also earned a Medal for Lifesaving award.

In a press release from the Connecticut State Police public information office, Davis’s death was called “a tremendous loss.” Davis was described as a highly respected trooper, who served with distinction and was well-liked.

“The unexpected passing of TFC Davis is a loss for this agency,” Dora B. Schiro, commissioner of the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection, said in the release. She added Davis “swore to serve and protect the public and he did so as a true professional, earning the respect of his peers.”

Similarly, Connecticut State Police Commanding Officer Colonel Brian Meraviglia said Davis was “a dedicated, distinguished member of the Connecticut State Police Family. His



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## School Eyed for Belltown Municipal Office Hub

by Elizabeth Regan

East Hampton residents can now find out what exactly they were voting on when they approved the purchase of a property adjacent to Center School late last year.

The 2 Bevin Blvd. property figures into each of five scenarios outlined in the much-anticipated report by Friar Associates, a Farmington-based architectural, engineering and design firm hired in April to assess the practicality and cost of using Center School as a municipal hub, among other options.

The report’s proposals range from \$22 to \$39 million. The cheapest scenario would involve moving the Town Hall and police department to Center School while transitioning students to Memorial School. The most expensive option would move the Town Hall and police department to 195 West High St. while completely renovating Center School for continued use by fourth and fifth graders.

The final option, resulting from critiques of the first four scenarios, would cost \$26 million. It would move all town hall departments, the

police department and the Board of Education to Center School, which would be expanded by 9,300 square feet. The 2 Bevin Blvd. property would be used for police department parking.

The compromise plan also calls for a 14,000-square foot expansion at Memorial School to accommodate fourth- and fifth-graders and a reconfiguration of the school’s parking and bus drop off layout. The gym would be expanded to allow for a full-sized basketball court and bleachers.

A prior study by Friar Associates, a 223-page report published in 2008, determined Center School would be a feasible location for the town hall offices and the police department. The idea was also supported by a Board of Education recommendation made last year to use Center School for municipal purposes.

On the other hand, the town’s Facilities Evaluation Committee last year recommended moving the police department to 195 West High St. The committee cited the presence of an ex-

isting structure on the 1.2-acre lot, good street access and the potential to house fire and police facilities together.

Town Council Chairwoman Patience Anderson said after Tuesday’s Town Council meeting that councilors have not yet “coalesced” around a specific plan for a potential municipal hub. But she said the council has focused on Center School, not 195 West High Street.

“We’re focusing on Center School because that’s the direction that we as a council have decided we’d like to go into. But there are, within that scheme, or that plan, various different options that we need to entertain,” she said.

The new report will be the topic of discussion at a public Town Council workshop on Feb. 16, at which councilors will hear about the report’s findings from a representative of Friar Associates and will discuss how to move forward.

Anderson said the workshop will also include the Police Department Building Committee, which met Wednesday to put together its pre-

sentation.

The committee was charged last March with determining what a new police station should look like, selecting a site and architect for the building, identifying possible funding opportunities and presenting the package to the Town Council. It suspended itself late last year when members said they could not proceed without the updated Friar report.

The report is dated July 2015 but was withheld from the public until recently, due to ongoing real estate discussions related to the Bevin Boulevard property.

Officials also invoked the real estate exemption to the state’s Freedom of Information law as the reason for numerous closed-door meetings held before the Town Council sent the question to townspeople on Dec. 21. Voters approved the purchase at an estimated cost of \$56,000, including attorney fees, based on statements by town officials that it is advantageous to purchase parcels “contiguous” to existing

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**State Trooper cont. from Front Page**

brother and sister troopers at Troop C and throughout the agency will miss him tremendously.”

Troop C Commanding Officer Lt. Scott Smith added, “Davis was truly passionate about being a trooper and his attention to detail was superb. Stephen was a true professional and a well-respected member of this department.”

Meanwhile, fellow Trooper Daniel McCarthy described his friend and co-worker with a Mark Twain quote, saying, “The fear of death follows from the fear of life. A man who lives fully is prepared to die at any time.”

Davis, who was married for 24 years and has one child, was described in his obituary (which appears in full on page 8 of this week’s *Rivereast*) as “one of a kind: a thoughtful, loving husband; a father that cherished his daughter; a devoted son; an adoring brother; a wonderful colleague; and, the absolute best friend anyone could wish for.”

A funeral Mass will be celebrated for Davis Saturday, Feb. 13 at 1 p.m. in Church of the Holy Family, 185 Church St., Hebron. Family and friends may call today, Feb. 12, from 3-7 p.m., at the same location.

*From the Editor's Desk***Observations & Ruminations**

by Mike Thompson

What a difference a week makes.

As I was writing this column last Tuesday, the highs were in the 50s. I’ll repeat: 50s. And as delightful as that was for early February, it wasn’t a complete shock, at least not considering how this winter had been. December had been so balmy – 65 on Christmas Eve! – that when temperatures even flirted with being seasonal in January, it seemed downright frigid. And, while I realize some towns in *Rivereast*-land had seen more snow than others, for the most part the white stuff had been pretty scarce.

How nice was it? When Chuckles the groundhog saw his shadow Feb. 2, thus signifying spring was “just around the corner,” I don’t think anybody really cared. Not because of any great realization that Chuckles is a marmot, not a meteorologist. Rather, I think it was because, if we had six more weeks of the winter we’d been experiencing up to that point, would anyone really complain?

Alas, the operative phrase has proven to be “up to that point.”

For when my column actually hit your mailbox last Friday, a surprise snowstorm was in the midst of blanketing the state. Yep, in 2016 these things can still hit weathermen off guard, apparently. On Wednesday, it was supposed to be maybe a flurry or two. By Thursday morning it had changed to 1-3 inches for most of the state, 3-5 closer to the Rhode Island border. And then when all was said and done Friday, I wound up with about 10 inches in my town of Manchester, while towns like Hebron and East Hampton got a foot – and some towns got more than that.

Then there was another, smaller-but-still-annoying storm on Monday afternoon and evening of this week that dumped about 6 inches or so. A few flakes were in the air Tuesday, but nothing to speak of, and the sun even briefly came out, at least in Glastonbury. Snow showers were in the forecast for Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday.

And then there’s the cold.

This weekend will be downright dangerous, with a high forecast for Saturday of just 18 degrees, and a high Sunday that’s worse than that – 13 degrees, building off a morning low of -5. That’s not good.

For what it’s worth, the long-range forecast shows things moderating next week, with temperatures climbing back into the 40s. So maybe winter will go back to the delightful warmer-than-usual winter it had been.

I know snow was something of a late bloomer last year. We didn’t really get our first big winter snowstorm until the end of January. But it had still been plenty cold – and we’d also had a Thanksgiving snowstorm a couple months earlier. This year, though, it had been for the most part extremely mild. So I was hopeful maybe we’d escape.

The moral of the story, I guess, is you can’t really escape winter.

\* \* \*

So the results of the New Hampshire pri-

maries are in, and I guess 60 percent of Democrats there are sexists, huh?

Look, I voted for Hillary Clinton in 2008 and I still have a soft spot for her and agree with her on many policies – but the idea that if you don’t support her you’re a sexist is ludicrous. Unfortunately, that argument seems to be spreading, and it does a disservice not just to Bernie Sanders supporters but to Clinton ones as well.

Are there people out there who won’t vote for Hillary just because she’s a woman? Sadly, I’m pretty sure the answer is: absolutely. It’s disgusting, especially considering it’s 2016, but that’s the world we live in.

But it’s also true people who support Sanders over Clinton are doing so because they like Sanders and his ideas better. Perhaps I’m being overly optimistic here, but I feel – I truly do – the vast majority of Sanders-supporters fall into this camp. I really feel that, for the most part, sexism is not a factor at all.

Still, that doesn’t stop folks like Gloria Allred from going on Bill Maher’s show and implying young women only support Sanders because young men do, and they want to go where “the boys are.” Or former secretary of state Madeline Albright, who said, “Young women have to support Hillary Clinton” and even added, “There’s a special place in hell for women who don’t help other women.”

Now, to be fair, Albright’s used that “hell” line before, in contexts having nothing to do with Clinton. But still, the message she and Allred and others have been sending is clear: Any woman worth her salt should vote for Hillary Clinton.

And the message insults not just people who support Sanders; like I said, it insults those who support Clinton too. It basically suggests there’s no other reason to vote for Clinton *besides* the fact that she’s a woman. I mean, surely you can’t be a Clinton supporter because of her policy beliefs or anything like that, right? Surely it’s only because she’s a woman, right?

Look, I think it would be really cool to elect a woman president. There are many other countries that have elected female heads of state; it’s high time for the United States to join them. Just as in 2008, I thought it would be really cool, and long overdue, to elect a black president. But that’s not why I voted for Obama. I voted for him because I believed in his policies and liked what he stood for. Those are the qualities I take into consideration when deciding who I want to be my next president. It’s not a terrifically novel approach; I believe most people feel this way.

I haven’t decided who I’m going to vote for in the Democratic primary in April; I really haven’t. But I can tell you it won’t be based on Sanders being a man or Clinton being a woman. To do so would be a disservice to both of them.

\* \* \*

See you next week.

**Office Hub cont. from Front Page**

town properties and that it would help alleviate parking constraints in the Village Center.

Town Manager Michael Maniscalco told councilors at their Tuesday meeting that the town has reached an agreement on price with the bank that owns the foreclosed property. He is awaiting a response on other contractual terms, he said.

At the same meeting, the Town Council unanimously approved a motion to retain a project manager to oversee the project. Maniscalco estimated a cost of \$5,000, which he said would come out of contingency funds. He said the project manager’s role would end when the project goes to referendum.

The project manager would help navigate the complicated state reimbursement process, Maniscalco said, and would ensure compliance with state guidelines to make sure the town receives all the money to which it’s entitled.

With the authorization to purchase 2 Bevin Blvd. and the \$5,000 fee for a project manager, that’s \$61,000 being spent on a project that hasn’t yet been discussed in detail or in public.

Anderson told reporters there will be a public comment period at the end of the Feb. 16 workshop. But she emphasized the report is still in draft form.

The draft report is available upon request at the Town Hall. It is not currently on the town’s website.

“There are things in that project that perhaps we want to tailor,” Anderson said. “Maybe there are things we want to take out. Maybe there are things we want to rearrange. Maybe there are things we’re not happy with.”

She cited school enrollment projections,

which have changed since Friar Associates started their study last year, as a factor that could have an effect on cost estimates when it comes to the potential Memorial School renovation.

“We’re not at the final report phase,” she reiterated.

The key is that the Town Council can talk publicly and move forward with transparency now that the real estate discussions are out of the way, according to Anderson.

“At least we’re having the discussion on the open,” she said.

According to Maniscalco, the 2008 Friar Report was added to the town website only after it was approved by the council. He said there’s no need for the new draft to be accessible online until it is formally accepted by the Town Council – nor do residents need to be handed a copy of the document if they attend the workshop.

“The point of it is, it’s [the Town Council’s] workshop. It’s not for the general public to understand,” he said.

Instead, Maniscalco explained, the workshop is a time for the Town Council to analyze and discuss the updated Friar report, to ask questions, and to come up with a solid plan to update the town’s aging facilities.

“The general public doesn’t get to choose what goes on to referendum; the Town Council does. The Town Council moves forward a project and it goes out for a referendum,” Maniscalco said. “The public decides if they like that project or not.”

The Town Council workshop will be held Tuesday, Feb. 16, at 6 p.m. at the East Hampton Middle School library.

**Five Belltown Office Scenarios**

The Friar Associates report lists five possible scenarios for relocating East Hampton’s town hall and police department. Here are the highlights of each scenario:

Option 1A includes:

- A 14,000-square foot addition to Memorial School to accommodate fourth and fifth graders.

- Parking and bus drop off reconfiguration at Memorial School.

- A 5,200-square foot addition to Center School and the renovation of existing facility to include all town hall departments and the police department.

- The purchase of 2 Bevin Blvd. for police department parking.

- A new air conditioning system for the existing Board of Education building.

- The sale of the existing Town Hall building at end of the project.

Cost to East Hampton: \$18,673,829

Cost picked up by state: \$3,373,571

Total: \$22,047,400

Option 1B includes:

- A 14,000-square foot addition to Memorial School to accommodate fourth and fifth graders.

- Parking and bus drop off reconfiguration at Memorial School.

- A 10,600-square foot addition to Center School and the renovation of existing facility to include all town hall departments, the police department, and the Board of Education.

- The purchase of 2 Bevin Boulevard for police department parking.

- The sale of the existing Town Hall building at end of the project.

Cost to East Hampton: \$20,184,377

Cost picked up by state: \$4,170,283

Total: \$24,354,660

Option 1C includes:

- A 14,000-square foot addition to Memorial School to accommodate fourth and fifth graders.

- Parking and bus drop off reconfiguration at Memorial School.

- Renovation of Center School to include all town hall departments and the Board of Education.

- The purchase of 2 Bevin Blvd. for Town Hall parking.

- The relocation of the police department to 195 West High St.; a 3,551 addition to the existing structure; parking for 15 vehicles in the front and 50 in the back; and an impound lot with fencing and monitoring.

- The sale of the existing Town Hall and Board of Education buildings at end of the project.

Cost to East Hampton: \$21,258,723

Cost picked up by state: \$3,841,257

Total: \$25,099,960

Option 2 includes:

- Center School “renovated-as-new.”

- The purchase of 2 Bevin Blvd. to supplement school parking.

- No changes to Memorial School.

- The relocation of the police department to 195 West High St.; a 3,551-square foot addition to the existing structure; parking for 15 vehicles in the front and 50 in the back; and an impound lot with fencing and monitoring.

- The construction of a new Town Hall at 195 West High St.

- A new air conditioning system for the existing Board of Education building.

Cost to East Hampton: \$28,190,358

Cost picked up by state: \$10,415,722

Total: \$38,606,080

Option 3 includes:

- A 14,000-square foot addition to Memorial School to accommodate fourth- and fifth-graders, including an expanded gym to allow for full sized court and bleacher space.

- Parking and bus drop off reconfiguration at Memorial School.

- A 9,300-square foot addition to Center School and the renovation of existing facility to include all town hall departments, the police department, and the Board of Education.

- The purchase of 2 Bevin Blvd. for police department parking.

- The sale of the existing Town Hall and Board of Education buildings at end of the project.

Cost to East Hampton: \$20,666,497

Cost picked up by state: \$5,217,125

Total: \$25,863,622

# Benson Selected as Colchester Town Planner

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

After multiple failed attempts at rounding up candidates for the town planner position, in the end the Board of Selectmen didn't need to look further than their own backyard, voting unanimously last week to promote assistant town planner and zoning enforcement officer Randy Benson to the position.

Although Benson has been working in the town for years under former town planner Adam Turner, he did not have his master's degree in planning. This was an issue for the board, as the original call for applications stated applicants needed to be certified town planners – which require the holding of a master's degree.

Turner resigned last summer, when he took a similar job in Martha's Vineyard. Since then, the selectmen have had problems filling his position, with multiple applicants who took jobs elsewhere before they completed the interview process.

Meanwhile, Benson stepped in and performed the town planner's duties on an interim basis – and, at the behest of First Selectman Art Shilosky, he ultimately applied for the permanent position.

Benson had interviewed for the position last month. At its meeting last Thursday, the Board of Selectmen held a detailed discussion regarding Benson's qualifications before ultimately appointing him.

"Randy didn't fit all of the things in the parameters," selectman Stan Soby said this week.

"Not that Randy won't be a really good town planner, but we had those specifications [regarding qualifications] and we hadn't visited those specifications before considering Randy's application."

Soby said he wanted to make sure the board discussed whether the town can work with Benson while he is in school to obtain his master's degree – which is something he is currently doing.

"It was just a matter of having that discussion on the record," Soby said. "We're comfortable with the combination of his skill set, experience, and him being in school."

Benson had been the candidate of choice after numerous rounds of interviews, including an interview with the Board of Selectmen, Public Works Director Jim Paggioli, Town Engineer Sal Tassone and Hebron Town Planner Mike O'Leary.

At last week's meeting, Shilosky championed Benson's cause.

"We have been at this for too long," Shilosky said of the months-long search for a new town planner. "I have worked very closely with Randy as our interim town planner. I personally asked him to put an application in."

Shilosky said he felt Benson was qualified and that "without a doubt" he was already doing the job.

"I know he didn't have a master's in planning, but he had all of the other qualifications,"

he said. "And my thought with him is if [Benson was] willing to go to school and get [his] master's, I felt that it would be appropriate for us to look at his application."

Shilosky said at the meeting he was "totally" in favor of appointing Benson.

"We all know what on-the-job training is," he said. "Book-smart is great, but if you can't take that book learning and make it work in the field, it's not going to happen."

Selectwoman Rosemary Coyle said this week that, overall, the board was in support of the decision.

"We need a town planner and we have someone who is doing the job now and is willing to continue with his education to improve himself and to work on the qualifications as originally listed," Coyle said.

Shilosky said at the meeting Benson had demonstrated since Turner left last August that he can do the job – and added that contractors love working with him.

Soby explained that is why he wanted to have the discussion to talk about working with Benson on the qualifications he still needs.

"I've worked with Randy as well over a period of time and I know what he brings to the job," he said at the meeting. "I wanted to have the discussion since we had set some specifications and wanted to make a logical progression to get to the point we can take action."

With that, Soby motioned to appoint Benson

and it passed unanimously.

Soby explained this week that Kerry Nielson, another candidate who was also interviewed by the selectmen last month, had a good background and it was "one of those things where it's nice to be able to have a choice."

But in the end, the board backed Benson.

The board is expected to move forward a job description to now hire a new zoning enforcement officer to replace Benson's former position.

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The selectmen also appointed its Charter Revision Commission at the meeting, including a variety of new members and some former members from the Charter Review Commission.

Former Charter Review Commission chair Gregg LePage was appointed along with Ursula Tschinkel, Monica Egan and Betty Wagner from the former commission. New members appointed included Michael Hinchliffe, Sheila Tortorigi and Don Phillips.

The commission was appointed for a one-year term expiring Feb. 4, 2017.

"It's a nice mixture of people who were involved and people who are new," Coyle said. "That's a good thing then you have different eyes looking at the work of the review commission and I think that's always important."

The next regular Board of Selectmen meeting is Feb. 18 at 7 p.m. at Town Hall.

## Police Searching for Colchester Robbery Suspect

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

State police are searching for a man they say robbed the United Bank on 99 Linwood Ave. Monday afternoon.

At approximately 3:30 p.m., police responded to the bank for a robbery. Police said bank employees reported a white man entered the bank, approached a teller, and handed them a note demanding money. The teller gave the man an undisclosed amount of cash and he left and fled the area in a late-model, dark-colored vehicle which police said is possibly a purple Mazda with tinted windows.

Police reported no weapons were displayed or implied, and there were no injuries reported.

The suspect is described as a white male, approximately 5'10" tall, and was last seen wearing sunglasses, a dark-colored baseball hat, a black hooded sweatshirt and blue jeans.

If anyone has any information about the robbery or who may be able to help identify the man, contact detectives at state police Troop



K at 860-465-5400 or text TIP711 with the information to 236-748. Police said all calls will be kept confidential.

## Lack of Quorum Leads to Quick Andover BOE Meeting

by Geeta S. Sandberg

The Board of Education's meeting Wednesday was a quick one – as the board was unable to make a quorum.

According to the board's bylaws, four members need to be present to constitute a quorum and without one, a regular meeting can't take place; only board chair Shannon Loudon and members Whitney Covell and Danielle Maguire were present Wednesday night.

But despite the lack of quorum, Loudon pointed out it was acceptable for those present to hear committee updates and take emergency action – and both ended up taking place.

Schools Superintendent Sally Doyen provided an update from the School Roof Committee, explaining they had decided to recommend the Board of Education go out to bid for a design professional/architect to assist with the school roof project, using a Request for Proposal that the committee had already reviewed and approved.

Doyen explained the form needed to be completed by Thursday, or it wouldn't meet the required timeline. As such, she said she was "going to go ahead and let it go out."

The process has to follow a specific set of state guidelines, Doyen said, because the school

needs to use a professional licensed through the state to be eligible for state funding.

Loudon reminded Doyen the committee was required to come before the board for approval prior to moving ahead with anything – but she suggested the members present could take emergency action on the item, which they ultimately did, voting unanimously to approve the committee's recommendation.

Bids are due by 1 p.m. March 7. The School Roof Committee will meet the following day to review and accept a winning bid, which will be forwarded to the Board of Education meeting March 9 for the board to approve the selection of an architect.

Doyen said she realized the project had a "tight timeline" but "I didn't want to miss the window," and the goal is to have any work done on the roof completed before the start of the 2016-17 school year.

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A special Board of Education meeting is scheduled for next Wednesday, Feb. 17, at 6:30 p.m. in the Andover Elementary School library, 35 School Rd. Following the meeting, there will be a public meeting on the proposed 2016-17 school budget.

## Rice Resigns from Portland School Board

by Elizabeth Regan

Only three months into her term as one of the Portland Board of Education's newest members, Republican Gisela Rice has resigned her position.

Rice submitted a one-line resignation message on Jan. 29, according to Superintendent of Schools Philip O'Reilly.

"Please accept my resignation from the Board of Education," Rice wrote in the email.

According to Board of Education meeting minutes, Rice was absent at three out of five meetings since the November election.

Rice did not return a phone call seeking comment.

Last year, Rice was instrumental in founding Portland Unified Sports, a program that encourages children with special needs to play sports alongside peer mentors.

She ran for the school board seat with the goal of helping to build partnerships and encourage communication between the school system and the wider Portland community.

Rice's departure leaves two vacancies on the seven-member school board – for the time being, at least.

The other vacancy opened up when Demo-



crat Ben Srb was elected to the Portland Board of Selectmen in November. However, Democratic Town Committee Chairwoman Kathleen Richards said the committee has recommended Democrat Sharon Peters to fill Srb's position, starting March 1. The term runs through November 2017.

Peters, an attorney, is a former selectwoman. She served from 2006 until her resignation in 2011. She is also a member of the town Ethics Committee.

"We're really happy to have her, because she does have a lot of experience for the town and has lived here her whole life," Richards said.

Board of Education Chairwoman MaryAnn Rode, a Democrat, expressed relief that at least one of the vacant school board positions has been filled, pending approval by the full board.

"Certainly [Peters'] experience on the Board of Selectmen will be a great asset to the Board of Education," Rode said. "I think she's going to be a good addition to the board."

The Republican Town Committee is currently seeking applicants for the position vacated by Rice. Chairman Rob Taylor said he's hopeful the committee will be able to recommend a replacement for Rice at its meeting later this month.

There are at least three or four interested candidates so far, according to Taylor.

"I think we have some great potential candidates we can put out," he said.

# New Insurance Agency Opens in Portland

by Elizabeth Regan

Mimma Burke has ventured east of the river to open an insurance agency on Route 66.

Burke hung out the State Farm shingle at 201 Marlborough St. address on Jan. 1. She had worked for almost 10 years at a State Farm office in Newington before setting out on her own.

One of Burke's search criteria as she looked at potential office locations included proximity to Middletown, where her husband grew up and where one of her four children currently plays soccer. She said she's made great connections in the area but did not want to encroach on the territory of another State Farm agent working in Middletown.

So she chose Portland. "What a difference when you cross that bridge," she said. "It feels like a different world."

She said she came across the Marlborough Street building – it was occupied by another insurance agent at the time – early on in her search. As luck would have it, the landlord happened to call the Newington State Farm location for an insurance quote on multiple properties. She quickly realized the coincidence and asked him to let her know if it became available for lease. While she wasn't ready to set up shop when the landlord first let her know the space was open, she made sure to keep in touch.

"A year went by and it was still vacant," she said. "And here I am."

Burke appreciates the small town atmosphere and the response from residents – whom she said prefer to support local businesses as much as possible.

She said finding the right office was important because meeting with clients is a priority. "Nowadays, all you hear is people going on

the Internet and shopping – and that's great for some people," she said. "But I love when people come in."

Burke worked in retail and banking before switching to the insurance industry. Social by nature, she said she initially worried there wouldn't be enough people walking through the door each day in their search for insurance. But that hasn't been the case, according to Burke.

She said she was able to forge many fulfilling customer relationships while working in the Newington office, where people would come in sometimes just to say hello.

"I do miss some of those relationships that I built," she said. "But I am just going to build new ones here."

Burke received her associate's degree in fashion merchandising and marketing from Tunxis Community College. She said she sees sales as a way to make a difference in people's lives.

She said she learned early on as a retail associate in a clothing store that she could have an impact. She described the time she helped set a customer up for success by helping her find the right suit for a job interview and the thanks she got when the woman came back in to tell her she got the job.

It's the same feeling she got in the banking industry and now feels while working in insurance.

"It's that connection you have with people and the trust that they have in you," Burke said. "I love to help people and I like to have that interaction all day long with different people."

Burke lives in Rocky Hill with her family.

*Mimma Burke's State Farm office can be reached at 860-342-1670. She speaks English and Italian.*



Mimma Burke (center) has opened a State Farm agency east of the river after living and working in the Hartford area for most of her life. She has hired Kattie Viveiros (left) and Sharon Leland (right) as part of her team.

# Zone Change for Marlborough Grocery Store Approved

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

After a standing-room-only crowd offered a mix of opinions on the proposal, the Zoning Commission last Thursday approved a zone change that appears to pave the way for the oft-discussed grocery store in the center of town.

The change – upping the ground floor square footage of a property in the zone from 40,000 square feet to 55,000 – came about after developer Allan Schwartz of Schwartz Realty, the new owner of the 3-5 East Hampton Rd. plaza, approached the Zoning Commission last month to ask for such an increase.

The plaza was one of five town properties that had been owned by attorney Robert Elliott. Chelsea Groton Bank foreclosed on the properties in December, and Elliott had until Feb. 9 to pay the bank over \$7 million, or else he'd forfeit his ability to reclaim the properties. That deadline passed Tuesday, and Elliott did not file any papers to indicate he could reclaim the properties.

After the December foreclosure, Chelsea Groton Bank turned over the management of – and later sold – the properties over to Schwartz.

The original grocery store application, which Elliott submitted in 2013, called for a 40,000-square foot grocery store equipped with a pharmacy and drive-thru at the plaza. The plan included traffic reconfiguration, the moving of some of the businesses currently in the plaza, the demolition of a house at 22 South Main St. and the revitalization of another house at 20 South Main St. into a commercial or retail use. (Both houses were among the five Elliott properties foreclosed upon.)

Schwartz attended last week's hearing to explain why he sought the larger footprint for

the grocery store.

Schwartz Realty, he explained, has done most of its work in Glastonbury, and counts among its developments Eric Town Square, a large Hebron Avenue plaza that has, among other tenants, Plan B Burger Bar; a plaza at 2450 Main St. that includes a Moe's and a Panera Bread; and a newly-built plaza at 41 Hebron Ave. that includes Ben & Jerry's and Noodles and Co. eateries.

Schwartz explained his company took an interest in Marlborough because it feels "a need to do something to bring the town to where it belongs."

"We've talked to all of the tenants who are in these buildings," Schwartz said, referring to the properties formerly owned by Elliott, "and I'm sad to say a lot of them feel very broken and they're distressed and sad and they just need to have something new and the town needs something new."

"We feel this is something that is important to us to rejuvenate this town," he continued. "This town deserves more than it has."

Schwartz explained that most grocery store management will not work with anything below 55,000 square feet. By having a larger square footage, Schwartz can advertise the property to a larger variety of potential tenants. He noted, though, beefing up the square footage allowed does not automatically mean the grocery store would be constructed at the 55,000-square foot maximum. There's always a chance a tenant would still be interested in the 40,000-square foot footprint.

But either way, Schwartz stressed, a grocery store needs to move in – as it's key to the future

of the whole development.

"With us, it's very important we get an anchor tenant, because no one else will follow if we do not get a good anchor tenant," he said.

In addition to the plaza, the zone change would affect a 59-acre property off Independence Drive behind Marlborough Pizza, and the Marlborough Barn complex on North Main Street, the Zoning Commission explained. (These three properties, the commission said, have the land available to expand to a 55,000-square foot building.)

"Our intentions are to build a building that is going to blend into the town," Schwartz said. "We look at this as an artistic job. It's not our intention to build a red roof."

The "red roof" comment drew laughter and applause from the audience; the roof sits atop the building at 3 East Hampton Rd. – and some residents have complained it is an eyesore.

After Schwartz spoke, the commission opened comments up to the public – with commission chair Kevin Asklar stressing the hearing was on the zone change being proposed, not the grocery store itself.

Raymond Kane, who lives at 36 South Main St., wondered whether Marlborough needed a 55,000-square foot grocery store.

"Who are the people that are going to shop there?" Kane asked. "We have 6,400 people in town. ... Ted's Market [in Hebron] is 22,000 square feet, and there's 9,600 people in Hebron."

Kane said he was also worried about the lighting and the hours of the store and how it would affect his home, since he lives across the street next to the Marlborough Congregational

Church.

Some residents asked whether a smaller tenant, like a Trader Joe's or a Highland Park Market, would be interested, or if it would be a big box store like Stop & Shop. Schwartz said that would be up to whomever wants to come to town, and wasn't really up to him – but, he said, he would also like a Trader Joe's or another "niche store."

But there was also a lot of support for the square footage increase, with some residents stating they were okay with the larger footprint if it would help revitalize the development and "move Marlborough forward to the future" as resident Ruth Kelly stated.

"For six years I've lived in town, I've heard the same thing – number one, our tax base is stagnant and number two, people don't want to raise taxes," resident Rich Storrs said. "Sometimes when a house is listed you have to drop the price to gain interest. In this situation, we have to increase the size to attract more interest and make it possible."

John Assunto, creator of the Facebook page "Concerned Citizens for Marlborough Development," said it's disheartening to see what he called the "deterioration" that has occurred at the center and urged the commission to approve the increase, calling it a "no-brainer."

Following the public hearing, the Zoning Commission held its regular meeting – where it voted unanimously to approve the square footage increase. The next step for the project would be for Schwartz to come before the board with an official application and site plan; however, Schwartz stressed that would be after he obtains a tenant.

# Paul Out as Marlborough Animal Control Officer

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

Bill Paul is out as Marlborough's animal control officer.

The Board of Selectmen voted last week not to reappoint Paul, three months after his term formally expired.

Citing a personnel issue with Paul that she could not discuss, First Selectwoman Amy Traversa explained this week she called for a motion to reappoint Paul at the selectmen meeting Feb. 2 and no one made the motion – thus ending Paul's employment with the town, effective immediately. Paul's appointment had expired last November, but he continued to serve as the town's animal control officer (ACO) until town officials could make a decision on reappointment.

Paul did not return calls for comment for this story.

Paul was named assistant animal control officer (ACO) in Colchester and Marlborough in

2007. In 2012, he became the ACO after Don Favry resigned following an investigation into alleged misconduct. Salem was added to Paul's list of his towns in 2013.

The ACO position covers a range of issues including abandoned, stray or neglected animals. The position also is charged with promoting the dogs through website and newspaper listings, to help the animals get adopted.

Marlborough receives about six to eight calls a month for the animal control officer, Traversa said.

With Paul out, Traversa said the town last week entered into a 60-day renewable contract with Hebron's animal control officer, Willie Bell, until town officials can decide how to move forward.

"Meanwhile, we are considering what to do on a regional basis on a longer-term solution," Traversa said.

Traversa said the state has been pushing towns to regionalize, and she said she was comfortable using Hebron since Marlborough also shares a building official with Hebron.

"We're really grateful to Hebron for being so agreeable and so neighborly," Traversa said about the renewable agreement to use Bell.

Marlborough's non-appointment of Paul does not affect his status with Colchester and Salem, as each of the three towns employed him separately.

Colchester First Selectman Art Shilosky confirmed Thursday that Paul is still employed in town.

"Nothing has changed with Bill Paul and he will be [employed] until whatever happens," Shilosky said.

Salem First Selectman Kevin Lydan also confirmed Thursday Paul remains Salem's ACO "at this point."

Traversa – who said Marlborough will continue to use the Colchester dog pound on Old Hartford Road – said there have been discussions with Hebron about the town joining the regional ACO pact between Salem, Colchester and Marlborough, thereby reducing the cost for all four towns.

"We have no timeline, so that's why we have the renewable 60-day agreement," Traversa said. "As soon as we have a chance to [look at the situation], we will."

She said the issue is taking the backseat for now, as town officials are busy crafting the 2016-17 fiscal year budget.

"It's not our highest priority," Traversa said. "We're covered in the meantime. We're in the early stage of exploration."

Anyone who needs to call the Animal Control Officer for Marlborough can contact Bell at 860-228-5971 ext. 150.



Hebron was awarded \$95,000 in grant funds this week to be used to investigate potential site contamination and remediation at the Turshen Mill – also known as the Treasure Factory – at 459 Church St. The building, which dates to the early 1900s, is one of the only mills left in town and has served a number of purposes over the years; the town is working with the current owner to help make the property desirable for new developers.

## Hebron Awarded Funds for Historic Mill Property

by Geeta S. Sandberg

Gov. Dannel P. Malloy announced \$8.7 million in state grants Wednesday for brownfield redevelopment – and Hebron was one of 16 municipalities to receive a portion of that pie.

Hebron was awarded \$95,000, which will go toward the investigation of a piece of property at 459 Church St., commonly known as Turshen Mill or the Treasure Factory.

In announcing the grants, which come under the state Department of Economic and Community Development's (DECD) Brownfield Remediation Program, Malloy said in a release, "In a new economic reality, transforming and remediating sites is so important. We're on the cutting edge of taking otherwise unusable property and transforming it into new space for businesses and residents."

He added, "These strategic investments help towns and cities take abandoned, blighted and vacant properties, and bring them back to life in order to spur new investments, new development and new jobs for those in the communities."

Meanwhile, Lt. Gov. Nancy Wyman stated, "These investments mean healthier cities and towns, but they also attract activity and help build neighborhoods, adding commerce, housing, retail, and greenspace. This funding is an important part of strengthening and expanding our economy, and inspiring smart growth."

State Department of Energy and Environmental Protection Commissioner Robert Klee added, "Investing in the cleanup of brownfields in Connecticut facilitates the conversion of degraded properties that pose a risk to human health and the environment to opportunities for reuse and redevelopment."

He continued, "This investment makes good sense, as brownfields are typically located near existing transportation, water, sewer and other infrastructure and their redevelopment will lessen pressure on open space and other environmentally-sensitive areas."

The funds will allow the town to conduct a Phase II/Phase III Environmental Site Assessment and prepare a Remedial Action Plan, if needed, for the property.

State Rep. Gayle Mulligan (R-55th District) said this week Hebron "will be able to begin the process of starting a new chapter of economic development at the old manufacturing plant. Hopefully one day a new business will be able to utilize this property which will significantly benefit our business climate in the state of Connecticut."

On Wednesday, Town Manager Andrew Tierney said receiving the grant "shows we're working with businessowners in town. The owner can now go through a Phase II study on that property and it will definitely help with any type of sale."

Tierney added efforts were also being made to get the building on the historic registrar which would make a future developer eligible for federal and state tax credits.

According to the Hebron Historical Society, the original Turshen Mill was a grain business purchased by resident Ira Turshen (known by most as "Izzy") and his wife Sophie Gross in 1924; it was made of wood and burned down in 1927.

Turshen rebuilt the mill using brick, including intricate details, a mix of architectural styles – and what would become his signature trade-

mark, a circular window (another one of Turshen's windows can be seen at the United Brethren of Hebron synagogue, which he also constructed). After the new building was completed, it became one of the most successful businesses in town, selling grain products, building supplies and groceries and serving residents in Columbia, Lebanon, Gilead and Amston until Turshen sold it in 1946.

Town Planner Mike O'Leary shared this week the site had an "interesting history."

"That area of town was a real bustling manufacturing business center at that time," he said. "There were many mills in the area, and the Amston train station was a little further down. So it was an ideal site for industrial use."

O'Leary added Turshen, who was a Russian Jew who moved to the country with his family and settled in Brooklyn, N.Y., before moving to Hebron, came to town and "invested in the community."

"He had a big impact on the community, so just from a historical standpoint that makes a statement in terms of the value of the building," O'Leary said.

Over the years, along with housing the Turshen's business, the building has been home to the Ellmore Silver Company, a pool company, a truck repair company and, most recently, an antique store known as the "Treasure Factory."

The building, however, has been vacant for at least 10 years.

"Again, Hebron and Amston had a very thriving mill history and this is one of the only mill buildings remaining," O'Leary said. "It's a

unique building in town."

He added receiving the grant was "great news," explaining it would allow for a study to investigate possible brownfields contamination which is "critical given the history of the site, in order to move it forward to a successful new use which is what our goal is."

One study has already been conducted on the property, O'Leary explained, that looked at the building's structural condition "which is very good" and involved a Phase I environmental site assessment that looked at all available documentation to determine past uses and any contamination issues.

"There didn't appear to be any issues so that was good," he said, and now, a Phase II – and potentially Phase III – study will encompass "a much more detailed environmental assessment" with testing wells and ground and surface water monitoring to determine if there is any contamination in the ground. If there is, the process will move on to Phase III which includes more details such as a contamination map and identifying and quantifying the contaminants. This would then lead into a Remedial Action Plan.

"The goal," said O'Leary, "is to make the building enticing for new developers to come in and use it."

He added Planning & Zoning recently modified the zoning regulations to allow a much broader range of mixed-use in the building, "so again, we could encourage some redevelopment ideas for that property—and it's all part of a larger plan trying to do whatever we can as a town to get that building up and running."

# Natural Gas Line Extension Proposed for Hebron Center

by Geeta S. Sandberg

Connecticut Natural Gas has proposed extending the natural gas line in Hebron to the town center and Hebron Elementary School, which would include access to residential and commercial customers.

According to a presentation by CNG at the Feb. 4 Board of Selectmen's meeting, the proposed six-mile expansion would also provide access for the RHAM high and middle schools, town offices and the fire department and, according to a cost analysis, switching the town facilities over to natural gas would result in more than \$100,000 in fuel savings.

Town Manager Andrew Tierney explained this week the gas line would come down East Street, where there is currently a trunk line, then move down Route 85, across Route 66 to the elementary school, left up Main Street toward Ted's Plaza, and right up John Horton Boulevard. The line would also branch off up Wall Street to reach RHAM.

Tierney explained moving to natural gas has been part of the town's long-range plan "for a long time."

"We wanted to get [natural gas] utilities down into the center of town and to the schools

and town buildings to try to offset fuel costs and generate more economic development and make it more enticing for businesses to come in," he explained, adding the town has been working on the possibility dating back to former town manager Robert Lee.

"And I've been working on this since I've been in place – the cost has been quite expensive in the past, but there are some incentives now available through CNG that makes it at least a little more affordable."

Although Tierney explained the project – and related costs – are still in the preliminary stage, he shared a couple of options CNG provided to pay for the project.

Project construction costs were estimated at \$4,193,100. If the town were to move forward with the project with no tax abatement, CNG estimated the town would be responsible for \$441,900; if the town were to pay for the project under a 10-year tax abatement, that amount would decrease to \$242,900; and with a 25-year tax abatement, \$168,100.

However, Tierney said "I think we're leaning to pay a little more off upfront."

And, he added, there would be an additional

conversion cost to switch the buildings over to natural gas. Conversion costs, he said, would tack on an additional \$1,000,000.

"CNG said they would work with us for a payment program, and there are some taxes we would also receive once the gas is in the ground," he said.

Tierney estimated the town would receive approximately \$60,000 in property taxes as a result of the project.

He added, "In order for this to work for both the town and CNG, we would have to make a commitment to hook up all town buildings along the route."

As a result, Tierney said a consensus to move forward would need to be reached with both the local and regional boards of education. And CNG, he shared, was looking to move forward rather quickly.

"It's a pretty aggressive forecast timewise," he said. "I've been talking to [CNG] for a long time, and I didn't think we were as close as we are, but when I reached out to them again, they showed up with this proposal like, 'let's get going!'"

CNG shared during its presentation they

were looking for town approval by March, with engineering, the final design and permitting to be completed by May. They were looking for construction to get underway in June or July and be completed that same summer.

"So it's a pretty aggressive thing," Tierney said. "We just have to make sure everyone is on board."

He added, "I know some people aren't ecstatic about fossil fuels, but we're not there yet with hydro or solar or windmills. Those are a good offset but we can't be completely reliant yet, so we still have to use some fossil fuels."

And, he said, "natural gas is one of the cleaner [fossil fuels] and it's highly regulated."

Tierney concluded, "They've just completed the same program in two other towns similar to Hebron – Deep River and East Hampton – and I checked with both towns and the project was received very well by the administration, selectmen, and communities that it services."

To move the discussion along, a special Board of Selectmen's meeting on the proposed expansion and financing options has been scheduled for Wednesday, Feb. 17, at 7 p.m. at the Company No.1 Fire House, 44 Main St.

# East Hampton Council, School Board Clash Over Language

by Elizabeth Regan

A series of public votes over the last two weeks on legal negotiations often conducted in private may mean the lawsuit between the Board of Education and the Town Council is nearing its end – or not.

The lawsuit is an effort to overcome differing legal opinions about who has the authority to make appointments to the school board.

The school board Tuesday unanimously approved language for a proposed stipulated agreement. The Town Council proposed its own language two weeks prior. A stipulation agreement is often used to save time and money on protracted litigation when the parties are able to come to a mutual understanding before trial.

Board of Education Chairman Kenneth Barber on Thursday said Town Council Chairwoman Patience Anderson asked the school board to put the stipulation agreement to vote in a public meeting.

He said the school board and the Town Council have been negotiating the agreement privately since December.

"She's asked for a public [settlement statement]. So here it is," he said.

Anderson said Thursday the council has tried to bring the school board into executive session to work together on a resolution but has not been successful. Her request for a public vote on the stipulated language and a formal acknowledgement in letter form is a way to make sure the entire board, and not just Barber, is aware of what the Town Council is proposing – and that the public knows, too. While the school board's language includes only a handful of changes, Barber said a few more

words means a lot.

Anderson, however, said the council is comfortable with its own language as approved on Jan. 26.

"There is no need to approve any other language," she said. "There is no need for a lawsuit. This is a frivolous waste of taxpayer dollars and our time when we are facing so many more important issues."

So whose language will win out?

The council's proposed statement began with the acknowledgement that both parties "agree that the Board of Education shall have the temporary authority to fill any vacancies which may arise on Board."

The school board's language was similar, except for the "shall have" and the "temporary." The board's statement said both parties "agree that the Board of Education has the authority to fill any vacancies which may arise on Board."

Barber said school board members wanted to make it clear they had the authority all along.

"[The council's] proposal was that they would grant temporary authority to the Board of Education for vacancies," he said. "That would be the assumption that we never had authority at all."

The school board's supremacy as an appointing body is supported by state statute and 20 years of past practice, according to Barber.

Another point of disagreement between the school board and council revolves around the duration of the agreement. The Town Council's original language for a proposed settlement statement authorized the school board to fill its own vacancies "until the Current Town Char-

ter Revision Commission's proposed amendments have been approved or rejected at referendum and, if approved, such amendments become effective."

But Barber said the council's proposal assumes the Charter Revision Commission will address the appointment issue and that its recommendations will be approved by voters.

"The prior charter revision fell 2-1," Barber said. "So if we went with their language and it was on the charter reform ballot and rejected, we would be right back at square one. The issue would not resolve itself."

The school board's proposed language instead states that the board has authority to fill its own vacancies "until a Town Charter Revision Commission's proposed amendments to Section 6.4, 'Vacancies in Elective Offices' have been approved at a referendum and such amendments become effective."

The seven-member Charter Revision Commission began meeting last week to address a list of charges made by the Town Council that includes the exploration of "options by which to fill vacancies of elected positions." The commission is required to file its draft report with the town clerk no later than Dec. 1.

Anderson said the school board's language leads her to believe they are looking for a "permanent, unequivocal" authorization to appoint - "And we can't do that because what if the charter revision comes back and says we're going to clarify it to give the Town Council the authority?"

By allowing the school board to appoint

Democrat Jeff Carlson to the seat vacated by Republican Josh Piteo in November, Anderson said the Town Council showed it is willing to take a hands-off approach until the issue is settled for good with a charter revision. The council's stipulated agreement language makes it even clearer, she said.

Anderson reiterated the council is comfortable with the language they came up with.

"I think we remain confident that our charter gives us the authority," she said. "I'm not sure that we can reach an agreement about that because both boards have conflicting legal opinions. I'm not sure that can be resolved."

Barber maintained, however, that Anderson's request for a public vote and a formal letter was a waste of time if she isn't willing to negotiate.

"If it's a take-it-or-leave-it and she just asked us to waste our time, then okay," he said. "I guess public negotiations are about to end."

The Town Council filed for, and received, an extension last month. It is good through Feb. 22.

According to Anderson, the ball is in the school board's court now.

"I had really remained hopeful we could come to an agreement and it appears that's not going to happen. Of course, they still have a chance to drop the lawsuit," she said.

The lawsuit was filed in December by the Board of Education after the Town Council refused to cede to the school board's demand for councilor's to pass a resolution formally acknowledging the school board has the right to fill its own vacancies.

# Hearing Coming for Seized Horses in East Hampton

by Elizabeth Regan

The Connecticut Department of Agriculture will head to Middlesex Superior Court in the coming weeks to seek formal custody of the 32 horses seized from an East Hampton farm as part of a five-month animal cruelty investigation.

A search and seizure warrant for the Fairy Tail Equines facility, owned by Thomas Olajos and his wife Melanie, was executed earlier this month by the state agriculture department. The raid came a week after Olajos told state animal control officers a colt had died on the property in early January, according to court documents.

The state said nearly all the seized animals were found to be malnourished and many had ailments related to a lack of shelter and veterinary care, according to a press release sent out on Tuesday.

The hearing at Middlesex Superior Court will determine if the state is allowed to find new homes for the animals. A spokesman for the DOA said the date of the hearing has not yet been set. It will be open to the public.

Olajos this week referred questions to his attorney, John Donovan of Cromwell-based Donovan and Morello.

“Once we get all the facts straight, we’ll be making our statement,” Olajos said.

He said he is working with his attorney to make sure all the “real facts are noted.”

“There’s a lot of rumors and lies being thrown around,” Olajos said.

Donovan did not return a call for comment.

The horses were brought to the state’s Second Chance large animal rehabilitation facility at York Correctional Institution in Niantic following the Feb. 2 execution of a search and seizure warrant authorized by a Superior Court judge the day prior, according to the agriculture department. Two dogs, 78 chickens and 19 rabbits seized from the farm were taken to municipal animal shelters in nearby towns. Three dead chickens were found at the farm, according to court documents.

Dr. Thor Hyyppa, an equine veterinarian working for the state, said in a press release Tuesday that the horses are more alert and brighter than they were upon their arrival.

He spent about a half hour with each horse late last week to evaluate the overall condition, according to the press release. The examination included a look at the heart, lungs, eyes

and hooves.

“We are making sure that the horses’ nutritional and medical needs are met and that they are adapting well to their new environment,” Hyyppa said.

Court documents said state animal control officers found the animals without sufficient food, water and shelter on numerous occasions over the course of their investigation. Documents also stated Olajos failed to follow veterinary recommendations to ensure the health and safety of his animals.

State Rep. Melissa Ziobron, R-34th District, visited the Niantic facility Tuesday and reported on her trip in a post on the crowdfunding website she set up to help offset the cost to the state for caring for the animals.

“Today I visited the horses and left feeling grateful that they are being cared for by DoAg,” she wrote. “While their conditions are improving, it is clear to me that these animals have suffered.”

The seizure was the result of an investigation that began in September when East Hampton’s animal control officer received a complaint from June Villa, owner of Villa Vanner in Shelbyville, Tenn. Villa had leased four horses to Melanie Olajos. Villa said the horses were emaciated when she got them back from the East Hampton farm, according to the search warrant.

Taylor Hanes, the trainer for Villa’s horses, said he found out after the seizure that the young horse that died on the Olajos property in January was the foal of one of Villa’s mares.

Hanes said a hauler tried to bring the colt back to Tennessee with the other horses belonging to Villa – including another foal – in September but Melanie Olajos insisted on keeping the young animal due to contractual stipulations.

While Hanes expressed regret that the seizure came too late for the colt, he said he thought the state animal control officers took appropriate action.

“I just think that Connecticut’s laws need to change regarding horses as livestock. [The animal control officers] had to wait; they had to go through the proper channels. I think they did everything they could,” Hanes said. “It’s unfortunate our colt died. In a situation like that, I hate to be critical of the people helping them.”

Ziobron said she is researching the state sei-



**Dr. Thor Hyyppa treated all horses seized Feb. 2 from Fairy Tail Equines in East Hampton. The horses are being kept at the state Department of Agriculture’s large animal rehabilitation facility in Niantic pending a hearing at Middlesex Superior Court in the coming weeks. The state hopes to obtain formal custody of the animals in order to find out what measures may be taken secure new homes for them. Photo courtesy of Connecticut Department of Agriculture/Steve Jensen.**

zure process, meeting with state officials regularly and reviewing possible legislation for the upcoming session.

Ziobron estimated costs to the state for the horses’ care could exceed \$1,000 per week. The online fund she established had raised almost \$14,000 as of Thursday morning.

The horses require about 50 bales of hay daily, as well as about 40 bags of pine shavings used for bedding. Grain will be introduced as feed as the horses’ condition improves, the agriculture department’s press release said.

The state said monetary donations are preferred due to the horses’ prescribed diets and special circumstances.

Department of Agriculture Commissioner Steven K. Revczky thanked people in Connecticut and beyond for the outpouring of support.

“We have taken many dozens of calls from concerned people across the country wanting

to adopt the animals or offering donations to be used for the animals’ care,” Revczky said. “Their support is greatly appreciated and will help ensure the agency has resources to dedicate to the animals’ rehabilitation.”

No arrests had been made as of press time. The agriculture department said last week it will continue to investigate to see if criminal charges are warranted.

Individual animal cruelty charges may result in maximum prison sentences of one to 10 years and fines of \$1,000 to \$10,000. The animal cruelty statute addresses crimes ranging from animal neglect to maliciously killing an animal.

Donations to help offset the costs to the state of caring for the horses may be made online at [gofundme.com/animalwelfare06424](http://gofundme.com/animalwelfare06424) or by sending a check to: The Animal Abuse Cost Recovery Account, c/o Connecticut Department of Agriculture, 165 Capitol Avenue, Room G-8A, Hartford, CT 06106.

## East Hampton Police News

1/27: As a result of a brief investigation into an evading motor vehicle accident in the area of Route 66 and Route 196 Russell Roly IV, 27, of 58 Hunt Rd., Columbia, was issued a summons for evading responsibility and following too close, East Hampton Police said.

1/28: Keron F. Flannery, 64, of 8 Sears Pl., was arrested and charged with driving under the influence, drinking while driving and failure to drive right, police said.

1/30: Michael R. North, 51, of 206 Vernon St., Manchester, was arrested and charged with driving under the influence and failure to drive right, police said.

## Hebron Police News

2/5: State Police said they are investigating after a burglary at Hebron Quick Lube at 24 Wall St. Police reported they responded to a burglary alarm at the business at 12:46 a.m. and that it became apparent a burglary had occurred and damage to the business was done. Anyone with information can contact Trooper Patrick Kokoszka at 860-465-5400.

## Marlborough Police News

2/1: State Police said David Flammia, 39, of 43 Gallaudet Dr., West Hartford, was arrested and charged with DUI, failure to carry registration, failure to carry insurance, failure to drive right, and narcotics not kept in their original container.

2/1: State Police said Thao Nguyen, 25, of 100 Michigan Dr., Groton, was arrested and charged with failure to appear.

2/4: State Police said Shirley Benjamin, 79, of 19 Main St., East Hampton, was arrested and charged with evading responsibility, failure to drive right, and failure to have insurance.

## Colchester Police News

2/2: State Police said Seth Lisee, 29, of 6 Butternut Dr., Norwich, was arrested and charged with illegal possession of narcotics.

2/2: State Police said Analesi Johnson, 22, of 31 Lincoln St., Greenfield, Mass., was arrested and charged with DUI.

2/3: State Police said Pierre Narcisse, 23, of 82 Webb St., Windsor Locks, was arrested and charged with failure to appear.

2/4: State Police said Paul Lanagan, 31, of

39 Pleasant St., was arrested and charged with DUI and illegally carrying a firearm.

2/5: Colchester Police said Deborah Parker, 65, of 330 Clubhouse Rd., Lebanon, was arrested and charged with DUI.

2/6: Colchester Police said Brittany Collings, 27, of 104 Matthewson St., Jewett City, was arrested and charged with DUI, possession of narcotics, and possession of drug paraphernalia.

## Two Injured After Colchester Collision

State police reported two Portland residents were injured after their vehicle was rear-ended on Route 2 Feb. 6 at 5:39 p.m.

Police said Montrose Howell, 59, and Geraldine Williams, 69, both of 21 Chatham Court, were transported to the Marlborough Clinic for neck and chest pain after the accident.

Police reported Howell was driving a Honda Accord with Williams as her passenger on Route 2 eastbound near exit 16 when Howell slowed and was rear-ended by Rajah Krawczyk, 36, of 129 Main St., Baltic, in a Toyota Corolla. Police said Krawczyk was not injured and was issued an infraction for following too closely.

## Two Injured After Marlborough Route 2 Crash

State police said a Beacon Falls man and a Colchester man were injured after a two-car accident on Route 2 on Feb. 4 at 10:13 a.m.

Police said Brian O’Rourke, 69, of 136 Highland Ave., Beacon Falls, was transported to Marlborough Clinic after minor injuries. Drew Funk, 21, of 12 Balaban Rd., Colches-

ter, was also transported to Hartford Hospital for minor injuries after the crash.

Police reported Funk, in an Isuzu truck, rear-ended O’Rourke, who was in a Honda Accord near exit 13 heading eastbound. As a result of the impact, O’Rourke’s car overturned.

## Obituaries

### Hebron

#### Estelle Mary Sazinski

Estelle Mary Sazinski, 98, of West Hartford, formerly of Hebron, beloved wife, mother, grandmother and great-grandmother, died Tuesday, Jan. 26. She was the daughter of predeceased parents Joseph and Agnes (Andrulis) Vismontas. Her husband Thomas passed away April 27, 1998.

She was the oldest of five children and was predeceased by two sisters and two brothers: Albina Vismontas, Helen Vismontas, Louis Vismontas and Joseph Vismontas.

She was born Nov. 2, 1917, in Ansonia, and grew up in and around Hartford. She attended Holy Trinity Grammar & High School. Since 1923, she was a parishioner of Holy Trinity Church. She worked at Underwood Typewriter where she met her husband. She lived and raised a family at 160 Affleck St. in Hartford and later moved with her family in 1958 to 82 Foster St. in Manchester. She worked at the Manchester High School cafeteria as head baker.

She enjoyed reading, cooking, attending Mass, being with family and friends and watching her favorite old-time TV shows such as *The Waltons*, *Little House on the Prairie*, *Dr. Quinn Medicine Woman* and *7th Heaven*. She resided at Stonecroft Village Senior Apts. in Hebron from 1990 until 2013, where she was a valued volunteer, cleaning the Holy Family Church rectory in Hebron, assembling the Hebron Senior Center bulletin, and reading to children. She relocated to St. Mary's Home in West Hartford in 2013.

She is survived by her two daughters, Evelyn Snow and her husband Gene of East Hampton, Ann Cassidy and her husband Brian of Hackettstown, N.J., and her son Richard of Glastonbury; six grandchildren: Elaine Snow of East Hampton, Elizabeth Gayhart Jr. and her husband Robert of North Windham, Keith Cassidy and his wife Leslie of San Antonio, Texas, Kenneth Cassidy of Hackettstown, N.J., Kate Cassidy of Great Meadows, N.J. and Colleen Murray and her husband Keith of Kirkland, Wash.; five great-grandchildren: Brandon, Nathan and Madison Goff of East Hampton, and Courtney and Ian Cassidy of San Antonio, Texas; niece Josephine Vismont Quinn of Cardiff, Calif.; great nephew John (JJ) Siberell and his wife Lisa of Carlsbad, Calif.; great-nephew John J. Sazinski and his wife Lori of South Windsor; two great-great-nephews John Jr. and Joshua Adam Sazinski; great-great-nephew Kaden Siberell of Carlsbad, Calif.; and two great-great-nieces Paige and Lily Siberell of Carlsbad, Calif.

She was an individual that brought happiness, joy and love to many. She will be missed but never forgotten.

Calling hour was Saturday, Jan. 30, at Holy Trinity Church, 53 Capitol Ave., Hartford, followed by a Mass of Christian Burial. Burial followed at Mt. St. Benedict Cemetery in Bloomfield.

Donations in Estelle's memory may be made to Holy Trinity Church or St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, 501 St. Jude Place, Memphis, TN 38105.

The D'Esopo Funeral Chapel, Wethersfield is handling arrangements. To share a memory of Estelle with her family, visit [desopo.com](http://desopo.com).

### Colchester

#### Selma Cooper

Selma (Goldman) Cooper, 94, of Coconut Creek, Fla., formerly of Colchester, widow of the late Bernard Cooper, passed away Sunday, Feb. 7. Born May 7, 1921, in New York City, she was the last surviving of the three children of the late Aaron and Frieda (Silverman) Goldman.



She leaves four children, Anita Gold of Glastonbury, Ruth Cooper of Sonoma, Calif., Frank Cooper (and his wife, Jennifer) of Glastonbury and Rise Pearl (and her husband David) of Jacksonville, Fla.; four grandchildren; and six great-grandchildren.

May her memory be for a blessing.

Funeral services were observed at noon Wednesday, Feb. 10, in the sanctuary of Congregation Ahavath Achim, 84 Lebanon Ave., Colchester. Burial will follow in Ahavath Achim Memorial Park.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the American Cancer Society ([cancer.org](http://cancer.org)) or to the Jewish National Fund ([jnf.org](http://jnf.org)).

Care of arrangements has been entrusted to the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home of Colchester. For online condolences, visit [auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com](http://auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com).

### Amston

#### Richard L. Cray

Richard L. Cray, 68, of Amston, passed into the care of the Lord at Middlesex Hospital surrounded by family and friends Friday, Feb. 5, after a courageous 16-month battle with cancer. Born Jan. 25, 1948, in Milford, "Big Rich" made his home on Amston Lake for the last 35 years.

Rich served with the U.S. Navy in Vietnam as a diver. He crisscrossed the country as a big rig truck driver before settling in Amston, where he worked for the Hebron Public Works Department until his retirement several years ago. As one of the founding members of the Hebron Christ Lutheran Church, he was instrumental in the construction of the original chapel, and organizing church activities. In addition to cooking for church events, Rich will be remembered for his cooking at the Hebron Sportsman's Club, where he was a long time active member and served on the board of directors. He organized and ran the annual Kids Fishing Derby, where he was a fixture behind his grill.

During his retirement, Rich enjoyed volunteering, serving on the board of directors at Camp Hi-Hote, volunteering with the Hebron Interfaith Human Services food pantry, and a local branch of the Foodshare program. Rich was also an avid hunter and fisherman. He built custom fishing rods and loved being out on the ocean in his boat. He kept a garden and shared his vegetable harvests with his friends and neighbors.

Rich was gregarious, "Large and in Charge," and touched the lives of everyone he met. His gruff exterior belied his kindness, sincerity, and generosity. When Rich thanked you for something, you knew it was from the bottom of the biggest heart around.

Besides his beloved Labrador retriever "Sally," Rich is survived by his daughter Lydia Marie Cray, mother of his 13-year-old grandson Joshua Cray, daughter Kimberly Ann Cray, and son Richard Lee Cray, as well as countless extended family and friends who loved him greatly and will miss him very much.

A memorial service will be held at Christ Lutheran Church at 330 Church St., Amston, Saturday, Feb. 13, at 11 a.m. A reception will follow starting at noon at the Hebron Sportsman's Club, Route 207 in Hebron.

In lieu of gifts and flowers, we ask that donations be made in his memory to Hebron Interfaith Human Services, or H.I.H.S.

### Marlborough

#### Robert Radcliffe Groves

Robert (Bob) Radcliffe Groves, 88, a resident of Marlborough for 60 years, died Wednesday, Feb. 3, at Marlborough Health & Rehabilitation Center, after a brief illness. He had been a resident of the Florence S. Lord Senior Housing Center since February 2003. He was predeceased by his wife, Susan Elizabeth (Johnson) Groves.



Bob was born Sept. 14, 1927 in Hartford, the son of the late Stanley and Mary (Lukey) Groves, and beloved grandson of Annie and Joseph Groves. He proudly served his country in the U.S. Navy during World War II. He worked for 30 years at the Coca-Cola Bottling Company of East Hartford. He was a life member of the VFW in East Hampton and a member for 24 years of the American Legion Post 197 in Marlborough.

Bob, known by many in his younger years as "Red," enjoyed playing cards, golfing and bowling and over the years would hike, camp and fish at various locations, but especially loved Stillwater Reservoir in New York State. Most recently, he looked forward to his Tuesday dinner nights with his daughters at one of the area restaurants, as well as spending time at his granddaughters' homes in Lebanon and Old Saybrook.

Bob is survived by his son Christopher J. Groves and his wife Marcelle of Marlborough; daughters Mary Ann Timbrell of Colchester and Carol Groves of East Hampton; grandchildren Natalie Groves, Aimee Baldassaro (Todd), Karen Bellos (Michael), Jonathan Timbrell (Lydia Bae); and great-grandchildren Anna, Adam, Macklin and Max. The family would like to thank Bob's Home Health Care Aid, Joseph, for the many years of companionship and trusted care he provided.

Burial will be at the convenience of the family in the Marlborough Cemetery with military honors.

In lieu of flowers memorial donations may be made to Fowler-Dix-Park Post 5095 VFW, 20 North Maple St., East Hampton, CT 06424 or to American Legion Post 197, P. O. Box 178, Marlborough, CT 06447.

To leave online condolences, visit [spencerfuneralhomeinc.com](http://spencerfuneralhomeinc.com).

### East Hampton

#### Judson E. "Pops" Turney Sr.

Judson E. "Pops" Turney Sr. of East Hampton passed away Tuesday, Feb. 9, at his home, with family at his side. Born Feb. 23, 1931, in Mystic, he was the son of the late Judson A. and Lucy (Everitt) Turney.

He was a machine operator at Wire Mold Co. in West Hartford, when he retired after 44 years. He was a member of the Coventry Vol. Fire Assoc., The East Hampton Vol. Fire Dept. and Fire Police until he retired as a senior member. He loved to cruise with his 1947 Ford champion fire truck to car shows, which he won many trophies with.

He is survived by his two sisters, his wife of 61 1/2 years Elizabeth Ann (Stebbins) Turney, two sons, three daughters, 10 grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.

His personality drew people to him and made him friends where ever he went. Pops will be sadly missed by all.

Friends may call at the Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton, today Feb. 12, from 5-7 p.m. Funeral services will be held at the funeral home at 7 p.m. Burial will be in Lakeview Cemetery in the spring.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to East Hampton Fire Dept., 5 Barton Hill Rd., East Hampton, CT 06424.

To leave online condolences, visit [spencerfuneralhomeinc.com](http://spencerfuneralhomeinc.com).

### Colchester

#### Constantine Chiger

Constantine Chiger, 86, of Riverview, Fla., passed away Wednesday, Feb. 3. Con was born Aug. 23, 1929, in New York City, and was raised in Colchester.

He is survived by his wife of 62 years, Eleanore Lundquist Chiger; sons Craig, Scott and Glenn; daughter Lynne; grandson Nolan; and extended family and friends.

Services will be held at the Belmont Funeral Home in Colchester Saturday, Feb. 13. Viewing will be from 11 a.m. to noon, followed by a noon funeral service. Burial will be at a later date.

### Portland

#### Mary C. Sajek

Mary C. Sajek, 83, of Portland, died Tuesday, Feb. 9, at Middlesex Hospital. She was born in Portland, daughter of the late Albert and Marya (Pehota) Sajek. Prior to her retirement, Mary was a group leader at Pratt & Whitney.

Mary is survived by her brother, Stanley Sajek of Portland, as well as several nieces and nephews.

Besides her parents, she was predeceased by her sister, Helen and brothers, Walter, Frank, Edward and Joseph.

A funeral liturgy will be held today, Feb. 12, at 11 a.m., at St. Mary Church, Portland. Burial will be held at St. Mary Cemetery, Portland. Friends may call prior to the service today from 9:30-10:30 a.m. at Biega Funeral Home, 3 Silver St., Middletown.

Those who wish may send memorial contributions to La Salette Missionaries, P.O. Box 777, Twin Lakes, WI 53181.

To share memories or express condolences online, visit [bigafuneralhome.com](http://bigafuneralhome.com).

### East Hampton

#### Olive Manning

Olive Maude Henderson Wall Manning, 91, died Thursday, Feb. 4, with her prayer book in her hands, at Salmon Brook Nursing Home in Glastonbury. Born April 30, 1924 in Brooklyn, N.Y. to John and Maude Henderson, she was a woman very proud of her Irish heritage and traditions.

She met her first husband, Jim, in East Hampton where they started their family, later moving to East Hartford, and then to Manchester with her second husband Jack.

She is survived by her son and his wife, Bruce and Joanne Wall; her beloved grandchildren, Kaitlyn (Macushla) and husband Jackson Lindsay, Tyler James Wall (Murphy), and their mother, Nancy Caron Wall. She was stepmother and grandmother to John (John, Jessica and their mother Judy Terrell), James (Scott, Eric, Brett), Francis (Tracey, Laura), and Mary (Michael). She also was blessed with great grandchildren and a very special son-in-law, Joseph Schatz who was always there to help when needed.

In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her first husband, James Francis Wall; her second husband, John (Jack) Manning; her twin sister Daisy and daughter Janet; and her brother John Henderson.

Olive was a woman of great class and a huge heart. She was generous with her love, her wisdom, her last coffee cake and bowl of tomato soup. She had an incredible ability to make and maintain lifelong connections with those she met and came to love in every facet of her life. She was the matriarch of our family, the keeper of our ancestry, and much like her own mother, the best shopper in the universe. She was strong, graceful, proper, compassionate and inclusive, showing us all by example a life well-lived. She was progressive beyond her time, spearheading a Jaycee's Women's initiative for yearly pap smears, long before it was a practice.

A 1985 retiree of Traveler's Insurance, she enjoyed caring for her grandchildren, hosting family dinners, golfing, playing bridge, traveling the world, knitting, and, of course, shopping. Indeed, Olive could have been the founder and director of a school called, "How to Be the Best Grandmother You Can Be." Olive was a humble woman, asking only for your love and friendship, some time to have a cup of tea, and flowers while she "was still alive." Olive was a great and loving friend to many as they were to her. Among her "partners in crime" were Ruth LaCroix, the late Betty Kent, The Krivickas girls (Dot, Cathy, Carol) and the Clark House girls.

"We can't feel saddened over the loss of those we love without first remembering the joy of loving them. The real sadness would have been never having had them in our lives at all. Remembering is a journey the heart takes back into a time that was, and our thoughts are the only tickets needed to ride. We who have truly loved are blessed." Author unknown.

The family wishes to thank Joyce and John of Masonicare, for their kind and compassionate care while Olive lived the last leg of her journey.

The Newkirk Whitney Funeral Home of East Hartford is in charge of arrangements. There will be no calling hours. She will be laid to rest at Hillside Veterans Cemetery, East Hartford. A Mass of celebration to honor Olive's beautiful heart and legacy will be at held at a later date.

In Olive's memory, hug your loved ones, immerse yourself in nature, fill your life with adventure, love unconditionally and cut the coupons for a Macy's shopping trip.

To leave an online condolence, visit [newkirkandwhitney.com](http://newkirkandwhitney.com).

## Obituaries continued

### Cobalt

#### Ann Johnson

Ann (Elliott) Johnson, 73, of Cobalt, the beloved wife of the late Melvin K. Johnson, passed away peacefully Wednesday, Feb. 3. She was born May 20, 1942, in Danville, Va., to the late Louis Benefield Elliot and Beatrice (Calloway) Elliott Spencer.

At a young age, Ann was baptized at the Camp Grove Baptist Church in Danville and sang in the choir. As a high soprano, it was said she had a voice of an angel. Ann graduated from Southside High School, where she was voted "Most Musical" and studied music at Knoxville College, Knoxville, Tenn., before moving to Hartford, where she sang in the Hartford Chorale. There she trained to be a surgical technologist and eventually became an instructor in Allied Health at Manchester Community College and Hartford Hospital. She was active in the Union of Surgical Technologists, often serving as an officer.

After moving to Hartford, she eventually found Melvin, the love of her life, and became a member of St. Monica's Episcopal Church in Hartford. She was an excellent cook, a beloved teacher, and an extraordinary mother who also loved music, horticulture, crafting and fashion. A sweet, patient and elegant individual, she was admired and loved by her large, extended family and many friends.

She is survived by her children, Roderick M. Johnson of Tampa, Fla.; DeShaunta Johnson of Maplewood, N.J.; son-in law Saul Petersen of Wicklow, Ireland; and three grandchildren, Roinn, 7, River, 4, and Summer, 6 months. She is also survived by four sisters: Hazel Spencer, Sarah Murray, Joan Harrell, all of Danville, Va., and Jean Witcher of Newport News, Va.; and three brothers, Richard Spencer, John Spencer (Geraldine) of Norfolk, Va., and Stanley (Joyce) Spencer all of Danville, Va., and a host of many nephews, nieces and other relatives and friends including Barbara and Joy Josephs of Rocky Hill.

In addition to her husband and parents, she was predeceased by a niece, Davin D. Spencer, dear cousins The Revered Luck and his wife Elizabeth Luck and Ann Pritchett, beloved aunts Maddie, Esther, Effie, and Eleanor, and many close friends, including Clifford Josephs of Rocky Hill.

Her funeral service will be held today, Feb. 12, at 11 a.m., at St. Monica's Episcopal Church, 3575 Main St., Hartford. Interment will follow in Mount St. Benedict Cemetery, Bloomfield. Her family will receive friends from 10-11 a.m. prior to the service at the church.

Flowers can be sent to Carmon Funeral Home, 807 Bloomfield Avenue, Windsor, CT 06095. Donations in her memory can be made to local chapters of Meals on Wheels.

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

### Hebron

#### Stephen Forbes Davis

Trooper First Class Stephen Forbes Davis, 50, of Hebron, tragically lost his life on Saturday, Feb. 6. Born in Quincy, Mass., Aug. 9, 1965, he was the son of Carolyn Davis and the late Arthur Davis.

Stephen was the beloved husband and soulmate of 24 years to Jeryl Davis and cherished father to Jorden Davis.

He was a graduate of East Catholic High School and the University of Hartford. He entered the state police academy and graduated with the 98th Training Troop on Sept. 2, 1988. Most recently, Stephen was assigned to Troop C in Tolland. During the 27 years with the State Police, he served as the Tolland resident trooper, a DARE instructor, field training officer for new troopers, and earned a Medal for Lifesaving award.

Stephen was one of a kind: a thoughtful, loving husband; a father that cherished his daughter; a devoted son; an adoring brother; a wonderful colleague; and, the absolute best friend anyone could wish for.

In addition to Stephen's wife, daughter and mother, he leaves his sister Kim Carino and her husband Francis; his parents-in-law John and Joyce Vullo; his brother-in-law John Vullo; his brother-in-law Jeff Vullo and wife Carol; his sister-in-law Judy Vullo; his sister-in-law Jane Meserlian; best friends Brandon and Tracy Hawthorne; Dazee, the family Jack Russell; and a large extended family of nieces and nephews.

May his brilliant, kind spirit shine down upon all those grieving this significant loss.

A funeral Mass will be celebrated Saturday, Feb. 13, at 1 p.m., in the Church of the Holy Family, 185 Church St., Hebron. Family and friends may call at the Church of the Holy Family today, Feb. 12, from 3-7 p.m.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to the AHM Children's Trust Fund Endowment, 25 Pendleton Dr., Hebron, CT 06248, or online at [ahmyouth.org](http://ahmyouth.org).

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