

RIVEREAST

# News Bulletin

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

Volume 40, Number 51

Published by The Glastonbury Citizen

April 22, 2016



The efforts of Hebron resident Carla Pomproicz – and the support of many from the Hebron community and around the world – led to the installation of a well in a remote village in Guinea, West Africa, earlier this year. Here, some of the 850 villagers look on as the water is pumped from the well, while another enjoys a fresh cup; it's a far cry from the muddy water they traveled nearly half a mile to gather and use in the past.

## Love of Drums Leads to New Water Source

by Geeta S. Sandberg

It all began when Hebron resident Carla Pomproicz took her granddaughter to a guitar lesson at a music store.

And it's led to a new source of clean water for a remote African village.

"I can't explain it," she shared this week. "The drumming just happened. I saw a drum, I put my hand on it in the music store, and I left the music store with the drum and no teacher."

So Pomproicz, who is also the Hebron town clerk, went on the hunt for one, finding a teacher in Manchester after a couple months of searching. Then, she explained, "I started playing and I couldn't stop."

That was around seven years ago. After about four to five years of study, Pomproicz shared that same inexplicable pull that made her purchase a drum, then made her want to travel to the area where the rhythms she was learning originated: Guinea, West Africa.

"I can't explain what drew me there," she said. "Everyone thought I was crazy... I had such a strong desire to go I don't even know if desire is a strong enough word. It was like I couldn't help myself."

And go she did – once she found someone she felt comfortable enough with to take her.

"I know many teachers from Africa that take trips, and I just didn't really feel comfortable going on one of them until I met Bolokada Conde, a grand master drummer" at a drumming retreat three years ago in upstate New

York, Pomproicz said. She said Conde, a South Carolina resident, was the only practitioner of the particular style of drumming she was learning "that still travels internationally to teach and perform."

So, she signed up for the trip he was offering. Seven other people, from all over the world, did as well; the group all met up in Guinea, "and basically we went on a family vacation with Bolokada Conde, his wife and kids and a group of musicians."

The group started in the capital and traveled throughout the country, making a stop in the village of Morowaya, where Conde grew up.

During that visit, Pomproicz realized the 850 villagers had no access to clean water.

"It's a very, very remote area of the country," she said, and the villagers walk around half a mile to reach a stream – more like a puddle in the dry season – filled with brackish water to use for all of their needs: washing their clothes and their bodies, cleaning their kitchen utensils, drinking and cooking.

It's also the same water area animals use, too.

"You can walk along the stream and they're just in there lying down," Pomproicz stated of the animals. "When we were getting our vaccinations we had doctors telling us don't even stand in water, don't even walk through it because there are parasites and all kinds of things that can make you sick. So here I was not going in the water, drinking bottled water, and

See Love of Drums Page 2

## From Research Lab to Football Stadium

by Geeta S. Sandberg

Theresa Oei has always been curious about the world and interested in trying new things.

As a kid growing up in Hebron, Oei said she always enjoyed using the scientific method to solve different problems, like using seashells to create a filter that could remove lead from water.

Oei, 22, who was homeschooled until ninth grade then attended East Catholic High School in Manchester, said this week, "I think it was kind of natural for me to then pursue science in my undergraduate degree."

She attended Yale University in New Haven and majored in molecular biochemistry. Following her graduation last year, Oei moved to Somerville, Mass. and began working at the Broad Institute of MIT and Harvard on the development of the next generation of genome editing technology.

It's complex work – which she used the concept of a word processor to explain.

"Think of it sort of as 'find' and 'delete' if we're using a word processor," she said. "We can open [a genome], find things and delete things. But the project I'm working on is specifically trying to improve the process of trying to insert whatever 'word' you want."

That work, which Oei talks about with passion and excitement, in and of itself makes Oei

an intriguing individual.

But now, Oei's curiosity and willingness to try new things has added another element to her life: she was recently selected to be part of the 2016 New England Patriots cheerleading squad.

"I never imagined that I would make it all the way through the process," Oei laughed. "It was more something I thought would be a fun thing to do."

There were 420 applications for the squad, but only 33 made the cut.

Oei explained this week that, as her dad is a big Patriots fan, "I've always enjoyed watching football, so you kind of know about [the cheerleading squad] in that sense."

And, she added, she thought of applying as an opportunity to bring some dance back into her life. Oei has studied classical dance since she was 4 years old as well as Irish step dancing. She explained this week she's half Irish, and the Irish side of her family has been step dancing "for many generations."

"I consider it part of my cultural heritage so I started dancing at a young age and competed with that," she stated. "I was very fortunate to compete in the world championship in Ireland, in Scotland and England – I really enjoyed it. I did it all the way through college and just did my last competition this last summer."

Oei said "transitioning to the world [post-college] has been exciting," but noted she's not dancing as much as she used to. So she thought applying to be a Patriots cheerleader would be "a way to potentially do something different and get some dance back into my life."

Following her initial application, to earn a spot on the squad Oei participated in preliminary auditions, where she performed a freestyle solo dance, then learned a dance to perform. From there, she explained, "only some people move on to the final auditions," where another solo routine was performed, and several more dances were learned to perform for a panel of judges.

"From there we moved on to boot camp, which was two weeks, that essentially gives you a taste for what it's like to be on the team," Oei explained. "Then at the end of that they announce the final roster of 33."

Preliminary auditions were March 6, with the final roster announced April 3.

"I was very excited," Oei said of learning she'd made the team. "I never expected it. I think it's a very neat opportunity. I think it's nice because it's fun meeting a whole new group of young women and making friends that way. I enjoy the team spirit and being able to do these larger appearances and things and it's enjoy-

See Cheerleader Page 2



Hebron native Theresa Oei, a biochemist in Massachusetts, was recently chosen to be a New England Patriots cheerleader.



**Pomprowicz and Conde point to the machine used to drill a well in Morowaya, the remote West African village where Conde grew up. The contractors hit fresh water at 160 feet, providing the villagers access to clean water for the first time.**

#### Love of Drums cont. from Front Page

here, these people have no choice.”

And it’s that realization that led Pomprowicz to organize an effort with Conde to raise money to drill a well in Morowaya, which Conde learned would cost about \$13-14,000.

“I said to him, ‘Well, that’s a lot of money for someone to raise,’ but he has a lot of friends around the world. So I offered to organize it, and all his friends came together, all my drum teachers, my friends, my family and my community came together to support this project, and we raised the money in a year.”

The project was planned for 2014, with Conde overseeing it, but due to the Ebola crisis Conde wasn’t able to return home that year, so the project was postponed. But he was able to return this past December, and was joined by Pomprowicz in January.

“And it was just happenstance that the well-drilling company was able to come while I was there,” she said. “So that was just such a wonderful, wonderful thing; to see it come full circle, and to see how happy the villagers are to finally have access to clean water. They celebrated, they danced, they sang and they were just so happy.”

Now, a celebration of the new well is taking place stateside, on Friday, April 29, at AHM Youth and Family Services.

A family event co-sponsored by AHM, the third annual African Drum and Dance Party, will feature Conde and “very high-energy” fun that Pomprowicz said is “completely interac-

tive,” followed by a question and answer session.

She added the event, which costs \$8 per person (but caps at \$25 per family) and takes place at 7 p.m., “is a celebration of the successful drilling of the well thanks to the contributions and donations from the people in our community – Hebron was a huge supporter.”

But it’s more than that, too; with 850 people, Pomprowicz said one well likely won’t be enough. In addition, about a month after her most recent visit, a fire spread through the village.

“So what was going to be just a ‘thank you’ party and celebration at AHM has become a ‘thank you for helping us, and maybe you’d consider helping us again’ party,” Pomprowicz laughed.

“Our hopes really for the future of this village is to get them, right now, stabilized [following the fire], to get them as healthy as they can be in this area of the world, get them some more clean water, get them some medicine and get the kids into school.”

She added, “I just fell in love with the people, I fell in love with the culture. They’re happy people, they’re resilient people. This fire is a setback for them but they learn how to survive: they help each other.”

“I’m in for the long haul,” Pomprowicz concluded of helping the village.

And it all began with the impulse buy of a drum.

#### From the Editor’s Desk

## Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

One of the interesting things about watching baseball games on TV is that, no matter how many games you’ve viewed in your lifetime, the game has such a history you can almost always learn something new.

I had one such instance over the weekend while watching a Mets game – and this something new was rather horrifying. It was about the sad story of Ray Chapman.

Chapman is, to date, the only Major League player to die as a result of an injury sustained during a game. Which is actually rather amazing, when you think of how many people have been beamed over the years by 95 mile an hour fastballs.

Chapman’s death was the result of a beaming – and led to some big changes in the game.

In 1920, Chapman was a shortstop for the Cleveland Indians. He was a star player for them, a solid defender as well as a strong hitter, having hit .300 three times over the previous eight seasons. On Aug. 16, 1920, he and the other Indians were playing the New York Yankees at the Polo Grounds in New York (Yankee Stadium was still three years from opening).

In those days, baseballs were not replaced over the course of a game as often as they are now. As a cost-saving measure, teams were required to use the same baseball during a game until, for whatever reason (usually a home run), the ball was lost. As a result, balls could get incredibly dirty, as well as scuffed and chipped and generally just worn. Not only could this make the ball more difficult for pitchers to control, but the ball itself could be so dark it could be difficult to pick up, particularly at twilight time, which is about the time of day it was in the top of the fifth inning, when Chapman was batting against Yankees pitcher Carl Mays.

Mays threw with a submarine delivery, and uncorked a pitch that was high and inside – and that eyewitnesses at the time said Chapman didn’t appear to see at all. He made no attempt to get out of the way of the ball, and it wound up striking him on the side of the head. This was in the days before batting helmets, so when the ball hit him, it hit him with full force. This next part is graphic, but lets you know how serious it was: The sound of the ball hitting Chapman’s skull was so loud, Mays apparently thought it had hit the end of the bat, so he picked up the ball and threw it to first.

Chapman was bleeding from his ear – and, by some accounts, his mouth and nose as well – and soon collapsed on the field. After being tended to by doctors, he attempted to walk off the field under his own power, but his knees buckled, and he had to be assisted into the dugout.

Chapman was rushed to the hospital, where x-rays showed he had suffered a depressed fracture of the left side of his skull. His condition continued to deteriorate, and just after midnight, doctors operated on him, removing a piece of his skull. After the operation, Chapman briefly rebounded, but quickly went downhill, and was ultimately pronounced dead at 4:30 a.m. He was just 29 years old.

The tragic death led to some quick changes in the game. After the 1920 season, umpires were required to replace a ball whenever it became dirty. Baseball also banned the spitball, which involves altering a ball with saliva (or with petroleum jelly or another foreign substance). The technique actually alters the wind resistance and weight on one side of the ball, causing it to move atypically. The moistened ball can also slip out of a pitcher’s hand more easily, which again makes the path of the ball more erratic. Mays was a notorious spitballer.

Interestingly, though, the change you’d think Chapman’s death would be most likely to spur didn’t happen – at least, not for many years. Despite a player having died after being hit in the head with a pitch, players didn’t use batting helmets in a game until 1941, when a pair of Brooklyn Dodgers players tried them out. The Dodgers soon announced the entire team would wear helmets at the plate that year, and were joined later that season by a few other teams.

But even then, the game was slow to change. Baseball loves its tradition – sometimes to a fault. Initially, whether players or teams adopted batting helmets was very much up to them. Ludicrously, it wasn’t until December 1970 – more than *fifty years* after Chapman’s death – that Major League Baseball mandated the wearing of batting helmets at the plate. And even then, veteran players were grandfathered in; they were given the option of wearing one or not. The last big-league ballplayer not to wear a batting helmet was Bob Montgomery, who last played for the Red Sox in 1979.

Wearing a helmet at the plate just seems like such an easy choice. Like I said earlier, it’s not uncommon in this game for ballplayers to have 95 (or even higher) mph pitches riding straight in to their head. You’d think you’d want your players to be protected; it’s crazy that it took so long to make helmets a requirement.

Anyway, that’s the story of Ray Chapman, a player I had never heard of until last weekend. It’s incredibly tragic what happened to him, though it did lead to changes – some of them just took a while.

\* \* \*

See you next week.

#### Cheerleader cont. from Front Page

able to be able to connect with people and share an enthusiasm for the Patriots.”

Alongside her time on the squad, Oei will continue her work with the Broad Institute. Being a cheerleader, she explained, “is part-time, and they encourage people to be working as well. So I’ll be doing it on top of my work, which I think is a little crazy at times, but I think I’ll be able to manage it.”

Practice has already started, Oei shared, and the next trip with the squad is in June: she’ll be heading to the Bahamas for a photo shoot for the swimsuit calendar that comes out each year.

“I think it’ll be fun,” Oei reiterated. “I’m looking forward to a whirlwind year. It’ll be an exciting opportunity. ... I see it mostly as just sort of an adventure to be had – something totally different.”

She added that everyone on the cheerleading squad “comes from different backgrounds; a lot of them were dancers or still share this love for dance and fitness.”

But, she concluded with a laugh, “I don’t know if there’s anyone else working fulltime in a wet lab.”

# Andover Public Hearing Set for Natural Gas Proposal

by Geeta S. Sandberg

Monday's meeting of the Planning and Zoning Commission drew more than 70 residents to the Town Office Building community room – with the majority looking for information on a proposal to bring a natural gas infusion station to town.

They didn't get much.

Global CNG Holdings, a Delaware LLC, first presented on the project – which would consist of the installation of a gas line, a gas metering station, a gravel access drive, a portion of paved drive, and an equipment area on a piece of land owned by Robert Russell, owner of Scott's Tree Farm on Route 6 – at the April 11 Inland Wetlands Commission.

Last week, Inland Wetlands Commission Chairman John England explained the proposal “is to bring compressed gas from Pennsylvania all the way to Andover in tanker trucks and then they're going to pump the gas from the trucks into an existing gas line. And they're doing this because they don't have enough gas to provide service to everybody through just the gas line.”

According to the minutes from that meeting, 120 trucks are expected to come in and out of the location per day, for approximately seven months of the year.

But those present Monday didn't receive any more information on the proposal, as commission chairman Eric Anderson explained, “We're

here to accept the application and schedule a public hearing. There's no public hearing at this stage... you will have the opportunity to be heard, but that's not tonight.”

Global CNG Holdings' attorney, Leonard Jacobs, added, “I'm just here to introduce myself. ... We're not going to make a presentation tonight; we're going to make a presentation during the public hearing.”

Jacobs explained the project application as well as traffic and environmental reports had been submitted to the town, and he asked the commission “to schedule a hearing and we'll come back. And we look forward to having people come to the public hearing and for people to at least hear us out.”

The commission set the public hearing for Monday, June 20, at 7 p.m. in the Andover Elementary School gym.

\* \* \*

Also Monday, the commission moved forward with an application for a special permit to allow resident Patrick Caron to operate a small-scale used car dealership out of his home on Lake Road, voting to have Zoning Agent John Valente craft a motion for possible approval at their next meeting.

The permit would let Caron work on cars in his garage for resale, and would allow him to

get a dealer license plate to move cars to his home and allow potential buyers the chance to test drive them.

In a recent letter to the editor Caron submitted to the *Rivereast*, he explained mechanical repairs would take place at Dubois Automotive in town, and the work in his garage would be limited to “waxing, shampooing and making non-mechanical repairs like replacing light bulbs, broken sun visors, radios, radio antennas, door handles and other similar interior or exterior repairs.”

He added the loudest tool he uses is a wet/dry shop vacuum, and no hazardous materials are used or generated.

At the meeting Monday, several residents spoke regarding the application – both in favor of and against its approval.

Resident Erika McNeil was concerned with how Caron's activity might impact property values and said, “I think this is more a matter of how it affects neighbors and people on the lake. The lake is a special place.”

But to resident Georgette Conrad, the request was being “overblown” by other residents.

“He just wants to see if he can get a dealer plate to make it easier to test drive the cars.”

In addition to those who spoke at the meeting, Valente shared several letters in opposition

had been received, as well as several letters in support of Caron. The commission also received a form letter in favor of the application with a dozen signatures, and a petition of support with several more names.

Caron added at the meeting, “I just want to repair cars in my garage – the four walls of my garage. I repair them, move them to the other bay, and advertise them for sale in the paper. The dealer plates are to make it easier.”

He furthered, “I like to work on cars. There's no impact outside; it's a pretty quiet thing. It's something to do. I wake up early in the morning like it's Christmas morning to go and figure out problems and make the cars whole again.”

Caron added his original application was for three cars at any one time, but he had since reduced that number to two so the cars could be kept in the garage and there would be no visual impact.

Following public comment, commissioners discussed the application and made sure all of their questions had been answered before moving the application forward and requesting Valente craft a motion on the application to address at the commission's next meeting, which is set for Monday, May 16, at 7 p.m., in the Town Office Building community room.

# Marlborough Moving Forward Despite State Concerns

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

The governor's latest budget proposal slashes state aid to Marlborough by nearly \$300,000 – but town officials plan to stay the course, when it comes to the proposed 2016-17 budget.

The Board of Finance April 7 moved to public hearing a proposed \$23.74 million budget, a 2.93 percent increase over current year spending. The proposal reflects a 3.84 percent tax increase – or 1.26 mills – making the proposed 2016-17 mill rate 34.15.

The budget includes \$8.55 million for Marlborough's portion of the RHAM schools budget; \$7.22 million for the local Board of Education budget; \$4.76 million for town operations; \$2.24 million for debt service; and \$862,000 for capital.

It also includes \$100,000 for the town's contingency account, which exists to cover any potential overages in the budget. Initially, only \$20,000 was placed in that account, but at the April 7 finance board meeting, the board put in an additional \$80,000, just as a precaution in case state revenues came in lower than ex-

pected.

As it turns out, the town may need all of that \$100,000 contingency – and then some.

On April 12, Gov. Dannel Malloy presented his proposed reductions to the state's 2016-17 budget – and Marlborough took quite the hit, losing a total of \$291,550: \$133,792 in Educational Cost Sharing (ECS) funds, which are state dollars provided to towns to help offset some of the costs of education; and \$155,758 less in the Municipal Revenue Sharing Account (MRSA), which provides the sharing of sales tax revenue.

Originally the town expected to receive \$188,665 in MRSA funds and \$3,221,395 in ECS funds.

First Selectwoman Amy Traversa said that, while the numbers are concerning, nothing is set in stone yet – noting the legislature has yet to approve Malloy's proposal.

“The governor came out with the proposal that cuts Marlborough almost \$300,000, but the general feeling from the legislature is that even

the governor's own party isn't supporting [the proposal],” Traversa said at Tuesday's meeting of the Board of Selectmen meeting. “We are expecting a decision by May 4, but I have absolutely no idea and no information.”

May 4 marks the end of the legislative session.

If the reductions in revenue do go through, Marlborough would be faced with a more than 5.5 percent tax increase on the current budget – unless the finance board reduced the proposed budget. The finance board reduced the proposed town operations budget by \$90,000 March 31 and the local school board's proposed budget by \$200,000 March 24.

“It's a lot for some communities,” selectwoman Evelyn Godbout said. “All of the [state] agencies are feeling it. No matter what they do, it's bad.”

Traversa said this year may not be the worst, with a nearly \$2 billion deficit at the state level projected for the 2017-18 fiscal year.

Traversa said she – along with leadership from Andover and Hebron – spoke to RHAM Superintendent of Schools Bob Siminski about reducing the RHAM budget as well.

“RHAM is moving forward as properly noticed and we are moving forward as noticed in the paper,” Traversa said. “Adjustments may have to be made, but we simply don't know.”

Traversa said she wishes she had more definitive information; however, all she can do is hope that the organizations advocating for the towns continue to advocate. Those organizations include the Council for Small Towns, the Capital Region Council of Governments and the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities.

“[The numbers] seem to change hourly,” she said. “They will change right up to and on the town budget meeting night.”

\* \* \*

The public hearing on the proposed budget will be held Monday, April 25, at 7 p.m. in the Marlborough Elementary School cafeteria.

# Marlborough School Board Approves Reductions

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

Faced with a Board of Finance mandate to cut \$200,000, the Board of Education last week made a series of revisions to its 2016-17 budget – changes that, schools superintendent David Sklarz said, were “knocking on the doors to the classroom.”

In February, the school board adopted a \$7.42 million proposed budget – a .36 percent increase over current year spending – and sent it to the Board of Finance for review.

Last month, the finance board decided to cut the spending plan by \$200,000, bringing it to \$7.22 million, a decrease of 2.34 percent – or \$173,413 – from the current year budget.

Sklarz told the school board at its meeting last Thursday, April 14, that he, Marlborough Elementary School's principal, Dan White, and its assistant principal, Kim Kelley, have worked to find places in the budget to trim.

“When cuts are necessary, we are always driven by making cuts furthest from the children,” Sklarz said.

He said the finance board's cut was “disheartening,” and added that he spent several sleepless nights “wrestling with this budget.”

Sklarz said one of his goals was to not impact the entire school and to plan with the understanding that temporary cuts would be reinstated in “better economic times.”

The largest item the board cut was a full-time teacher, which saved \$78,500. The position had been slated to be cut anyway, in Sklarz's initial budget proposal to the school board in December, but the board voted 5-4 in February to put the position back in, due to concerns about class sizes.

The teacher would have been either in second grade or kindergarten, as those grades were projected to come close to exceeding the board's

class size guidelines in the 2016-17 year. But Sklarz said Thursday neither grade has currently exceeded those guidelines, nor are they expected to do so.

Another change in staffing was the reduction of hours for the preschool teacher from 1.0 full-time equivalent (FTE) to a 0.8 FTE. Sklarz explained this would save the district \$17,570 in salary and benefits, but it would also mean the teacher would no longer have Mondays available for student assessment, evaluation planning and parent conferencing.

In the front office, the board agreed to cut one school office receptionist, for a savings of \$19,750 and also to trim hours for the administrative assistant position in the superintendent's office, for a savings of \$6,331.

White explained Monday the cut of the school office receptionist won't result in anyone losing their job; the current receptionist is becoming a paraprofessional in the fall, to fill an open position there. The paraprofessional will continue to help out in the school office, filling in 30 minutes in the morning and 30 minutes at the end of the day in the school office to supplement the office's busiest times.

The board also cut \$24,393 of its facilities contingency funds; leaving \$5,000 in the line item.

Sklarz cautioned this may lead to a bit of a problem if unanticipated school maintenance occurs. Maintenance had been a topic the school board brought up earlier this year because of concerns for where the money would come from – the town or the school.

“This may require the use of the rental fee account for the purpose of facilities emergencies,” Sklarz said. “This would delay the maintaining of the facilities improvement plan that

has been in place for three years for painting, new furniture and other improvements.”

The rental fee account is funded by the Marlborough Elementary Child Care Association, or MECCA. MECCA pays approximately \$35,000 annually to Marlborough for the use of its facilities.

Another change Sklarz proposed – and the board accepted – was decreasing from 10 buses to nine buses. Sklarz explained the current load of 10 buses dates back to the 2011-12 year, when the school was at peak enrollment of 673 students. But enrollment has fallen since then, and is projected to be 544 in the 2016-17 year, so Sklarz felt nine buses would be sufficient.

“The nine buses would adequately accommodate the students and the travel time would not be significantly affected – if at all – based on the number of stops and distances,” Sklarz said.

Some smaller items included reducing curriculum revision by \$2,500; reducing the board's legal fees line by \$3,000; reducing estimated electric costs by \$5,000; reducing expected magnet school tuition by one student for \$4,087; reducing instructional supplies by \$1,420; reducing computer supplies by \$3,040; reducing custodial supplies by \$2,000; and not getting one teacher laptop for \$792.

Sklarz said the administration moved four student iPads for \$2,333 and two Epson projectors for \$5,200 to the one-time state Board of Education technology grant the district received. The school also moved \$2,000 of staff development to the Title II Federal Grant.

After Sklarz' presentation of the reductions, board member Wes Skorski balked at the cuts, and said he was “upset with the Board of Finance, the selectmen and the town leadership.”

“These are not tough economic times,” he said. “What's happening is the town voters years ago voted for projects like water and sewer. Now that credit card statement is due and people are upset.”

Skorski added that he feels town officials are “being bullies” and “picking on the school and the kids.”

“They can't pick on RHAM or the town budget so they're picking on the children,” Skorski said.

During public comments, First Selectwoman Amy Traversa spoke up against Skorski.

“The idea that the Board of Selectmen or that the Board of Finance takes any pleasure whatsoever in making any cuts anywhere is offensive,” Traversa said. “I can also tell you this; the \$200,000 cut was made when we believed the [Educational Cost Sharing] cut was \$30,000. The governor's new proposal is \$133,000 [less in ECS funds].”

She went on to say that Andover, Hebron, and Marlborough officials have all pushed RHAM schools superintendent Bob Siminski to reduce the school district's budget.

Other board members agreed with the administrators, saying they were confident Sklarz, White, and Kelley know what they are doing with the budget.

“I would hate to make a change and make the wrong change,” board member Sue Rapelye said.

The vote to accept the reductions passed 5-1-2, with Theresa Brysgel against and Skorski and Mimi LaPoint abstaining from the vote.

The proposed town and both school budgets go to public hearing Monday, April 25, at 7 p.m., in the Marlborough Elementary School cafeteria.

# New Restaurant Opens in Marlborough Town Center

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

On the outside, 17 North Main St. is a modest, white-washed building; however, inside residents can get fresh, made-to-order food from the new hotspot in town.

Mark's on Main is owned by Mark Barron of Hebron and focuses on fresh ingredients and all-natural cooking. Across the street from Town Hall, it also includes special offerings for vegetarians, gluten-free customers and customers with other dietary restrictions.

The restaurant's signature meal is the Pita Wabbit, a meatless burger made with low-fat cheeses, vegetables and nuts. The Wabbit includes alfalfa sprouts, tomatoes, carrots, mushrooms and white cheddar cheese in a white tortilla wrap.

Mark's menu is a variety of soups, salads, sandwiches, wraps and Mexican cuisine. There are also weekly dinner specials and desserts along with beer and wine.

"We make most of our own food," Barron said. "We don't use any preservatives, no MSG (monosodium glutamate), and no corn syrup."

Barron added the turkey and beef are roasted on the premises and are all free range.

"In the summer, we will use local farms' produce," Barron said.

One of the people behind the scenes at Mark's is Dan Weeden, the chef.

"I've never worked with a chef like this, who is so giving to the customers," Barron said. "A customer comes in five minutes to close and he serves them."

Weeden said one of the reasons he enjoys working at Mark's on Main is the positive environment.

"I can play around with things," Weeden said. "[Mark] hasn't said no yet."

Barron isn't a stranger to the restaurant world. He is the former owner of Mark's Restaurant in Glastonbury that has since closed. That restaurant had 103 items on its menu – and first brought the Pita Wabbit to the area. However the restaurant was mostly counter dining, with no liquor or outdoor seating.

But the new Mark's is very different from the old Mark's. The new restaurant features full-service dining, with beer and wine available (Barron is currently seeking a full liquor license, to allow him to sell additional spirits). An outdoor patio is currently being constructed.

The dream to open up Mark's on Main almost didn't happen. In the first year of renovating and designing the restaurant, Barron was in the hospital with a heart problem. He said although the setback slowed him down, he kept on working.

A former antique shop, Barron said he transformed the building in the last three years, ripping out the floors and walls along with changing where the front door is located. Barron said he wanted to focus on a contemporary design with a bit of a casual flair.

With the goal of eventually purchasing the building, Barron said the restaurant has been a labor of love and that it is "outstanding that the fruits of my labor are paying off."

The restaurant's grand opening was in December, during the town's holiday Gathering on the Green. As part of the event, fireworks set off from behind Mark's.

So far things have been going well, Barron



Mark Barron of Hebron opened Mark's on Main at 17 North Main St. Dec. 6 in conjunction with the Gathering on the Green.

said, pointing out that the restaurant has at times seen wait times of 30-35 minutes.

Kathy Mucha, a former employee of Barron's at his Glastonbury restaurant and a Marlborough resident, said she enjoys eating at Mark's because of the food and the company.

"You know it's good, quality food," Mucha

said. "People say it's a little pricey, but you know it's good food."

Mark's on Main is open Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Sundays from 11 a.m.-8 p.m., and Fridays and Saturdays from 11 a.m.-9 p.m.; it is closed Mondays. The restaurant can be reached at 860-295-1188.

## Portland Police News

3/29: Mitchell Jacinto, 19, of 22 Brewer Rd., was issued a summons for possession of more than half an ounce and less than four ounces of marijuana, East Hampton Police said.

3/30: Wendy Lee Given, 46, of 16 Dickau Court, Glastonbury, was issued a summons for sixth-degree larceny (shoplifting), police said.

4/3: Jorge A. Calderon III, 27, of 11 Fairway Dr., Wethersfield, was arrested and charged with driving under the influence, failure to drive right in a construction zone and failure to obey fire police, police said.

4/6: Steven T. Bortz, 26, of 61 White Birch Rd., was issued a summons for misuse of plates, operating while under suspension and operating an unregistered and uninsured motor ve-

hicle, police said.

4/8: Tammy Anne Einsiedel, 46, of 6 Edgerton St., was arrested and charged with interfering with a police officer, police said.

4/11: Porter Colby McAuliffe, 33, of 15 Taylor Dr., Portland, was taken into custody pursuant to an active warrant for her arrest stemming from a December 2014 incident. She was charged with two counts of sixth-degree larceny, two counts of credit card theft, two counts of illegal use of a credit card, two counts of third-degree identity theft, conspiracy to commit third-degree identity theft and two counts of receipt of goods obtained by illegal use of a credit

# Czernicki Sworn In as Newest Portland Selectwoman

by Elizabeth Regan

The first regular meeting of the Board of Selectmen since the death of selectman Carl Chudzik began with an empty seat and a moment of silence.

Then Kitch Breen Czernicki sat down. Czernicki, a Republican, was sworn in at the Wednesday meeting by Town Clerk Ryan Curley as the town's newest selectman. She was chosen by the Republican Town Committee and approved by a unanimous Board of Selectmen Wednesday.

"It's a pleasure to join you," she told her fellow selectmen as she settled in at the far end of the table. "It's bittersweet to take a seat from someone who is totally active and committed to the town of Portland."

Chudzik, also a Republican, died March 14 at his home. He is remembered by his colleagues as the epitome of what a small-town selectman should be: genuine, engaged, and devoted to doing the right thing for Portland.

Czernicki is a relative newcomer to town, with a fondness for its history. In 2006, she moved into a Main Street home that's been around since 1770.

She brings experience as a member of the Wethersfield Town Council from 1997-2005. She served as mayor from 2001-03, elected to the position by her fellow members of the Town Council.

"I feel like part of my life has come full circle. I believe in service to town and I'm very blessed to be able to do this again," she said at the meeting.

Cindy Varricchio, Republican Town Committee treasurer, was one of the members of the search committee along with Jim McCabe, committee chairman, and Peter Castelli.

Varricchio said Thursday that the committee was fortunate to have four qualified applicants

to choose from. They ultimately recommended Czernicki based on her experience as a councilwoman and mayor.

"She's got quite the background in public service and we felt she'd be an asset to the board," Varricchio said. "[There were] big shoes to fill with Carl and we felt she was equipped to do it."

Czernicki expressed gratitude for the opportunity in a conversation with reporters after Wednesday's meeting.

"I missed being part of government," she said. "I don't think I'm a political junkie, but I think I have something to offer."

Wethersfield, a town of 27,000 people as of the 2010 census, has a council-manager form of government that combines political leadership from its elected council members with the managerial experience of a paid administrator. Portland's government structure revolves around town meetings in which residents vote on big issues.

"Obviously there will be a learning curve. Having done it in one town doesn't mean you know how to do it in every town," she said.

While there are advantages and disadvantages to both forms of government, she said she's particularly drawn to Portland's smaller size and well-defined sense of community.

"I think that's great. I think every town should have its own identity and people should be bonded to it," she said.

Czernicki acknowledged she's joining the board amid difficult economic circumstances as the town grapples with the potential loss of almost \$500,000 in state funding.

"I think the Board of Selectmen made hard decisions when they cut \$100,000 from both the general government and education," she said.

## Andover Police News

4/14: State Police said Alan Silvestri, 36, of 2 Center St., was arrested and charged with third-degree assault and disorderly conduct.

## One Injured After Crash

A Columbia man was injured after a three-car crash on Route 6 near Route 87 April 14.

State police said Thomas Griffith, 62, of 54 Laurel Ln., Columbia, was transported to Windham Hospital for minor injuries. Police reported the collision occurred around 4:10 p.m. at the intersection of routes 6 and 87.

Police said two vehicles were stopped for a traffic signal when a 2005 GMC Canyon driven by Griffith collided into the rear bumper of one vehicle. The impact then made the car in front of Griffith rear end the car in front of it, police said. Griffith was issued a verbal warning for failure to travel a reasonable distance apart.

## Colchester Police News

4/14: State Police said Joel Velez, 26, of 82 Ives St., Willimantic, was arrested and charged with criminal impersonation, second-degree forgery, and interfering with an officer.

## Marlborough Police News

4/13: State Police said Christine Slossberg, 50, of 72 Abbey Rd., East Hampton, was arrested and charged with DUI and failure to drive right.

4/13: State Police said Lisa Mogren, 52, of 71 South Buckboard Ln., was arrested and charged with violation of probation.

4/15: State Police said Scudder Evans, 22, of 17 Fairview Run, was arrested and charged with violation of probation.



New Republican selectwoman Kitch Breen Czernicki is sworn in Wednesday by Town Clerk Ryan Curley. She brings experience as a former mayor of Wethersfield.

She has been vocal during the past year about what she perceives as a lack of transparency and oversight at the Chatham Health District. In January, she stood up as a member of the public to ask selectmen to consider withdrawing from the struggling regional public health entity. The district also includes Colchester, East Hampton, East Haddam, Hebron and Marlborough

"Obviously that continues to go on and on," she said. "I'm concerned about that."

Czernicki, now an aquatics instructor with the Middlesex YMCA, is retired from the Middlesex Hospital system. She was the operations manager for nine primary care offices.

She is married to retired Hartford police officer Edward Czernicki. The couple has three children and two grandchildren.

# Domestic Violence Survivor to Speak in Portland

by Elizabeth Regan

Domestic violence survivor Casey Morley is bringing a message of awareness to Portland, through the Church of St. Mary's National Day of Prayer service.

The ecumenical event will be held Tuesday, May 10, at 7 p.m. as a way to pray for and support those affected by domestic violence.

Morley, a Southington resident who owns a hair salon in the town, is the author of *Crawling Out*. The book chronicles her efforts to emerge from a childhood of abuse, domestic violence and alcoholism that she didn't have words for until decades later.

"I was 35 years old before I even heard the word 'dysfunctional.' I had to go look it up," she said.

Morley said understanding domestic violence is critical to preventing it. That's why she wrote the book and why she is spreading the message in places like Portland.

"Many people don't know," she said. "They don't know they're in it. How do you get out of something you don't know you're in?"

Nearly one in four women and one in seven men have experienced severe physical violence from an intimate partner at some point in their lives, according to a report released in 2014 by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Using the same ratio and definitions, there could be about 680 women and 390 men in Portland whose partners have hit them with something hard, kicked them, slammed them against something, choked or suffocated them, burned them on purpose, or had a knife or gun used against them.

According to Morley, the number of victims and the resources available to them are dispro-

portionate.

"There's just not enough money, there's just not enough help, there's just not enough awareness," she said. "There's just not enough."

The National Day of Prayer service will include a goodwill collection for New Horizons Domestic Violence Services, a Middletown-based nonprofit organization.

Shaunna Cullen, a community educator at New Horizons, said the organization operates a domestic violence shelter and a 24-hour hotline. There is also a victim's advocate at Middlesex Superior Court to help guide people through the court system.

New Horizons serves more than 1,000 domestic violence victims a year and houses about 60 women and children in its ten-bed shelter each year, according to Cullen. They also provide motel rooms for male victims of abuse.

New Horizons Adult Advocate Xiomara Campos described the 24-hour hotline (860-347-3044) as one way to unite victims with the different services the organization provides.

She said some police departments give out the hotline number when they respond to domestic violence situations. It's part of an initiative, known as the Lethality Assessment Program, that trains police to assess a victim's risk for serious injury or death and to connect those at greatest risk to the local domestic violence advocate.

Connecticut State Police joined the program in 2014. The Portland Police Department has not yet signed on, Campos said.

Cullen said another key focus in her role as community educator is making sure children understand what a safe and healthy relationship is.

"I'm really trying very diligently to get into

the school systems for prevention," she said. "I do have a couple different evidence-based curriculums that have been proven to reduce violence if given properly."

It's an approach that Morley – who cites her son as a prime motivation for breaking the cycle of violence she said has been in her family for generations – wholeheartedly endorsed.

"I would love to be an advocate for every kindergartner to have that education and then develop it to the next level," she said.

The need for heightened awareness extends from children all the way through the elderly population, according to Morley. She sees her book as a tool adults can use to understand domestic violence and relate it to their own lives.

"[The book] raises awareness, it gives permission to unmask the secrecy, to shed the shame and guilt, and it gives others hope that they too have the strength and courage to crawl out," she said.

She pointed to messages she's received from elderly women who credit her book with changing their lives.

"Seventy-, eighty-year-old women are finally crying and getting help," she said.

Most surprising to her was the book's effect on elderly men who have reached out to thank her for writing it. She said she's heard from men who tell her they can now see the part they played in abuse and who have begun to make amends.

Morley, a Catholic, said writing the book and now spreading its message has helped foster a sense of self-confidence she went without for more than 50 years.

"My first job at hairdressing, I could not even answer the phone. When it rang, I would hide," she said.



**Southington resident Casey Morley, a domestic violence survivor, will speak at the Church of St. Mary's National Day of Prayer Service Tuesday, May 10.**

Now, she appears on local television shows and radio programs; she stands up in front of large audiences at speaking engagements.

She credits God with ending her silence.

"I pray about it every day, that I get the strength, the courage, and that the words come out," she said.

*The National Day of Prayer Ecumenical Service, co-hosted by Knights of Columbus Council 7, will be held Tuesday, May 10 at 7 p.m. at the Church of St. Mary, 51 Freestone Ave.*

## Due to State Cuts, Portland Selectmen Slash Revenue Estimates

by Elizabeth Regan

The Board of Selectmen took a cue from Gov. Dannel P. Malloy when it on Monday approved a revised 2016-17 budget based on the potential reduction of about \$400,000 in state funding.

The selectmen's \$32.49 million budget proposal reduces their original revenue estimates by \$200,000, to address the likelihood the town will not get as much money from the state as initially thought. It also requires the boards of selectmen and education to each identify \$100,000 in spending cuts.

The general government spending plan originally proposed by First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield was based on revenue projections from a state budget proposal released by Malloy in February. But last week, Malloy put out a supplemental budget with bad news for many municipalities.

The governor's proposal reduces funding levels for K-12 education statewide by about \$44 million compared to his February numbers, according to CT News Junkie. It also reduces the amount of money in the Municipal Revenue Sharing Account – which currently sets aside a half a percent of the sales tax for property tax relief at the local level – from about \$109.3 million to \$17.3 million.

The Connecticut Conference of Municipalities said Malloy's budget means Portland would get \$414,518 less than town officials budgeted for. That's \$182,554 less in education cost sharing and \$231,964 less in municipal revenue sharing.

But the state budget still needs approval from the General Assembly. On Tuesday, CT News Junkie reported that legislative leaders in the Democratic majority are working to come up with their own budget proposal based on revenue numbers expected at the end of the month.

One of the major sticking points between Malloy and lawmakers revolves around cuts to municipal aid, according to CT News Junkie.

The current legislative session ends May 4, though it's possible the process could last even longer if legislators push off final budget details to a special session like they did last year.

That's when they waited until the last day of the fiscal year to pass a budget that included \$1.3 billion in tax increases.

On the other hand, CT News Junkie points out lawmakers "technically already approved a 2017 budget when they passed the two-year budget last year. So they could adjourn without adjusting the 2017 budget even though it's out of balance."

State Rep. Christie Carpino (R-32nd District) said in an email Tuesday that she has spoken with Bransfield and made it clear she cannot support Malloy's proposal.

"It penalizes Portland for poor choices the majority party has continued to make year after year in Hartford," said Carpino, whose district covers Portland and Cromwell.

Citing a bipartisan budget mitigation package approved by the House and Senate several weeks ago, Carpino said both Democrats and Republicans worked hard to erase the \$220 million deficit for this fiscal year while maintaining municipal aid.

Now, she said, she's disappointed Malloy's proposal for the upcoming fiscal year ignores the commitment shown by lawmakers.

"Slashing aid to education and towns with no warning effectively punishes our municipalities for paying into a broken system," she said.

Bransfield, who has been the town's top official since 2003, told selectmen at a special meeting Monday night that she's never had to entertain such significant cuts to municipal aid so late in the budget process.

"This year it's altogether different," she said. "It's just a very sobering time."

Selectmen can't wait for final state budget numbers because Portland's town charter requires a town meeting on the budget to be held the first Monday in May.

The town budget may only be amended if at least 5 percent of qualified voters show up at the meeting and two-thirds of them vote to change it.

Town Clerk Ryan Curley said 275 people would have to be at the town meeting to start a

discussion about amending the budget.

The combined budget now being forwarded to the May 2 town meeting comes in at \$32.49 million, with \$19.87 million for education and \$12.62 million for town operations.

If the budget is approved, the mill rate of 32.34 would rise by 0.32 mills to a total mill rate of 32.66 mills.

A mill is \$1 tax per \$1,000 of assessed property value. Under the proposed mill rate, taxes paid on a home assessed at \$200,000 for the 2016-17 fiscal year would be \$6,532. That's an increase of \$64 over the current year.

Selectmen rejected two other options to address the potential loss of funding. The first would reduce revenue estimates by \$400,000 to align with Malloy's proposed decrease in municipal aid. It would not require any additional spending cuts. That option would bring the mill rate to 33.23, an increase of .89 mills over the current mill rate.

Another option would reduce revenue estimates by \$200,000 in the hope that Malloy's municipal aid cuts wouldn't go through in their entirety. It also would not require additional spending cuts. That option would bring the mill rate to 32.94, an increase of 0.6 mills over the current mill rate.

Selectwoman Kathy Richards said she thought it was important to stick with the proposed mill rate the Board of Selectmen had agreed upon during its budget workshop late last month.

"I don't think we can afford much more," Richards said. "And a lot of people are losing their jobs, too."

Malloy's supplemental budget assumes a reduction of 2,500 state jobs, mostly through layoffs.

Board of Education Chairwoman MaryAnne Rode addressed selectmen to ask them if it's necessary to make decisions now when the state budget situation is in flux.

She said forcing budget cuts based on guess work can harm the district's ability to grow and compete, adding that it can be a slippery slope

when selectmen start making reductions based on situations that may not even arise.

"We don't know what's going to happen and so we're guessing – and that has long-term effects," she said. "If our budget gets cut by an additional \$100,000, that puts us that much further behind next year so when we come before the board with a larger increase, it will be scrutinized again."

She asked selectmen not to lose sight of the fact that they have already asked the school board to cut \$40,000.

Rode said the cuts come from a proposed education budget that already represents "a very lean, modest increase by comparison to many, many towns around."

The school board approved its spending plan in January at a 1.58 percent increase over the current year.

But Bransfield told selectmen it's important to put forth a budget that voters will support in one referendum.

"As the state of Connecticut goes, so goes the town. There is a crisis in our state and I think we need to address that as a town," Bransfield said. "I think it's a very moderate approach. I don't think it's extreme one way or the other."

If municipal aid cuts end up exceeding the \$200,000 amount anticipated in the selectmen's budget, Bransfield said the town has money set aside for emergencies.

"That's why we do have a rainy day fund and that is why we keep it at the recommended level our accounting firm recommends."

Bond rating agencies look at unassigned fund balances as a reflection of the financial strength of a municipality and they can get concerned when fund balances decrease.

Finance Director Tom Robinson said the town's undesignated surplus is at \$3.7 million. That's about 11 percent of the total proposed budget.

Town accountants recommend maintaining a fund balance between 10 and 15 percent of the total budget, according to Bransfield.

# Fire Chars 18 Acres of Forest in Portland

by Elizabeth Regan

A fast-moving brush fire spread through 18 acres of a remote section of the Meshomasic State Forest Sunday.

The first call for heavy smoke in the area of the state forest was received around 5:05 p.m., according to Portland Fire Chief Robert Shea. The department's Facebook page said smoke could be seen as far away as Farmington.

"I'll tell you, we knew we had a fire. That's for sure," Shea said.

They just didn't know where.

Shea said he used Google Earth to triangulate the probable location based on a heavy area of pine growth at one of the forest's highest elevations. Firefighters got as close as they could with firetrucks but had to resort to all-terrain vehicles – as many as they could get through mutual aid – for the 10-minute ride into the depths of the forest.

Shea said firefighters reached the fire line within about 45 minutes of the first call.

Firefighters from Middletown, Westfield, Glastonbury and East Hampton joined Portland to attack the fire with a limited water supply and a lot of tools, according to Shea.

"They were using rakes, hand tools – a lot of very rigorous handwork," he said.

Shea worked the scene from a command post at the edge of the forest, he said, while Deputy Chief Andrew Goff oversaw operations from the fire line.

The fire was contained in roughly three hours

and crews worked to extinguish hot spots until about 10 p.m., according to the department.

Shea said members of the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection's forestry division came in to see that the fire was contained; they remained there overnight to monitor the areas that were still burning.

There were no injuries in the fire, Shea said. The cause of the fire is unknown.

"There was some evidence in certain areas that there might've been activity of some sort, but there were no campfires that we saw," he said, adding that the DEEP is investigating.

The Portland Fire Department is accustomed to forest fires, Shea said, though he said Sunday's fire was the most widespread and difficult to access in quite some time.

He cautioned Portland residents and visitors to follow regulations – such as the prohibition on campfires – and to pay attention to state fire danger levels and warnings from the National Weather Service.

Careless fires are a lot of work for firefighters to put out and a threat to their safety, Shea said: "All the guys are volunteers and they're taking a big risk when they go into the woods at night."

He praised the efforts of the 40 personnel who came out on Sunday to knock down the blaze, adding Portland could not have done it without help from nearby towns.

"Every department that showed up was willing and ready to work. And they worked hard,"



Firefighters from Portland and four other departments battled an 18-acre brush fire at Meshomasic State Forest Sunday.

Shea said.

In a press release issued Tuesday, DEEP Deputy Commissioner Susan Whalen reminded people permits to burn brush are not valid when the danger of a forest fire is rated high, very high, or extreme by the state.

The spring fire season typically lasts from mid-March to mid-May, according to the DEEP

website. That's when days are getting longer and the sun is getting hotter, shining through still-bare trees to dry out grass, leaves, twigs, and decaying material on the forest floor.

"Anyone spotting a forest fire should remain calm and dial 911 to report the fire as quickly as possible to the local fire department," Whalen said.

## Butson Named New JJIS Principal in Colchester

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

On July 1, the reins for Jack Jackter Intermediate School will officially hand over from retiring principal Deb Sandberg to East Hampton resident Elise Butson.



Elise Butson

The Board of Education unanimously appointed her principal of the school at a special meeting April 14.

Butson, currently associate principal at Timothy Edwards Middle School in South Windsor, has experience with Higher Order Thinking (HOT) schools, and said that is what she is most excited about.

JJIS, which educates the town's third-through fifth-graders, has been an HOT school

since 1998. The HOT school model is a state initiative that focuses on student voices in government and the integration of the arts.

"It allows the students to express all of their talents," Butson said of the HOT model, saying it was the reason she was drawn to the Colchester school system. "It has a really strong focus on academics and the social focus. It's about growing the whole child."

Butson added the HOT model lets the children "be who they are and lets them be whoever they want to be as adults."

"Ms. Butson brings energy and passion along with an extensive background in Higher Order Thinking schools which is a perfect fit for the JJIS community," Superintendent of Schools Jeff Mathieu said in a press release following the announcement. "She will be a great addition to a talented administrative team and a high performing school."

Butson has 19 years of experience in educa-

tion, and formerly worked in the Hartford Public Schools including an HOT magnet school.

She earned her bachelor's degree in elementary education and English from the University of Vermont, her master's degree in education technology from the University of Hartford, and both her sixth year in educational leadership and advanced superintendency from Central Connecticut State University.

The position will be Butson's first principal position, and she said her goals will be to familiarize herself with the staff, the school's objectives, and the parents and community along with any important traditions in the building.

"It's a position I'm ready to take on," she said. "JJIS has such a strong staff and I'm a collaborative person. It adds to who I am as a leader."

Butson said she has been passionate about education since her youth and that it is "amaz-

ing how you see growth even in little things every day."

Butson's hiring was the result of a two-month interview process. Board of Education Chairman Ron Goldstein classified the process as "rigorous," with approximately 38 resumes received.

"There was a series of interviews including a full-day interview with folks at the school, with parents, and with students and other administration," Goldstein said. "They also had a performance test which was to create an original presentation about a topic we gave to them."

Goldstein explained Butson received school accountability data April 12, and then had to present it to the board at its April 14 meeting.

"The board was impressed by Ms. Butson's enthusiasm and her emphasis on working collaboratively," Goldstein said in a statement. "We are excited to have her on our team."

## \$36.18 Million Budget Sent to Referendum in Hebron

by Geeta S. Sandberg

The Board of Finance last Friday voted to forward a proposed 2016-17 budget of \$36.18 million to referendum May 3.

The spending proposal amounts to \$36,177,949 for a decrease of \$203,852 or .56 percent, from the current spending package, and would result in a mill rate of 36.17, up from the current 36 mills.

The mill rate is used to determine a resident's real estate and personal property taxes (the state recently passed Public Act 15-244, which prohibits municipalities from using a mill rate greater than 32 mills to tax motor vehicles). Under the proposed mill rate, a resident with a home assessed at \$250,000 would be responsible for \$9,043 in property taxes, up from \$9,000.

At the public hearing held on the budget April 12, the spending package was proposed at \$36,227,955 with a mill rate slated to remain the same at 36 mills. However, all that changed when, mere hours before the hearing, the board was made aware of the release of a revised version of Gov. Dannel P. Malloy's proposed state budget. Included in the proposal were significant cuts to Educational Cost Sharing funds to towns, including a \$267,010 reduction (added to a February reduction of \$30,001) for Hebron.

ECS funds come to the town as revenue, and a reduction in revenue from alternate sources such as the state means an increase in the amount that needs to be raised via resident taxes. As a result, if the Board of Finance had passed the budget as it was presented during the hearing, it would have resulted in a mill rate

of 36.33.

The change caused the finance board to discuss the budget until midnight following the hearing, and members made a number of motions to forward the budget as presented or cut various amounts. But ultimately, none of the motions passed and plans were made to meet again April 15.

At that time, after more discussion, the board finally voted 4-1 to reduce the proposal through a \$75,000 cut to the town budget and a \$38,500 reduction to the Board of Education budget.

(Finance board member Henry Sawicki, who stated previously he felt more should be cut from the education budget and less from the town, voted against.)

Included in the spending package is \$11,758,954 for the Board of Education budget, which is a \$231,500 decrease from the 2015-16 budget; \$15,269,771 for Hebron's portion of the RHAM Board of Education budget, for a reduction of \$234,653 from the current year, due to a decrease in the number of students attending the two schools; and \$9,149,224 for the town government budget which is a \$337,301 increase over current year spending.

The \$9.15 million town government budget consists of a \$770,911 contribution for Capital Improvement Projects; a \$140,000 contribution to Open Space and Land Acquisition; an \$8,800 contribution to capital non-recurring items; a \$62,100 contribution to capital projects; a \$50,000 contribution to revaluation; a \$54,000 contribution to debt management; \$928,988 for debt service and \$7,209,425 for town govern-

ment.

Also included in that amount is the directive from the Board of Finance to cut \$75,000; however, the exact areas those funds will be taken from is yet to be determined.

Speaking on the reductions this week, Board of Selectmen Chairman Dan Larson said he was sad the state waited until the last minute to release the budget revisions that impacted the town, and also that RHAM "is basically immune from these cuts since their budget has already been presented and awaits final approval from the voters."

But, he furthered, "This budget will still be virtually, by and large, a zero impact on the taxpayers when you figure the property taxes and the [decrease] in motor vehicle taxes, so I feel that I kept my word to the voters in doing everything in my power to have a zero percent increase to the taxpayers."

Larson added, "Everybody took some hits and, again, it's sad that it had to have happened but this is the budget climate that we are in. That being said, I would like to see this budget pass. And once this budget has passed I think it's imperative that the Board of Education, Board of Finance and Board of Selectmen all sit down, because my fear is that next year it's going to be worse."

Larson said he anticipated adding some discussion on where the \$75,000 in cuts should come from to the agenda for the Board of Selectmen's meeting, which was held Thursday, after press time; however, he also said he

wanted to give town staff enough time "to cobble together areas they think we may be able to reduce."

Town Manager Andrew Tierney also spoke to the budget this week, saying, "I think the Board of Finance did what they had to do. We had a very good budget until we received news from the governor's office about the reduction in ECS revenues."

And come referendum time, Tierney said he hopes people vote 'yes.'

"I would hope that people could come out and support this budget," he said. "My fear would be, if it doesn't pass, where would the further cuts come from? I put forward a very practical budget ... a continuation budget is basically what I went for and we absorbed contractual increases and insurance increases, so I would be fearful of where further cuts would come from."

Regarding the reduction to the education budget, Schools Superintendent Tim Van Tassel said Wednesday "I'm going to provide some initial thoughts at our next Board of Education meeting just to come up with that additional \$38,000 amount."

He added, "I greatly appreciate the work that the Board of Education and Board of Finance did on this year's budget, and now it moves forward for the community to decide."

\*\*\*

The budget referendum takes place Tuesday, May 3, from 6 a.m.-8 p.m., with voting at Hebron Elementary School, 92 Church St.

# Hebron Woman Arrested in Crash That Killed Two UConn Students

by Geeta S. Sandberg

A local woman was arrested in connection with the fatal car crash in Columbia last fall that claimed the lives of two University of Connecticut students.

Hebron resident Hannah Schmidt, 19, of 82 Sentinel Woods Dr., turned herself into Troop K and was charged with two counts of negligent homicide with a motor vehicle, and a stop sign violation.

According to an arrest warrant affidavit, on Sept. 18 of last year, Schmidt, a sophomore at UConn, was driving south on West Street in Columbia with two friends and fellow classmates, Alana Ferrante of South Windsor and Ryan Meegan of Ridgefield. When Schmidt entered the intersection of West Street and Route 66, the 2005 Toyota Camry she was driving was struck on the right side by a tractor trailer truck driven by Adolfo Lopez, 49, of Hartford.

Both vehicles traveled off the right side of the eastbound shoulder of Route 66 and came to a rest after colliding with a utility pole, which snapped at its base, state police said.

As a result of the crash, Lopez was trans-

ported to Windham Hospital with minor injuries. Schmidt, meanwhile, was transported to Windham Hospital and later transferred to Hartford Hospital via LifeStar with serious injuries.

Both Ferrante and Meegan were pronounced dead at the scene.

Following the crash, an investigation was conducted that concluded several factors related to the collision, including: the stop sign facing the south bound traffic on West Street was visible to traffic as far back as 405 feet, according to police.

In addition, according to the arrest warrant affidavit, there is an advanced stop sign ahead warning sign present 533 feet prior to the actual stop sign.

Witnesses of the crash told police that Schmidt "entered the intersection after failing to stop for the stop sign on West Street."

Lopez's driving, meanwhile, was described as "normal" and "straight and true," the affidavit states.

In the days following the crash, statements were obtained from several other witnesses including one who said, according to the affida-

vit, that while he was driving east on Route 66, he observed a Toyota "enter from West Street onto Route 66 directly in front of the path of travel of the tractor trailer truck, without stopping at the stop sign."

Another driver, also traveling east on Route 66 a few cars behind Lopez, told police "she saw a silver-colored car coming real fast out of West Street and it entered onto Route 66 without stopping," according to the affidavit. The witness then said she saw Lopez swerve to the left, "but it still struck the car."

Lopez was also interviewed following the accident. The affidavit states Lopez was on his way back to the Mytlitsky warehouse in Lebanon after finishing up his egg deliveries for the day.

Lopez stated he was going about 40 miles per hour down Route 66 in Columbia when he saw a car come from the left out of West Street.

According to the affidavit, Lopez stated "the car didn't stop at the stop sign it just came right into the street and cut in front of me from the left to the right. I put my foot on the brake and

couldn't do anything. The people in the car saw me and said something to the driver but it was too late. I couldn't stop and kept going straight." He added, "It all happened in seconds."

A statement was also received from Schmidt, who told police after she left her father's house in Hebron she drove her friends to RHAM High School to show them where she went to school.

According to the affidavit, Schmidt said when she exited RHAM she took a left out of the front driveway onto Route 316 north, but couldn't remember anything after that.

No drugs or alcohol were found in Schmidt's system.

As a result of the investigation, it was concluded Schmidt "drove through a clearly-marked stop sign without coming to a complete stop and then yielding to traffic flowing east and west" on Route 66, according to the affidavit, thus causing the crash that resulted in the death of Ferrante and Meegan.

\* \* \*

Schmidt was released on \$1,000 bond. She is scheduled to appear in court April 27.

## Another Step Forward for Colchester Senior Center

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

The town is one step closer to owning the Colchester Senior Center, as the Board of Finance Wednesday approved the proposed purchase to go to the Board of Selectmen for a town meeting, then referendum.

The Colchester Senior Center is currently located at 95 Norwich Ave. in the former Bacon Academy Arts and Sciences building. When Bacon Academy moved up the street from its former 84 Main St. building, arts and sciences went with it. Currently owned by the Bacon Academy Board of Trustees, the town has been renting the building since the early 1980s for the seniors.

In the 2015-16 fiscal year budget, the town paid \$16,000 in rent to the trustees along with all maintenance and utilities for the building.

However, with the town's elderly population growing and the fact the building was designed for students and teachers, not seniors, the consensus among residents and town officials has been that a new building is needed. As well, the trustees can no longer afford the building and need funds to restore and update Old Bacon Academy.

Last September, the Board of Selectmen formed a subcommittee between the selectmen, finance board and the Commission on Aging to discuss how to proceed forward with a new center. At the subcommittee's April meeting, it unanimously approved to support the purchase of 95 Norwich Ave.

First Selectman Art Shilosky explained the process to a new senior center has four phases: first, secure the current building, which this purchase would do; find a location and create a design for a new senior center; build the center and move the seniors in; and lastly, decide what to do with 95 Norwich Ave.

The purchase agreement – which includes a \$275,000 purchase price along with \$8,240 in closing costs – was approved by the Board of Selectmen April 7. Shilosky said the building was appraised at \$295,000 so the purchase price is a "compromise" between the trustees and the town.

On Wednesday, the finance board unanimously approved taking that money out of the undesignated fund balance. The next step in the process is for the selectmen to set a town meet-

ing date that will then send the purchase to referendum. Shilosky explained this would happen after the 2016-17 budget is passed at referendum as to not confuse the two votes.

However, if the purchase does not pass at referendum, the town could lose the building entirely. Shilosky told the finance board Wednesday that if the referendum is defeated, the building will go up for public sale – and the trustees have a buyer.

If the town were to lose the building, Board of Finance chair Rob Tarlov said Wednesday, building or finding a new senior center could come sooner than expected.

\* \* \*

Also Wednesday, the Board of Finance also discussed setting a more structured citizens' comment section for its meetings.

Tarlov said after recent citizens' comments featured some back-and-forth conversations between citizens, a stricter policy is needed. Previously, he said, there have been no restrictions on citizens' comments.

Board member Rob Esteve agreed with

Tarlov that there is "room for improvement" in how the board conducts citizens' comments.

Esteve suggested the board consider a timeframe of citizens speaking for three minutes and residents could only speak once along with talking directly to the board. Anything beyond that would be at the discretion of the chair, he said.

Tom Kane, another member, said all of the citizens "are grown-ups" and should know how to act.

"The question is, how do we enforce it?" Kane said. "What do we do when there is a back and forth? Can we kick them out or end citizens' comments?"

Tarlov suggested a series of warnings may be needed with citizens being warned once then asked to leave. If the resident does not leave, the police would be called.

"Hopefully, it will never get to that," Tarlov said.

Shilosky agreed with Tarlov, saying a town policy is on the agenda for the Board of Selectmen meeting Thursday after press time.

## Trial Set for '98 East Hampton Murder

by Elizabeth Regan

A former East Hampton handyman will be going to trial after rejecting a plea deal in a murder case that has lasted 18 years.

Gerald "Brian" Tuttle, 53, was charged with murder in 2013 after advances in forensic technology connected his DNA to physical evidence found during the investigation of the 1998 strangling of 60-year-old Gertrude "Trudy" Ochankowski.

Middlesex State's Attorney Peter A. McShane said Tuttle rejected a plea deal late last month. The case is set to go to trial on Sept. 6.

Tuttle has been held on a \$1 million bond since he was arrested at his home in Surfside Beach, S.C., Dec. 10, 2013.

The arrest was the result of an investigation conducted by the East Hampton Police Department in conjunction with McShane's office and the cold case unit from the Office of the Chief State's Attorney, according to the state Division of Criminal Justice.

The case had been handled for nearly 16 years by now-retired Sgt. Garritt Kelly of the East Hampton Police Department.

Ochankowski was found naked from the

waist down in a stream just off Tartia Road on Jan. 12, 1998, according to court documents. Police alleged in an arrest warrant affidavit that Ochankowski's body was dumped there after she was killed in a remote apartment above the Main Street Laundromat in which she had been washing her clothes.

Ochankowski's body was discovered in the afternoon, the affidavit said; her car had been found earlier that day idling outside the Laundromat with her dog and her purse inside.

Witnesses later said they had seen her car parked and running as early as 9:30 p.m. the previous night, according to the affidavit.

Tuttle was the building superintendent and a tenant in the building that housed the Laundromat, the affidavit said; he had keys to all the rooms.

According to the *Hartford Courant*, Tuttle was arrested by state police in 1989 for sexually assaulting an elderly woman in East Haddam. The *Courant* said Tuttle grabbed the woman, whom he did not know, outside a Laundromat and sexually assaulted her before letting her go.

## Three Injured in Hebron Crash

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

Three handicapped passengers from a group home in Amston were injured after a crash on Wall Street April 5, when the van they were riding in went off of the road around 3:42 p.m.

State police reported John Wilcox, 37, Carlos Rodriguez, 33, and Andre D'Anteuil, 38, all of 33 Old Colchester Rd., Amston, were transported to Middlesex Hospital for possible injuries after the crash. Police said all three were wheelchair-bound.

Police reported the 2016 Ford Transit van driven by Taylor Carter, 25, of 20 Mallard Dr., Bloomfield, was traveling south on Route 316 near Basketshop Road in Hebron when the car

crossed the center line and went off of the road. At the time of the crash, Carter told police she had avoided another vehicle when she went off of the road. She was issued a warning for failure to drive in the proper lane. Carter was not injured, police said.

Carter is an employee of the Connecticut Institute for the Blind, police said, who also owns the van. The institute owns a group home at 33 Old Colchester Rd. and services people who are visually-, physically- or mentally-impaired.

A representative for the institute could not be reached by press time.

## East Hampton Man Killed in Eastford Crash

by Elizabeth Regan

An East Hampton man was thrown from his motorcycle and killed after colliding with a car on Route 44 in Eastford Monday afternoon, according to police.

Torrence Botsford, 63, of West High St., was traveling east "at an elevated rate of speed" on a 2004 Honda GL1800 when he

collided with a 2009 Toyota Corolla making a left turn into a driveway on Pomfret Road, police said.

The Toyota was driven by Debra Willard-Webb, 58, of Hampden, Maine. She was taken to Windham Hospital for treatment of minor injuries, according to police. A front seat passenger was not injured.

# Obituaries

## Portland

### Priscilla H. Currier

Priscilla H. Currier, 76, of Portland, wife of Robert A. Currier, passed away Wednesday, April 6, at home. She was the daughter of the late Thomas F. and Mildred (Bradway) Henry.

Born Sept. 10, 1939, in Philadelphia, Pa., she lived in Portland for most of her life. She graduated from Lesley College in Cambridge, Mass., with a teaching degree and retired as a director of Headstart after 25 years. She was a member of the First Congregational Church in Portland and of the Belltones Handchimes and Choral group of East Hampton. For many years she and her husband enjoyed their cottage and boating on Long Lake in Bridgton, Maine.

Besides her husband, she leaves her son, Scott Currier of Portland; daughters, Beth Currier and her spouse Kathy Dougherty of Salem, Mass., and Judy Turgeon and her husband, David of Hebron; nine grandchildren, Daniel Turgeon, Bree Currier, James Turgeon, Brenna Currier, Julia Turgeon, Kelsey Currier-Dougherty, Emma Currier-Dougherty, Thomas Henry Currier and Tess Currier.

Memorial services will be held Saturday, April 30, at 11 a.m., at the First Congregational Church, 554 Main St., Portland, with the Rev. Jane Hawken officiating. All are invited and welcome in the church's Fellowship Hall for light refreshments following the service.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Portland Congregational Church Memorial Fund at 554 Main St., Portland, or Maine Audubon Society for loon conservation - Development Office, Maine Audubon, 20 Gilsland Farm Rd., Falmouth, ME 04105.

To send an online expression of sympathy, visit [portlandmemorialfh.net](http://portlandmemorialfh.net).

## Hebron

### Phyllis Coleman

Phyllis (Dadona) Coleman, 69, of Hebron, beloved wife of Mark, passed away Wednesday, April 13, at home, surrounded by her loving family. Born Feb. 24, 1947 in Hartford, she was the eldest daughter of the late Frank and Rita (Belanger) Dadona Jr., of a career Marine family.

Phyllis attended Morse School of Business continuing on in her career as a bookkeeper and retired in 1998 from the VNA East.

As a young girl, she was an active Girl Scout and worked as a volunteer and leader with her daughters and granddaughter. During retirement she was an active member of the motorcycle touring group, New England Roadriders.

In her spare time, she enjoyed being a seamstress, quilting, boating, reading, gardening, cooking, golfing, riding her bicycle and walks with her husband along the rail trails. She was an avid fan of the women's UConn basketball and ECSU baseball. Her greatest joy came from time spent with her family.

In addition to her loving husband of 50 years, she leaves two daughters, Cynthia Vertefeuille and fiancé, Duain Woodruff, Kristen and James Tracy of Windham; three grandchildren, Mark and Bailey Tracy and Brittany Woodruff; three siblings and their spouses, Robert and Linda Dadona of East Hampton, Richard and Marybeth Dadona and Dorothy and Gary Winch of Colchester; in-laws Ellen Bramley of Enfield, Dennis and Dinah Coleman of West Hartford and Moira and Brien Robertson of Saybrook; and many loving nieces, nephews, cousins and friends. She was predeceased by a nephew and niece, Casey Winch and Julie Winch.

The family received guests Sunday, April 17, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. The funeral liturgy was celebrated Monday, April 18, directly at Church of the Holy Family, 185 Church St. (Route 85), Hebron.

Donations in her memory may be made to the Helen and Harry Gray Cancer Center, 85 Retreat Ave., Hartford 06106. Burial will be private.

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

## Moodus

### Wallace R. Hall Sr.

Wallace R. Hall Sr., 89, of Moodus, husband of the late Kathleen (Goff) Hall, died Monday, April 11, at Middlesex Health Care.

He was born in Cromwell, son of the late John and Mary (Spencer) Hall. He served with the United States Army. Prior to his retirement, Wallace worked at North and Judd. He loved being outside, whether it was fishing or enjoying the countryside while riding his motorcycle.

Wallace is survived by his sons, Wallace Hall Jr., Timothy Hall, Michael Hall, Lenny Hall, Mark Hall; daughters, Carol Hiner, Doreen Mosher, Laura Olinger, Colleen Pratt, Vicki DeMerchant, Charlene Hall; many grandchildren, great-grandchildren as well as several nieces and nephews.

A graveside service will be held Saturday, April 23, at 11 a.m. at St. Bridget of Kildare Cemetery, Moodus. There are no calling hours. Biega Funeral Home has care of the arrangements.

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

## Marlborough

### Denise Monique Girard/Masichuk

Denise Monique Girard/Masichuk, 48, of Marlborough, passed away Thursday, April 14, at Hartford Hospital, with her loving family at her side.

She leaves to mourn her passing but cherish her memory her loving husband and best friend of Steven Masichuk; her parents, Monique Gonsalves (her husband, George) of Hebron; Dennis Girard of Florida; four siblings, Corina Girard of Middletown, Misty VanWoerden (her husband, Johann II and their son, Johann III) of East Haddam; Marc Gonsalves of Port Charlotte, Fla., and Michael Gonsalves of Manchester; her dog, Casey, and two cats; and numerous extended family and friends.

Denise had worked as an accountant and bookkeeper for Brimatco Corp. in Cheshire, as well as Randsheeves. A "rock" of strength to many, she had the amazing gift of multi-tasking and helping so many, especially as the glue that held her family together through thick and thin and placed them above all else. In her spare time, she enjoyed many kinds of handiwork, from sewing to jewelry making and was an avid animal lover. Denise also "lived for Fridays," when she would get to spend quality time with her nephew, "Little Man."

The family will receive guests from 4-7 p.m. today, April 22, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. The funeral liturgy will be celebrated at 11 a.m. Saturday, April 23, directly at the Church of the Holy Family, 185 Church St. (Route 85), Hebron. She will be laid to rest privately with her beloved grandparents, Francoise and Clermont Genesse, at the New Hebron Cemetery.

Donations in her memory may be made to the Meadow Hill Veterinary Shoppe, 159 Exeter Rd., Lebanon 06249.

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

## Colchester

### Charles Harvey Pent Jr.

Charles Harvey Pent Jr., 81, of Colchester, passed away peacefully in his sleep at home on Saturday, April 16, with his loving wife, Maryan, at his side. Born Nov. 16, 1934 in Daytona Beach, Fla., he was one of three children of the late Charles and Edith (Barnes) Pent, Sr.

Shortly after his age 17, he entered the U.S. Navy as a Seaman Recruit serving during the Korean War.

Charlie went on to work as a truck driver for Holmes Transportation for 25+ years and was a member of Teamsters Local 671.

In addition to his loving wife, Maryan Caffery Pent, he leaves three children, Charles H. Pent III of Lewistown, Pa., Christine Luna of New Smyrna Beach, Fla., and Carol Ann Pent of Cromwell; 12 grandchildren; 12 great-grandchildren; and numerous extended family and friends.

He was predeceased by a son, Gerald Pent, in 2010; as well as two grandchildren.

At his request, there will be no services and he will be laid to rest privately in the Higginum-Burr Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, donations in his memory may be made to Hospice & Palliative Care at Middlesex Hospital, 28 Crescent St., Middletown, CT 06457.

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

## Marlborough

### Carol Forand

Carol (Campbell) Forand, 71, of Manchester, formerly of Marlborough, passed away peacefully at Hartford Hospital Thursday, April 14, after a courageous battle with cancer. Born April 9, 1945, in Hartford, she was the daughter of the late William and Edna Mae (Porter) Campbell.

Carol graduated from Conard High School and received her bachelor's degree from the University of Connecticut School of Nursing. Over the course of her career, she was employed at Hartford Hospital, Connecticut Children's Medical Center, the VNA of Eastern Connecticut, and Marlborough Elementary School. For the past 15 years, Carol served as the 504 program manager for the Hartford Public Schools.

She was an avid lover of all sports, especially golf, the Boston Red Sox and the UConn basketball teams, and she especially enjoyed spending time with her family.

Carol is survived by her three daughters, Margo George and her husband Timothy of Tolland, Traci D'Amico and her husband Christopher of Marlborough, and Chrissy Forand of Manchester; four beloved grandchildren, Bradley, Andrew, Brenna and Patrick, her sister Ellen Cooper and her husband Robert of East Hampton, N.Y.; brothers Robert Campbell and William Campbell of Vernon; nieces, nephews, cousins and an amazing extended family of friends and co-workers.

A funeral service for family and friends was celebrated Thursday, April 21, at Mulryan Funeral Home, 725 Hebron Ave., Glastonbury. Friends called at Mulryan Funeral Home Wednesday, April 20.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations can be made online to the Ron Foley Foundation at [ronsrn.org](http://ronsrn.org) or mailed to Ron Foley Foundation 1000 Farmington Ave., Suite 108A, West Hartford, CT 06107.

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

## Colchester

### Marie Jeanette Gilmour

Marie Jeanette (Shailor) Gilmour, 84, of West Hartford, beloved wife of William Rodger Gilmour, died Monday, April 18, at Hartford Hospital, after a long illness.

Born March 8, 1932 in Westchester, she was the daughter of Charlie and Josephine Shailor and sister to Bub Shailor.

Marie was a graduate of Bacon Academy, Class of 1950, in Colchester and later attended State Teachers College. She worked for Cigna as a pensions account manager in Bloomfield and retired after 43 years. Marie was an avid reader and enjoyed crocheting and travel. She was a member of the Eastern Star and Amaranth and volunteered her time in local politics as a moderator.

Marie is survived by her sons, Craig Gilmour and his wife Pam of Marlborough, and John Gilmour and his wife Kelly of Hebron; six grandchildren, Jack, Sam, Jarrod, Dustin, John and Jessica; and her husband of 65 years, William "Bill" Gilmour, who cared for her tirelessly with the help of her loving aids Avis, Jeanette and Doreen.

Marie was a quiet calming influence, who loved silly windup toys but mostly loved her friends and family. She will be missed.

Funeral services will be today, April 22, at 10 a.m. at the First Church of Christ Congregational, 12 South Main St., West Hartford. Burial will follow at Fairview Cemetery, West Hartford. Calling hours were held Thursday, April 21, featuring an Eastern Star Service, at the Taylor & Modeen Funeral Home, 136 South Main St., West Hartford.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the Amaranth Diabetes Foundation.

For directions and online condolences, visit [taylorandmodeen.com](http://taylorandmodeen.com).

