

RIVEREAST

News Bulletin

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

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Ravaged by Fire... A house at 51 Carriage Dr. in Hebron is unlivable after a fire tore through the home last Sunday, April 24, when a lawn tractor left under the back deck caught fire. It was the second house fire in town in three days; a home at 21 Burnt Hill Rd. caught fire Thursday, April 21. There were no injuries in either fire. See story on page 25.

Sanders, Trump Win Area Towns

by Geeta S. Sandberg

The state as a whole went for Democrat Hillary Clinton and Republican Donald Trump in Tuesday's presidential primaries – but in *Rivereast*-land, the story was a little different, at least as far as the Democrats were concerned.

Statewide, Clinton bested Sanders 51.48 percent to 46.71 percent – collecting 152,559 votes to his 138,438 votes. Roque “Rocky” De La Fuente received 882 votes, or .3 percent, and another 4,481 – 1.51 percent – voted as uncommitted.

Of the five states who held primaries Tuesday, four of them went to Clinton including, along with Connecticut, Delaware, Maryland and Pennsylvania, which gave her 55, 21, 95 and 189 delegates, respectively, bringing her total to 1,662 delegates, with 2,383 needed to win the nomination.

Sanders, meanwhile, only won Rhode Island, earning him 24 delegates to add to his current delegate total of 1,365.

While Clinton bested Sanders statewide Tuesday, when it came to the *Rivereast* towns, all six voted for Sanders.

In Andover, 259 votes or 61.96 percent went to Sanders, while 145 or 34.69 percent went to Clinton; in Colchester, Sanders received 977

votes, or 60.05 percent, while Clinton garnered 624 or 38.35 percent.

Over in East Hampton, Sanders earned 738 votes, or 58.29 percent, and Clinton got 506, or 39.97 percent; and in Hebron, Sanders received 528 votes, or 55.06 percent, and Clinton earned 415 votes, or 43.27 percent.

Meanwhile, Sanders pulled in 382 votes, or 51.76 percent, in Marlborough, to Clinton's 343 votes, or 46.48 percent. Lastly, in Portland, Sanders received 558 votes, or 52.79 percent, to Clinton's 466, or 44.09 percent.

Marlborough First Selectwoman Amy Traversa, a Democrat, said this week she was “not surprised” Sanders topped Clinton in area towns. “This is by far probably the most unusual and interesting primary season, and probably election, of my lifetime.”

She added of Marlborough's voters, “I think there's a real mix here. If you look at the actual breakdown of affiliated voters, only half that registered are affiliated with either party, so there's a big unaffiliated population.”

Traversa also said the town's voters are “rebels” and “freethinkers,” and said “the registered voters tend to be a little bit younger”

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State Cuts Leave Belltown Budget in Limbo

by Elizabeth Regan

Amid threats to state funding, which Town Manager Michael Maniscalco has described as “municipal heroin,” the East Hampton Town Council Tuesday decided to put off a vote on the 2016-17 proposed town budget in the hope that more solid revenue figures will be available by their next meeting.

At a joint meeting of the council, Board of Finance and Board of Education held the previous day, Maniscalco had apprised town officials of a state budget situation that could mean the loss of as much as \$619,000 in expected revenue to the town for the upcoming fiscal year – and even more in subsequent years.

He said state aid currently composes about 20 percent of total town revenue.

“The revenue that we are receiving from the state at this point is more or less, from my perspective, almost the equivalent of municipal heroin. We are somewhat addicted to the state aid that we're receiving,” he said. “It's getting to the point where this is a very unstable revenue source for the town of East Hampton.”

Earlier this month, Gov. Dannel P. Malloy put out a revised budget proposal to close a \$922 million deficit. The plan would reduce funding to the East Hampton school district by \$302,000 and slash funding to the town by \$317,000. The town funding was part of a program created by the legislature last year to send a half-a-percent of the sales tax back to towns for property tax relief.

But the state budget still needs approval from the General Assembly. Democratic leaders have been vocal about preserving municipal aid for

local property tax relief, but have not put forth their own budget proposal as of press time. Republicans, on the other hand, presented a budget this week that would restore education funding for towns but eliminate the municipal revenue sharing dollars.

The current legislative session ends May 4, though it's possible the process could last even longer. Last year, lawmakers waited until the last day of the fiscal year to pass a budget in special session that included \$1.3 billion in tax increases.

On the other hand, media outlet 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.”

Based on the uncertainty at the state level, it was the consensus of the council, school board and finance board at their Monday night joint meeting that the council put off its final budget proposal until local officials have a better idea of what the state budget is going to look like.

The Town Council reiterated the idea at its regular meeting the following evening when it voted unanimously to decide on the budget at its May 10 meeting.

Republican Councilor Ted Hintz Jr. said the threat to municipal aid for East Hampton could range from \$60,000 to \$600,000, depending on the different budget proposals floating around the legislature.

“I don't feel comfortable at all presenting anything to the town when we have no idea what

the state's going to do,” Hintz said.

The council did not discuss any potential cuts to the general government or Board of Education sides of the budget.

Council members did, however, set a town meeting date for May 16 and a referendum for May 24.

The date was set despite a local ordinance requiring a town budget meeting to be held no later than the second Monday in May. But this year, because of the primary election held Tuesday, voting machines will not be available until after that date. State statute specifies municipalities must lock the machines for 14 days following an election.

At Monday's joint meeting, finance board member Dean Markham, a Democrat, asked finance director Jeff Jylkka what could happen if the town disregards its own ordinance.

Jylkka responded that someone could sue the town, but that the town would “have a budget passed by the time the lawsuit even got to the courts.”

The comment met with laughter from some of those assembled around the table.

“From my point of view, I'd risk it and defer some action locally until we can get better information,” Markham said.

By setting the date of the referendum, councilors also set the clock on a state law forbidding the use of town resources to publish or distribute materials advocating a position on the proposed budget.

The law specifies that once a referendum is officially pending, “no person shall use or au-

thorize the use of municipal funds to send an unsolicited communication to a group of residents regarding a referendum via electronic mail, text or telephone or other electronic or automated means for the purpose of reminding or encouraging such residents to vote in a referendum.”

The provision, passed in 2013, was the legislature's reaction to legal questions about whether or not “robo-calls” made to the school community reminding parents of the time, date and place of a referendum were valid under state law.

It is acceptable, however, to include the time, date and place of the referendum in a regularly-published school or district newsletter, according to statute.

On Wednesday morning, a post on the East Hampton Public Schools Facebook page with an update on the status of the proposed budget included a paragraph with the date of the referendum.

But after discussing the budget situation – and the 2013 state law – with the *Rivereast* Wednesday afternoon, Superintendent of Schools Paul Smith immediately edited the post to remove the mention of the referendum date. He said he was happy to do so as a way to alleviate any concerns that may arise even though he felt the post was purely informational.

While no decisions were made this week regarding any changes to the proposed budget's bottom line, a variety of ideas were thrown around at the tri-board meeting. They included

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Sanders, Trump cont. from Front Page

which she guessed was part of the reason the majority voted for Sanders.

“I think everybody has been a little unhappy with the status quo so fresh ideas are wanted,” she added. “I think it just signals how dissatisfied everyone is with the status quo.”

Meanwhile, Hebron Democratic Town Committee Chairman Ted Bromley said, “It looks as though in terms of the actual vote total, the town was pretty consistent with the rest of the state, being almost half for Bernie and half for Hillary.”

But as for why Sanders came out on top, Bromley said “I have no great insight into why,” but said, “I think both candidates came to Connecticut and made their case for their campaign and I think Sanders resonated with some people and Clinton with others.”

On the Republican side, area towns went with Trump, who won not just Connecticut but all six states voting Tuesday. The wins in Rhode Island, Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania and Connecticut brought the candidate 19, 16, 38, 17, and 28 delegates, respectively – bringing his total to 953 delegates, according to the Associated Press; 1,237 are needed to win the Republican nomination.

Trump has a commanding lead over his opponents; after Tuesday’s primaries, Sen. Ted Cruz has 546 delegates, while Ohio governor John Kasich is in third with 153.

Statewide, according to the Secretary of the State’s office, 58.23 percent of voters – or 112,258 of those who headed to the polls Tuesday – voted for Trump. This is around 30 percent more than the second-highest vote getter, Kasich, who received 54,057 votes or 28.04 percent.

Following Trump and Kasich was Cruz, who garnered 22,533 votes or 11.69 percent; and Ben Carson, who, despite having suspended his campaign, still pulled in 1,563 votes or .81 percent. Another 2,364 voters – 1.23 percent – voted as uncommitted.

In *Rivereast*-land, all six towns aligned with the states’ preference for Trump, with Kasich coming in second.

In Andover, 163 votes or 55.07 percent went to Trump, followed by 80 votes – 27.03 percent – that went to Kasich, while in Colchester 698 votes or 57.31 percent went to Trump, followed by 322 or 26.44 percent of the votes that went to Kasich.

In East Hampton, Trump earned 574, or 56.94

percent, of the votes, while Kasich garnered 267, or 26.49 percent; and in Hebron, he pulled in 476 or 54.46 percent to Kasich’s 263 votes, 30.09 percent.

Over in Marlborough, Trump garnered 355 votes, or 56.98 percent, while Kasich received 186, or 29.86 percent; and in Portland, Trump earned 404 votes, or 57.22 percent, to Kasich’s 214 votes, or 30.31 percent.

Speaking on the results this week, Colchester Republican Town Committee Chairman Brenden Healy said, “The voters of Colchester have spoken and we’re looking forward to a spirited campaign this fall and we’ll be excited to support the Republican nominee whoever that is.”

Regarding Trump’s win, Healy said, “I expected it, just based on the news reports and polling that we’ve seen. If you were to ask me a year ago what the outcome would be I would not have predicted that [Trump would win] but again, we’re good at supporting the candidate and we’ll do everything we can to get that person elected.”

Portland Republican Town Committee Chairman Rob Taylor added “Trump has always been the frontrunner for at least the nation, and Connecticut has made it clear they want Trump as their candidate.”

In terms of Portland’s preference, he furthered, “It seems that overall, when it comes to comparing the other candidates, it makes perfect sense” that the majority of residents voted for Trump. And the reasons, he said, were “probably a lot of different things.

“Everyone has their own reasons,” Taylor explained. “Some people say it’s because he says what everyone else is thinking. I personally like him because he’s more of a moderate on a lot of the social issues that, say, Cruz isn’t, and that’s why I prefer Trump over Cruz.”

He furthered, “Cruz might have the political experience and the legal background but when you stand out against a lot of the popular social issues, then it just makes him a horrible candidate nationally because he doesn’t represent everyone’s issues – just his own. I think trump is at least the better of the three [candidates].”

* * *

The next primary takes place Tuesday, May 3, when voters in Indiana will head to the polls, followed by Nebraska and West Virginia on Tuesday, May 10.

Belltown Budget cont. from Front Page

adjusting revenue estimates to account for the potential \$619,000 shortfall, ignoring the possibility of reduced state funding completely, or accounting for it through additional cuts to both the town and school sides of the budget.

The current \$43.43 million budget proposal, approved earlier this month by the finance board, restores \$500,000 in cuts to the Board of Education budget previously made by Maniscalco.

The finance board’s proposal would result in a 29.55 mill rate, an increase of 1.77 mills over the current year, according to Finance Director Jeff Jylkka. Of that increase, 1.44 mills comes from debt incurred through the \$52 million high school renovation project.

Jylkka said simply adjusting the budget to reflect the governor’s proposed cuts would result in a mill rate increase of 2.34 mills; this would translate to a 8.4 percent tax increase.

The Town Council is empowered by charter to change or reduce – but not raise – the finance board’s budget recommendations.

Hintz scoffed at the idea of such a steep mill rate increase. “There is no way that if you put through 2.34 mills in this town that it will ever pass,” he said.

Another suggestion revolved around approving the finance board’s budget as soon as possible and sending out a supplemental tax bill if the cuts to municipal aid become a reality. Some council members spoke in emphatic opposition to the idea.

Republican Councilor Melissa Engel said sending out a supplemental tax bill isn’t fair to taxpayers.

“It doesn’t give them the ability to say, ‘No, we should’ve made cuts within our own budget to absorb that \$600,000,’” she said.

“I’m never going to be in favor of sending a tax bill to somebody that they haven’t voted on,” she added.

Mark Philhower, a Republican council member, said it’s more prudent to make cuts now and appropriate the funds if municipal aid ends

up coming through than it is to ask taxpayers for additional money if the funding doesn’t materialize.

Smith said he’d be amenable to additional cuts of approximately \$200,000 if he could be assured the finance board and council would appropriate to the school board any Education Cost Sharing dollars that end up coming through.

Council member Kevin Reich, a Democrat, suggested using money set aside in the capital improvement plan and in various town departments to save for future projects.

“It was proactive, and I appreciate it, but you know in this year proactive might not cut it,” he said.

Democratic Board of Education Chairman Kenneth Barber closed the meeting by saying he would like to see the finance board’s proposal pushed forward with the 1.77 mill increase to the mill rate that is currently being proposed.

While he said he appreciated the calls for enhanced collaboration articulated by several people at the tri-board meeting, which he described as a “hug fest,” he indicated members of the three boards should put their words into action. He asked them to join together in support of the finance board’s budget, which will ultimately be up to the voters to decide.

But Republican Finance Board Chairwoman Allison Tokarz said she wouldn’t have voted to restore the \$500,000 in education cuts in the first place if she had known the state was considering significant cuts to municipal aid.

Cutting capital funding for roads and sidewalks isn’t the answer, according to Tokarz, especially as the town looks toward the likelihood of even less municipal aid in future as the state’s financial health continues to decline.

“I think all you’re doing is what we’ve been doing for years, which is kicking the can down the road,” she said. “What are we going to do next year when it’s even worse?”

Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

The weather Tuesday was more reminiscent of a November day than an April one, which I suppose made it fitting that, after work, I went to a polling place and cast my ballot for who I’d next like to see president.

And while the majority of my town agreed with me and supported Sanders, the majority of my state did not. It was close, but Clinton won Connecticut, giving her wins in four of the five states up for grabs Tuesday (Rhode Island went with Sanders). It’s true there are still several states that haven’t voted yet – including California, which has 546 delegates up for grabs – but I’ll admit it doesn’t look good for the Bernie campaign.

If indeed Hillary wins the nomination, I hope both sides can agree to let bygones be bygones. But after an exchange a Bernie pollster had the other day with my mother, I’m not so sure.

The pollster had stopped by the family homestead to chat with my sister – who, as it turned out, was at a Bernie rally that day. So he chatted with my mother instead. He admitted that getting the nomination isn’t going to be easy, and shared that he’s telling people that, if Sanders doesn’t get the nomination, he’s encouraging people to on Election Day instead vote for the Green Party candidate, Jill Stein.

Wrong answer.

Look, there’s a time and a place to vote for a third-party candidate in a presidential race. This isn’t one of them. The third-party candidate never wins, or comes anywhere close; the most successful one was Ross Perot in 1992, and he didn’t even collect 20 percent of the popular vote. (More importantly, he didn’t get a single Electoral College vote. Those votes matter; ask Al Gore.) I get the principle of wanting to vote for a third-party candidate if they reflect your opinions and beliefs more, but Sanders supporters miffed Clinton wins would be wise to check their pride and think of the greater good.

Thanks in part to the Republicans’ incessant floundering, the White House can be the Democrats’ – *if they play their cards right*. And that means, in my opinion, everyone getting on the same page. Sanders supporters may not necessarily like a Clinton presidency, but it’s a darn sight better than a Trump one, or a Cruz one, or a Kasich one. And that’s what the race will realistically come down to: Republican vs. Democrat. So if the Democrats who have been supporting Sanders all along support Stein instead, effectively splitting the Democrat vote in two, that basically guarantees a Republican win in November. And for reasons I’ve stated before – health care being a very big one – I really feel that would be bad for the country.

Look, I have nothing against Stein. I freely admit I know little about the woman beyond her being the Green Party candidate. But this is not the year to choose to make a statement by voting for her or another third-party candidate. There is too much at stake. If, like me, you voted for Sanders in the primary and Clinton winds up winning the nomination,

then vote for Clinton in November. I don’t see any other alternative.

* * *

Speaking of politics, I came across a list of witty quotes about elections aptly subtitled “Election quotes so witty Theodore Roosevelt would laugh; so true, he would cry.” The quotes are, in some cases, deeply cynical, but they’re all pretty amusing – and also thought-provoking. Here are some highlights:

“I offer my opponents a bargain: if they will stop telling lies about us, I will stop telling the truth about them.” – Adlai Stevenson

“If voting made any difference, they wouldn’t let us do it.” – Mark Twain

“The people who cast the votes decide nothing. The people who count the votes decide everything.” – Joseph Stalin

“Bipartisan usually means that a larger-than-usual deception is being carried out.” – George Carlin

“The oppressed are allowed once every few years to decide which particular representatives of the oppressing class are to represent and repress them.” – Karl Marx

“We stand today at a crossroads: One path leads to despair and utter hopelessness. The other leads to total extinction. Let us hope we have the wisdom to make the right choice.” – Woody Allen

“Don’t buy a single vote more than necessary. I’ll be damned if I’m going to pay for a landslide.” – Joseph P. Kennedy

“By the time a man gets to be presidential material, he’s been bought 10 times over.” — Gore Vidal

“When buying and selling are controlled by legislation, the first things to be bought and sold are legislators.” – J. O’Rourke

“In a society governed passively by free markets and free elections, organized greed always defeats disorganized democracy.” – Matt Taibbi

“In America, anyone can become president. That’s the problem.” – George Carlin

“The best argument against democracy is a five-minute conversation with the average voter.” – Winston Churchill

“Anti-intellectualism has been a constant thread winding its way through our political and cultural life, nurtured by the false notion that democracy means that ‘my ignorance is just as good as your knowledge.’” – Isaac Asimov

“Half of the American people have never read a newspaper. Half never voted for president. One hopes it is the same half.” – Gore Vidal

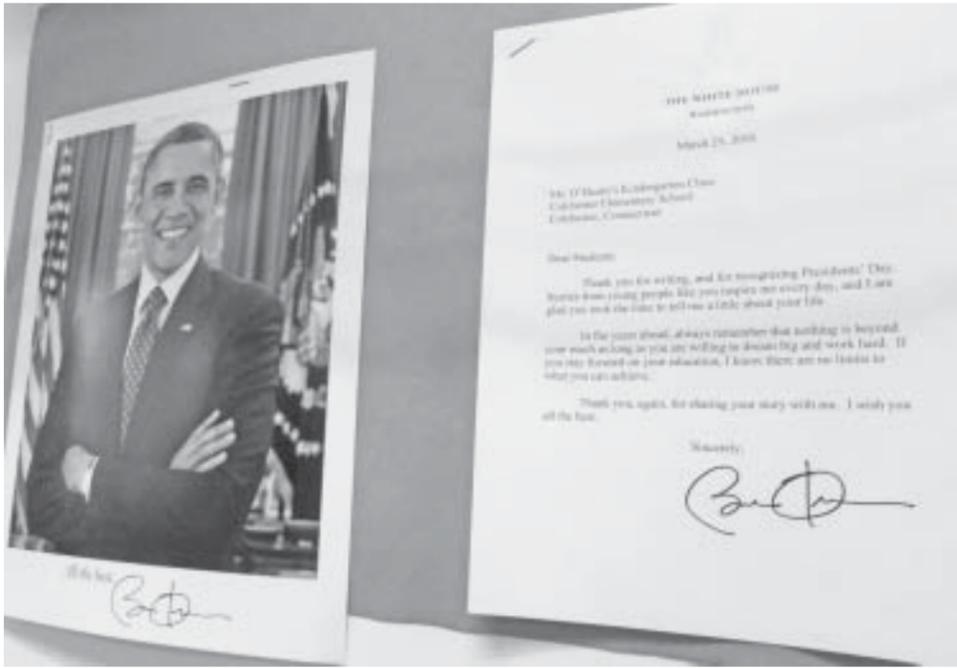
“A citizen of America will cross the ocean to fight for democracy, but won’t cross the street to vote in a national election.” – Bill Vaughan

“If pigs could vote, the man with the slop bucket would be elected swineherd every time, no matter how much slaughtering he did on the side.” – Orson Scott Card

“A politician thinks of the next election; a statesman thinks of the next generation. “ – James Freeman Clarke

* * *

See you next week.



Colchester Elementary School kindergartners in Karen O'Hearn's class received a surprise in the mail in March after their letter to President Barack Obama was answered. The students received multiple pictures of the president's family, a layout of the White House explaining what goes on in each room – and an inspirational letter from Obama encouraging the students to “dream big.” The contents of the packet are now hanging in the CES hallway, for the whole school to see.

Colchester Kindergartners Receive Letter from Obama

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

What began as an exercise for Presidents Day ended with a kindergarten class at Colchester Elementary School receiving an inspirational letter from President Barack Obama.

The 17 students of Karen O'Hearn's class wrote a “Dear Mr. President” letter in honor of Presidents Day in February; however, O'Hearn never expected a reply.

The idea to write to the president came about after O'Hearn saw a notice in Scholastic News, a teachers' magazine, along with an address to send letters. The exercise also correlated with the school's writing program, she said.

“The main thing I wanted them to take away from all of this was to think outside of their own personal worlds,” O'Hearn said of the students. “Our charge was writing to solve problems and to make the world a better place.”

O'Hearn said she had the students start out small with school problems then branch out with larger problems.

“As kindergartner students are kind of ‘me’ centered and I wanted them to start thinking about real world problems and working to solve them,” she said. “I wanted them to realize that even though they are small and young, they can make a difference too and that we can all do things to make the world better.”

Students asked a variety of questions to Obama – some large and some small.

Rocco Cusano, a kindergartner, said he asked the president, “How can we help people get houses and where can they sleep?”

“How can we help people get food?” asked Benjamin Romasanta.

Sean Bell asked how to stop children from running in the halls while Kailyn Formanek said she asked how the students can stop any fighting.

One kindergartner, Chelsea Williams, said she asked the president a more direct question

of “Do people appreciate you?”

CES Principal Judy O'Meara said the class is the first class in a very long time to write to the White House. And while most people weren't really expecting a response – at the end of March, a surprise showed up in the CES mail.

It was a letter from the White House, written specifically to the students and including various photos of the president and his family, as well as a layout of the White House.

“Stories from young people like you inspire me every day, and I am glad you took the time to tell me a little about your life,” Obama wrote. “In the years ahead, always remember that nothing is beyond your reach as long as you are willing to dream big and work hard. If you stay focused on your education, I know there are no limits to what you can achieve.”

O'Hearn said she never expected the president to write “dream big” – and said it was was

a “stroke of luck,” since it is also the district-wide theme for Colchester Public Schools this year.

O'Hearn also used Obama's response as a way to stress to her students the importance of speaking out.

“I reminded them that it was because of them and the writing they did that other people are now talking about the letters we wrote and maybe people will start thinking about ways to solve these problems,” O'Hearn said. “Their writing made things happen.”

While the students enjoyed receiving the letter and the autographed pictures of Obama and his family, their favorite parts of the packet were the photos of the Obamas' dogs, a pair of Portuguese water dogs named Bo and Sunny.

O'Hearn said after receiving the letter that she hopes the students go on in their lives and “continue to think and dream big.”

Colchester Receives \$245,000 to Help Local Families

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

Colchester was awarded \$245,000 by the Connecticut Commission on Children last week, to help better local families using a unique two-generational approach.

The pilot program will be led locally by the Collaborative for Colchester's Children (C3) and its Early Childhood Coordinator Cindy Praisner. Although the town is the lead applicant, Praisner explained C3 had many people “at the table” already and are leading the pilot.

C3 is a partnership of parents, educators, community members, agencies and businesses that work together to provide services and supports to Colchester children and their families from birth through age 8.

The two-generational approach, Praisner explained, is focused on how to help an entire family become self-sufficient – be it through helping with childcare or the family's own needs, such as helping them access education or find employment.

Through the 15-month pilot program, the state hopes to study and experiment with the two-generational model. The other municipalities participating are Hartford, New Haven, Bridgeport, Meriden and Norwalk. Praisner

explained part of the reason Colchester was chosen along with those larger, more urban cities was to see how the approach would be different for a small town.

To participate in the program, Praisner said, families must have a documented combined household income below 75 percent of the state median income. Families must also express a desire to improve their economic status and have a child birth to age 8 that is in C3's School Readiness program, Early Head Start or Head Start, or receives support from Colchester Youth and Social Services or United Community and Family Services' behavioral health office.

The program begins with the hiring of a family coach – which Praisner clarified would not be a school or town hire, but strictly a hire by the pilot program.

The family coach will work with the families and help them create a plan, figure out what the next step is, and access services.

Praisner said some of the ways the pilot program could help area families is through transportation or housing solutions, helping with debt, or addressing mental health issues. The program will look differently for each family,

she said.

“It is whatever it takes to help that family move forward,” Praisner said of the two-generational approach.

The initiative focuses on helping not only the child or adult separately or somewhat together such as joint therapy, but as a whole picture.

The goal of the pilot program, she said, is to reduce the burden on families while learning where the “glitches” are. Praisner said she hopes to help at least 20 families, through workshops and other offerings.

Colchester was selected for the program last summer, and then C3 had to send a plan and a rough budget to the state before knowing how much the town would receive. The exact amount wasn't announced until April 21.

And while there is some uncertainty whether the pilot program will be fully funded in the state's 2016-17 budget, Praisner said the town has already received \$122,500 of the \$245,000 to start with for the current fiscal year.

A major aspect of the pilot program that will aid Colchester, Praisner said, is the component that helps people find employment – an initia-

tive, she said, the town has not had in the past.

“We had the childcare part,” Praisner said. “Workforce was a piece we don't really do in Colchester. We want to tighten that relationship and know what's available and how to access it.”

Helping families become employed, she explained, helps keep them from needing services such as the town's food and fuel bank year after year.

With last week's announcement of the pilot program funds, Praisner said, C3 can now hire a family coach and begin working with families. (She also stressed the coach would only be employed for the duration of the program.) The goal is by September that adults will be enrolled in education programs or have found jobs.

Praisner said C3 is hoping for future funding, but she is happy with what the town will hopefully be able to accomplish in 15 months.

“I am confident that we can make our system more effective and efficient to help families and address some of the long-standing obstacles in our community,” she said.

\$23.74 Million Budget Sent to Marlborough Town Meeting

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

Uncertainty remains in the air regarding state revenue, but in spite of this, the Marlborough Board of Finance Monday resisted making any changes to the proposed \$23.74 million 2016-17 budget – and sent the package to a town meeting vote.

The finance board's decision to leave the budget untouched from what it adopted April 7 also came despite some residents' concerns at the board's Monday meeting regarding education and public safety.

The proposed budget is a \$675,082 increase, or 2.93 percent, over the adopted 2015-16 spending plan. Of that proposed budget, \$7.22 million is for the local school board; \$8.55 million is for Marlborough's portion of the RHAM schools budget; \$4.76 million is for town operations; \$2.24 million is for debt service; \$862,000 is for capital; and \$100,000 is for contingency.

The budget reflects a March 24 \$200,000 reduction from what the local Board of Education had originally presented, as well as a March 31 reduction of \$90,000 from the originally-presented town operations budget.

The spending proposal also reflects a 3.84 percent tax increase – or 1.26 mills – making the proposed 2016-17 mill rate 34.15.

The mill rate is used to determine residents' taxes. One mill is equal to \$1 in tax per \$1,000 of assessed property and under the proposed mill rate of 34.15 a resident with a home assessed at \$250,000 would pay \$8,537 in taxes.

When the town put together its budget earlier this year, the package included \$188,000 in Municipal Revenue Sharing Account

(MRSA) funds, along with \$3.22 million in Education Cost Sharing (ECS) revenue. ECS revenues are state dollars provided to towns to help offset some of the costs of education.

MRSA provides towns a share of the state's sales tax revenues and, Board of Finance chair Doug Knowlton explained, is to compensate for the state's 32 mill motor vehicle cap and to help towns not rely solely on property taxes to make up any lost revenue. For instance, because Marlborough's mill rate is above 32 mills, the town is losing \$111,085 in revenue with the motor vehicle cap.

However, on April 12, Gov. Dannel Malloy released his proposed budget, which included reductions in MRSA and ECS funds. With those reductions, Marlborough would be set to lose \$157,000 in MRSA money and \$133,000 in ECS money.

Malloy's proposal is just that, a proposal, and First Selectwoman Amy Traversa said the town is "literally tap dancing as fast as we can to keep up with what the state is doing."

"We've never been faced with this situation before," Traversa said Wednesday. "Until the state makes a decision, we just don't know [what to do]."

On Monday night, Knowlton said that if the revenue comes in lower than expected there will be two options – raise taxes or make more reductions in expenditures.

The finance board did attempt to plan for some of the potential decrease in revenue. At the board's April 7 meeting, it voted to put an additional \$80,000 into the contingency line item, specifically to address the projected short-

fall in state funds. (There was previously \$20,000 in that contingency fund, but that will not be used to offset a state shortfall; rather, it will be used to address any other emergency expenses that arise in town during the next fiscal year.) However, under Malloy's proposal the town would be losing approximately \$291,000 in state funds – meaning that, even with the \$80,000, the town would still need to find \$210,000 someplace.

If the finance board were to compensate for the possible \$210,000 in reductions with an increase in taxes, that tax increase would be 5.55 percent.

On Monday, the finance board voted 5-1 to send the \$23.74 million proposed budget to town meeting with the majority of its members saying it is too early to make any changes based on Malloy's proposal.

However board member Ken Hjulstrom said he was not comfortable with voting for a budget with a potential deficit and voted against the motion.

* * *

Before the finance board voted Monday, residents got a chance to speak about the budget – and some expressed disappointment in cuts to the local school budget.

Resident Leann Eppinger said she was "disappointed" in the \$200,000 reduction to the local school board, saying it was "not the right call."

Resident Pam Farrington – who is also a teacher at the local elementary school – noted the cut left the proposed budget actually 2.34 percent lower than what it currently is, and

called that "educationally irresponsible."

"My 15-year-old son said, 'Why does the town hate the school so much?'" Farrington said.

Some residents, however, applauded the board for the cut to the school budget, saying the seniors deserve a break.

"The senior citizens deserve some respect," resident John Stimpson said, adding that tax increases are "going to drive them all out."

Alan Miller said the town does not have the economic development to support repeated tax increases, saying the town "doesn't have the foundation" to support so much spending.

Also at the meeting, resident Mark Packer, a former resident state trooper from 2004-11, urged the town to reconsider replacing one resident state trooper with a constable. Faced with the \$90,000 cut the finance board made to the town operations budget, the Board of Selectmen voted April 5 to eliminate one of the town's two resident state troopers, replacing that position with either one full-time or two part-time constables. Currently, the town has one full-time and one part-time constable, in addition to the two resident state troopers.

But Packer cautioned against relying on constables too heavily.

"Constables are not allowed to take serious incidents because they don't have the time," Packer explained. "Six months for an investigation on a part-time constable doesn't work."

* * *

The town meeting vote is scheduled for Monday, May 9, at 7 p.m., at Marlborough Elementary School, 25 School Dr.

Portland Residents Balk at Proposed Zone Change

by Elizabeth Regan

The Planning and Zoning Commission last week withdrew its own zoning application after an outspoken group of residents at a public hearing expressed fear that "transients" would put a drain on town resources if a large-scale housing development went up in town.

Town Planner Deanna Rhodes has said the commission's proposal to change its mixed-use development regulations was spurred by a request from Dan Bertram, a Danbury-based developer with plans to turn the former Elmcrest hospital property into a "neighborhood shopping center" with 238 high-end residential units.

The commission's application would have limited mixed-use developments to no more than 16 residential units for every 5,000 square feet of commercial space. That's a marked increase from current regulations, which state a maximum of three residential units may be built for each 5,000 square feet of commercial space.

Schematics available on the website of real estate consulting firm Ferrara Jerum International show Brainerd Place, a 74,825 square foot development proposed by Bertram in partnership with the Rochester, NY-based DiMarco Group.

If the new ratio of housing units to commercial space is implemented, Bertram would be able to seek zoning approval for as many as 300 units alongside the proposed shopping center.

The Planning and Zoning Commission approved a special permit for the site in 2009 with 149,127 square feet of commercial space and 82 housing units. Then the project stalled due to the economic downturn.

Now Bertram is trying to shift the focus from commercial to residential.

He told the commission and the approximately 80 people in attendance at its meeting last Thursday, April 21, that his plans revolve around a high-end apartment community.

"We're familiar with how to bring luxury apartments in to suburban communities," he said.

Bertram has pointed to his development in Brookfield to illustrate what he envisions for Brainerd Place. While he's not ready to release pricing yet for his Portland plans, he said the Brookfield numbers are "in the ballpark."

According to Bertram's website, Brookfield's Barnbeck Place consists of studios and 1-2 bedroom apartments ranging from \$1,060 to \$2,550 per month. The site lists amenities including granite counters, stainless steel appliances, high end cabinetry and private decks in an elevator building.

Resident Karen Mazza spoke during the public hearing to say the 238 rental units represent a marked increase over the 613 rental units currently available in town, according to her own research.

"That's a third of our current rental units: a 39 percent increase in one fell swoop," she said. "I can imagine that must have some kind of change on our infrastructure."

Mazza and numerous others expressed concern about the effect of so many new residents on the town's police department, volunteer fire department, schools and water and sewer system – as well as on Portland's small-town character.

"While the transients are able to benefit from the taxes we pay, homeowners get nothing for their rentals. Our schools are smaller, our police department is smaller, our fire department is volunteer," Jeffrey and Allison Poach wrote in an email, which was read at the meeting by Rhodes. "We cannot simply absorb the residents of an additional 300 units with our current resources, which means we would have to increase our already high taxes."

But not all comments were against the proposal. Local businessman Bob Petzold said Bertram's proposal is a close match to the vision outlined in the 2015 Vibrant Communities Initiative (VCI) study that recommended a mix of uses laid out in a quaint style around the site's three historic buildings.

The study was carried out by the Cecil Group, a community planning firm that solicited input from the municipal, business and volunteer community as well as through multiple focus groups of residents.

Petzold sat on the steering committee for the study, he said. Other members included Bertram, Rhodes, property owner Fred Hassan and First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield.

The study said the town should explore zon-

ing changes, including an increase in residential units, as a way to support the community's shared vision for the property.

Petzold said the study found a deep commitment to preserving the three 19th century homes on the property – but doing so will be an expensive endeavor.

"Those buildings are in dire shape right now; if we wait another 10 years those things will be on the ground," he said.

There was a public outcry when the Brainerd Place designs were released in September without the 1830 Hart-Jarvis House and 1884 Sage House. Only the Brainerd House, an Italianate building designed by New Haven architect Henry Austin and built in 1851-52, remains in Bertram's schematics.

Bertram said during the meeting that the zoning regulation change is the key to a successful project, which will in turn "enable the historic preservation of other buildings on this site. It all works together."

Bertram did not specify if he still plans to raze the Hart-Jarvis and Sage houses. He did not return a phone call by press time.

Another member of the VCI study's steering committee, grassroots advocate Elwin Guild, spoke in his capacity as a member of the Economic Development Commission to say the group opposes the zoning regulation change "in the absence of a full application for the project" but is not opposed to more housing.

"The commission is in favor of increasing the density of mixed use development," he said. "It has reservations about the lack of specificity and other detail that would be comforting in endorsing it."

When Guild asked Planning and Zoning Commission Chairman Bruce Tyler why the application specifies a maximum of 16 units per 5,000 square feet of commercial space, Tyler said the number was "kind of arbitrary."

But Bertram stood up again later to say that's the ratio he needs "to make this work."

The public hearing was dominated by Tyler's insistence that speakers confine their comments to the text amendment being considered and not to the potential Elmcrest development in particular.

The distinction was explained by Rhodes early on when she said the proposed zoning application would apply to any properties in town that meet the criteria for a mixed-use development. Parcels with ten acres or more and access to adequate water and sewer services would qualify, she said.

But Ben Srb, a selectman and the owner of both a landscaping and septic business in town, asked the commission whether there are any other sites in town that actually fit all the criteria for a mixed-use development. He said the Elmcrest property is the only realistic site in town, when additional factors like required road frontage and buildable area are taken into account.

"If you're not talking about the so-called Elmcrest property, which has been brought up multiple times tonight and in every other meeting up to this, then what property are you talking about?" Srb asked.

Srb said changes to zoning regulations should not be made with one property in mind since doing so could lead to unintended consequences in the future.

The public hearing portion of the meeting closed after Rhodes read dozens of emails, most of them against the application, into the record.

She also put into the record a letter that local developer Bruce Morrison said was signed by 42 members of the Portland business community in support of the application.

In the end, the commission voted to withdraw the application after two motions to lower the mixed-use ratio failed. The first would've changed the figure from 16 housing units to 14 units. The second motion would have changed it to five units.

The commission will now go to the Board of Selectmen to request a financial analysis of the impact the zoning regulation change would have on the town. The commission will then use the information to decide if it will come back with another application and start the process all over again.

"We want information on the impact of this change to schools, police department, fire department, utility system and taxes," Tyler said.

Hebron Selectmen Express Support for Organ Donation

by Geeta S. Sandberg

Hundreds of thousands of men, women and children are currently waiting for organ transplants in the United States. According to the United Network for Organ Sharing, someone is added to the national transplant waiting list every 10 minutes, and on average, 22 people die each day waiting for a transplant.

But just one organ donor has the potential to save eight lives. And it's for that reason individuals like Amston resident Kathy Garvie work to increase awareness of organ donation, and the Hebron Board of Selectmen recognized the importance of "the gift of life" at last week's meeting.

The selectmen read a proclamation declaring April National Donate Life month, and displayed the Donate Life flag in the meeting room.

"National Donate Life Month was established in 2003," the proclamation asserts. "Every day in April, people across the United States make a special effort to celebrate the tremendous generosity of those who have saved lives by becoming organ, tissue, marrow and blood donors and encourage more Americans to follow their fine example."

Town Manager Andrew Tierney shared, "I think it's a very worthy cause. Hebron will be joining many other towns and cities across Connecticut recognizing the gift of life. We support that."

He added he was approached about the idea by Garvie, who is a part of LifeChoice Donor Services, a federally designated non-profit organ procurement organization "dedicated to fostering community and professional support of organ and tissue donation, providing com-

passionate care for families, and saving and improving lives," according to the website lifechoiceopo.org.

Garvie lost her daughter Erin in a car accident in 1998 when she was 17. Following her death, Erin's corneas, bone marrow and tissues were donated through Donate Life, a non-profit alliance of organizations across the country that work to increase the number of organ, eye and tissue donors.

Garvie shared this week when her daughter got her license, she asked about the option to be an organ donor and Garvie explained "I have it on my license and if you should die in an accident they'll donate your organs [if possible] to someone else. And she said, 'that's like recycling to the utmost!' because she was into that, and I said, 'That's what it is — you're not going to take them with you.'"

Garvie added she got involved with Donate Life and LifeChoice following her daughter's death to try to raise awareness because "every day in the United States 22 people die waiting for organs and we want to change that number."

But she added, "a lot of people have fears in terms of well, maybe they [doctors] will let you die if they know you're an organ donor" or won't work as hard to save your life following an accident — "but that's not true."

If however, someone does pass away, their organs may allow someone else to live a happy life, making some good come from the bad.

"Some of the people in my organization have actually met the people who received organs from the organization," she added, sharing one friend even placed her hand on the chest of a

recipient and felt her son's heart beating.

"It makes you feel like something good comes out of the bad, instead of just having the bad."

Garvie added being part of the organization also provides a support system.

She shared on the LifeChoice website, "I've made a lot of new friends — friends who understand where you're at, and how you're feeling. In other places, people don't get it, or they think I should be over losing my daughter by now. They think it was a long time ago and can't understand why I still feel sad sometimes. Or they don't know that I've lost a child, and it can be a hard thing to talk about. People here can relate to what I've gone through."

For more information on Donate Life, visit donatelife.net or ctorganandtissuedonation.org.

* * *

Also at last week's meeting, the board unanimously appointed resident — and also Board of Selectmen clerk — Jessica Rainville to the Board of Education, filling a vacancy created with the resignation of Ray Bieri, who currently sits on the Board of Finance.

Rainville's family has lived in town for 50 years, she explained at the meeting. She grew up in Hebron, went through the Hebron school system and now has two children of her own, with one currently in kindergarten.

She has a bachelor's degree in social work with an early childhood minor and shared at the meeting "with the open seat, I feel it's a good time to step up" and become more involved.

In the letter of interest she submitted to the selectmen she wrote, "As a Hebron resident

with continued passion for her community, I would like to extend my service involvement to the Hebron Public School System as it resonates not only with my interests, passions and continued education; but with the mission statement of the Board of Education overall. "

School board vice chair Maryanne Leichter was present at the meeting and expressed support for Rainville. She shared Rainville was present at the last education meeting, spoke to almost the entire board, "asked great questions and seems so lovely and I'm so happy [with her interest] and hopefully this goes smoothly and we'll welcome you with open arms."

Board of Finance Chairman Malcolm Leichter, who was also chair of the Capital Improvement Plan committee this year, also supported the appointment and shared Rainville joined the CIP committee and "she did an outstanding job."

He called her "open-minded" and said "I believe she'll work for the interest of the kids as well as the community and I think we need more balance."

Selectwoman Gail Richmond added she met Rainville through her work as board clerk and said "She's conscientious, very hard working and I think she'll be a great addition."

Rainville was appointed unanimously and will fill a term that runs through December 2017.

* * *

The next Hebron Board of Selectmen's meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 5 at 7:30 p.m. in the Hebron Town Office Building, 15 Gilead St.

Referendum on \$36.18 Million Budget Tuesday in Hebron

by Geeta S. Sandberg

After months of crafting, the proposed Hebron 2016-17 town budget is ready for the voters — and they'll get to weigh in on the \$36.18 million spending package at referendum next Tuesday.

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

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, a reduction of \$234,653 from the current year due to a decrease in the number of students attending the two schools (an article on the RHAM budget appears elsewhere in this issue); 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 government.

The budget includes reductions the Board of Finance made earlier this month to both town and school spending. On April 15, the finance board cut \$75,000 from the proposed town operations budget, and \$38,500 from the Board of Education proposal.

Speaking on the budget this week, school board chair Erica Bromley stated, "I certainly think that the Board of Education passed a responsible budget this year. It was reasonable and responsible and we worked really hard to

get it to that point."

In regards to the April 15 cut by the finance board, Bromley commented, "Obviously it's difficult to see additional cuts made. That's never an easy thing to watch that process happen, but I know the Board of Finance had a difficult decision to make and a lot of things to consider in their decision."

She concluded, "Based on uncertainty at the state level it's going to be hard for towns to absorb additional cuts and I think at this point really all we can do is encourage people to come out and vote and participate in the process."

Board of Selectmen Chairman Dan Larson also shared his thoughts this week, saying "we need to pass the town budget."

He added the RHAM budget was "another thing," explaining "at this point in time they have been immune since their numbers were already in prior to us finding out how much the state was going to impact our local budget."

Hours before the public hearing on the 2016-17 budget proposal April 12, the Board of Finance learned 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.

"I would like to see at least the town portion pass," Larson furthered. "We [the selectmen] urge people to vote, and it is critical — utterly critical — that people fill out the exit polls. If the budget does fail, the Board of Finance has already stated that they're going to be looking at those exit polls and looking at the comments on those exit polls when they make further reductions in the budget."

* * *

Voting takes place Tuesday, May 3 from 6 a.m.-8 p.m. at Hebron Elementary School, 92 Church St.

Fires Destroy Two Homes in Hebron

by Geeta S. Sandberg

Two Hebron house fires in three days brought mutual aid to town and resulted in severe damage to both homes.

A little before 6 p.m. Thursday, April 21, crews were dispatched to the first fire, at 21 Burnt Hill Rd. Fire Chief Nick Wallick explained this week, "There was heavy fire upon arrival of the fire truck — the first truck took just a few minutes to get there and the fire was well ahead of us."

Wallick added the two-story house "is a total loss."

Mutual aid was provided by departments from eight other towns, Wallick said, mostly to shuttle water for the fire. They were: Manchester, Glastonbury, Marlborough, Columbia, Bolton, Andover, Lebanon and Colchester; the Colchester department wrote about the blaze on its Facebook page following the incident.

"Units were dispatched around 6:30 p.m., and didn't return until just before midnight, moving 10s of thousands of gallons of water," they wrote.

Three people were home at the time of the blaze, but Wallick said there were no injuries.

Fire Marshal Randy Blais Tuesday classified the fire was accidental, but the exact cause is "undetermined."

"We got a couple possibilities," he said, "but you can't put your finger definitely" on one.

The second house fire occurred a little after 5 p.m. Sunday, April 24, at 51 Carriage Dr. and required mutual aid from five other towns: Glastonbury, Marlborough, Colchester, Columbia and Willimantic.

Wallick explained the fire started in a vehicle in the rear of the house "and turned into a structure fire."

Blais elaborated, explaining "that was a lawn tractor that caught fire and it was parked under a deck, and the deck and the side of the house started."

He added the tractor, which had just been used, "was sitting there all winter...it could have been a cracked fuel line; we could probably come up with 10 things that might have caused it, after sitting all winter."

The homeowner and her son were home at the time, but no one was injured; the house is currently uninhabitable.

* * *

Deputy Fire Marshal and Board of Selectmen Chairman Dan Larson spoke to both fires this week, saying, "Thankfully no lives were lost... but it is always a travesty when a person loses all of their belongings."

Larson also offered up some advice.

"It's very important people remember to keep flammables away from the outside of their home and to watch and be mindful of extension cords — when they're not being used, unplug them," he said. "People always need to think 'fire safe' because actions that become routine may still be hazardous actions and with just the right conditions horrible events can occur."

Larson said that, as a selectperson, "I commend all the men and women who so selflessly give up their time — whether it be the actual firefighters or support personnel — who give up their time to go out and help others. And I thank all the mutual aid departments who came in to assist our town; this is really what it's all about: when things happen, everybody pulling together."

Larson added, "And again, my heart goes out to those people who have suffered such a major loss."

East Hampton Podium Players Prepare Zany Farce

by Elizabeth Regan

A fickle blizzard blew into the East Hampton High School auditorium on Monday during the technical rehearsal for *Drop Dead! A Farce*, the latest production mounted by the town's beloved Podium Players.

The fake snow could be seen gusting behind one of the windows of a fabricated living room as a murder mystery unfolded onstage. But when one of the actors yanked on the door, feigning a mighty struggle against the wind, there was no shiny, white stuff to be seen.

A disembodied voice broke the scene, coming down like the voice of God over the speaker system.

"Where's the snow?"

Crew members scurried behind the set as the voice rang out again.

"We need all the elements!"

Directed to try again, the cast sprang into motion. The mighty struggle, the opening door, and...nothing.

"There's no snow!"

The booming sound shook the stage and a cardboard armchair fell over.

The voice belonged to Valerie Bozzi, director of numerous productions for the Podium Players.

The East Hampton resident spoke later outside the auditorium to describe the pleasures and pitfalls of putting on a play as part of a community theater group.

Drop Dead! A Farce is described as a zany play-within-a-play that follows a cast of characters trying to mount a murder mystery. Unfortunately, an actual murder takes place while the company is rehearsing.

Bozzi said a reading committee whittled down the list of possibilities to just a few plays. The final decision was up to her.

"I took them home and read them out loud to people, and everyone said 'you have to do this one,'" she said.

From that point on, it was more than two months of line learning, character development and a lot of fun.

But it was only this week that they could put it all together on stage with a complex array of

set design, props, tricks, lights and sound.

She said the set, which includes an expansive wall with painted-on furniture and accessories behind a one-dimensional armchair and a real-life loveseat, went up on Saturday and took longer than expected to construct.

That means cast and crew was looking at only three days to rehearse on the new high school stage with the brand new set.

Up until this week, the traveling troupe of actors had rehearsed wherever they could find space, from the middle school to the library.

"All of that makes it hard to put it together till the last minute," Bozzi said. "My car was filled for the last two weeks with stuff and we couldn't load it until Saturday. It's not a complaint, but at the same time that's the challenge. You really should have several weeks with your set and this is our first time."

She expressed gratitude that there's so much support in town from venues willing to give them space. And it's possible that maybe, someday, they'll find a permanent space of their own.

"We've recently got our nonprofit status, so who knows where that will go. It's a dream. But right now just having places to store our stuff is the biggest thing," Bozzi said.

While Bozzi directs the real-life play, *Drop Dead!* features Colchester actor Jonathan Blaine as the director of the fictional acting company.

Blaine, a veteran of four Podium Players productions and too many lifetime credits to count, described the cast of 10 as a great group to work with.

"Sometimes you're in a play and there are people who are a little disheveled and they don't know their lines. We have nothing like that here. Everybody's really professional and they're all coming prepared. It's really a pleasure," he said.

With Bozzi back behind the soundboard and the actors on the stage, the characters – who range from an ex-porn star to film critic Gene Shalit's brother, Dick – roamed the large space as a heavy black sandbag loomed above their heads on a rope suspended from the ceiling.

It was supposed to fall mysteriously from the



The Podium Players will perform *Drop Dead*, a zany play-within-a-play, the next two weekends. Standing from left are Johnathan Baine, Gwen Lawson, Charles Harvey, Benjamin Hill, Eric Hansen and Wade Elmer; seated from left are Susan Caplan, Sherry Baine and Shawn Kelly and Karen Gagliardi.

rafters and smash to the ground, narrowly missing two cast members.

But when it fell, it did so with more of a 'plop' than a 'boom.'

Bozzi, now just a voice again, shouted from the loudspeaker: "It just can't happen like that. Do it again!"

The actors took their places. The sandbag fell once more, as slow and unmenacing as the first time. But the actors were undeterred.

"I was almost killed," shouted Susan Caplan in the role of Mona Monet, The TV Star. "Does anyone care about me?"

There was a sigh over the loudspeaker as

Bozzi tried to work out sandbag logistics for this tricky play-within-a-play.

"Not at the moment," the voice said. "Hold on."

The production will begin tonight at 7:30 p.m., and continue Saturday, May 30, at the same time. For those that cannot make it this weekend, shows will be held again on Friday, May 6 at 7:30 p.m. and Saturday, May 7, at 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Tickets may be purchased online at podiumplayers.org for \$12 for adults and \$9 for students and seniors. Tickets are available at the door for \$15 for adults and \$12 for students and seniors.

Referendum on \$28.03 Million RHAM Budget Coming Up

by Geeta S. Sandberg

Residents of Andover, Hebron and Marlborough will have the opportunity to head to the polls next Tuesday to vote on the proposed 2016-17 RHAM budget of \$28.03 million.

The spending package amounts to \$28,033,359, which is \$262,584 or .94 percent more than the current schools budget of \$27,770,775 – the smallest increase in more than five years.

Included in the number is the reduction of four teaching positions stemming from retirements, which schools superintendent Bob Siminski had said was in line with declining enrollment at the schools; enrollment at the middle school is projected to decrease by 34 next year to 533 students, while enrollment at the high school is projected to drop by 28 students, down to 995.

In addition, \$91,352 is included for a School Resource Officer, the agreement for which is in the process of being finalized with the Town of Hebron; the SRO will be a Hebron trooper who will be on-site at the schools.

Also reflected in the budget proposal is a .75 percent salary increase – plus step – for certified staff ("step" refers to the pay scale used to determine salary, which is based upon degrees held and length of time teaching).

A 2.1 percent increase in the administrators' salary as per the third year of their contract is also reflected, as is a two percent salary increase (plus step) for non-certified staff.

Health insurance, meanwhile, is budgeted at \$2,126,802, a decrease of \$572,626 from the amount budgeted for current year.

The spending proposal also includes \$314,500 for capital projects. These are: \$130,000 to resurface and reline the track; \$85,000 to ensure proper fire separation at exit paths, mechanical rooms and storage areas and the replacement of damaged fire-proofing on steel beams in the boiler room; another \$20,000 for roof repairs; \$19,500 to replace the auditorium stage curtain and two television studio curtains with new fire retardant curtains; and \$60,000 to replace a 250-gallon hot water heater at the middle school.

The budget proposal also includes \$19,450 for high school math textbooks; \$5,247 for high school social studies textbooks; \$4,940 for high school science textbooks; and \$3,592 for English textbooks.

Funds have also been budgeted to enhance the schools' network, continue with the computer replacement schedule and the purchase of 1-1 computing devices for students in grades

nine and 10.

Meanwhile, heating oil and diesel fuel have been budgeted as decreasing for the 2016-17 school year, down \$112,278 to \$205,621 for heating oil, and \$5,758 to \$127,742 for diesel fuel.

The budget also includes \$382,500 for vocational agricultural and magnet school tuition, and \$907,916 for special education tuition.

Siminski said of the proposal this week, "I think that looking at the budget, we've been able to make some substantial reductions to the increases in the budget from health insurance to fuel."

He added, "And again, remember that we're reducing positions and when you look at high school and middle school staffing you need to remember that the teachers are discipline specific. In other words, they have to be certified to teach a certain discipline so we need to be very careful about how the schedules are built and classroom numbers are assigned."

Siminski said it was also important to continue the program offerings in the district "because if you start to reduce those I think you'll see an awful lot of students start migrating to magnet schools and there, we won't have any say over cost; we just provide transportation

and tuition and the students are not at RHAM."

The RHAM budget is paid for with funds from the three sending towns as well as non-residents who attend school in the district. The amount each sending district pays is determined by the number of students who attend the two schools from each town. For the 2016-17 school year, 236 students or 14.84 percent are projected to be enrolled from Andover; 485 or 30.5 percent are projected to be enrolled from Marlborough; 866 or 54.47 percent are projected from Hebron; and three students are expected from out of the district.

If the budget passes, that would translate to \$15,269,771 to be paid for by Hebron, up \$385,708 from the current year; \$8,550,175 by Marlborough, up \$238,907; and \$4,160,150 by Andover, up \$155,828 from what it is paying in the current year. The three out-of-district students are responsible for \$53,263.

Voting takes place Tuesday, May 3, from 6 a.m.-8 p.m. in each of the three towns. In Andover, voting takes place at the town office building, 17 School Rd.; in Hebron, at Hebron Elementary School, 92 Church St.; and in Marlborough, at Marlborough Elementary School, 25 School Dr.

High Budget Spike, But No Tax Increase in Andover

by Geeta S. Sandberg

A public hearing was held last week on the town's proposed 2016-17 budget – a \$12,225,137 spending plan that is a whopping 12.93 percent increase over current year spending.

But despite this, the town mill rate is expected to remain exactly the same as it is now, at 30.72 mills – a figure that, town officials pointed out, is just .22 mills higher than what it was in 1985.

The town plans to pull off this feat by using the town's fund balance and recent surpluses.

The \$12,225,137 spending proposal includes: \$4,320,821 for the Andover Elementary School budget, an amount flat with current year spending; and \$4,160,150 for Andover's portion of the RHAM schools budget, an increase of 2.9 percent; and \$2,226,941 for the operating budget, which excludes capital expenditures and \$400,000 earmarked for rehabilitation of the bridge on Times Farm Road; \$803,945 is also included in capital expenditures – an increase of \$535,800 over current year spending.

Even though the entire budget is increasing nearly 13 percent, Board of Finance Chairman Dan Warren explained this week, "The actual operating budget [including RHAM and Andover Elementary School but excluding capital expenditures and fund transfers] is only increasing 1.75 percent" or \$183,825.

It's furthered in the budget document provided on the proposal, "The remainder of the increase in spending is related to capital improvements for the town's ailing infrastructure and committing portions of the General Fund to provide seed money for future projects related to the town garage and replacing the senior center with a multi-use public building."

Some of the capital investments included in the proposal are: \$308,000 for the replacement

of portions of the Andover Elementary School roof; \$100,000 for emergency road improvements and a road condition survey; \$50,000 for fire department apparatus bay ventilation; \$33,000 for a public work's lease; \$30,000 for fire department floor milling and sealing; \$25,000 to restore the library windows; \$20,000 for repairs or a matching grant for the 12-person bus used by the senior center; and \$5,800 for upgrades to the Hop River State park Pedestrian Bridge.

The overall budget also includes \$300,000 earmarked for the aforementioned public works building project and the community center building project.

While the overall proposed budget increase is double-digits, taxes would remain the same, thanks to the use of a number of offsets, including \$502,000 from the unassigned general fund that currently contains approximately \$2.5 million; \$164,080 from the assigned general fund; a \$240,000 Open Space offset; a \$240,000 working capital offset; and spending \$107,000 in recent operating surpluses.

Warren said, "Basically, the town has been underexpending the budget for many years so we built up a robust cash reserve, so we're proposing to spend down some of those cash reserves on some of these projects."

Speaking to some of those items, Warren said, "One of the biggest expenses for capital is the school roof project. The town has money in a dedicated account for school improvements so we're proposing to spend from that to offset that project."

He added, "The fire department projects, again there's a separate bank account for non-recurring capital so we're proposing to spend some of that money. The Times Farm Bridge project again, there's another bank account, and

a working capital account with over \$500,000 in it."

Warren furthered, "So some of the money we're proposing to spend is money that has been earmarked over the years for capital or one-time costs and some of the other money is cash reserves that have grown due to budget surpluses in recent years."

The proposal also includes a one percent salary increase for officials; contracted increases for union employees, which includes public works, the assessor, assistant assessor and tax collector; and variable increases for non-union administrative employees.

In addition, there's a seven percent increase in benefits, up to \$337,500 from \$315,385; and an 18 percent decrease in insurance, down to \$105,000 from \$128,000.

Also included in the spending package are increases in a number of other areas including an 11 percent increase, or \$2,128 in the elections budget to raise poll worker wages; a \$4,000 increase in the registrars budget for state-mandated training; a 98 percent, or \$7,315 increase in the administrative assistant's budget based on anticipated salary; a \$35,000 increase in the public works department budget to hire a part-time public works/facilities manager; a \$12,000 increase to the Planning and Zoning Commission budget to hire a contract-based town planner; and a four percent, or \$4,602 increase to the Fire Commission budget to reflect increase maintenance costs.

Decreases, meanwhile, include a 19 percent or \$8,965 decrease in the treasurer's budget, based on anticipated salaries; a nine percent or \$9,400 decrease in the snow removal budget to reflect a five-year average; a seven percent or \$11,278 decrease to the transfer station budget to reflect recent spending; and a 19.5 percent

or \$21,936 decrease to the library budget due to library staff benefits being removed from the line item.

Warren said of the proposal, "For some of these capital expenditures we don't have very many options. Times Farm Bridge is in extreme disrepair and we're also up against a window for federal aid matching grant. So basically have to get that started this year. And again, the school roof is a similar thing where it's critical that it be done; the town's known about it for a couple years and we've got to take action otherwise the cost could be more."

Warren also pointed out some of the increases the Board of Finance has no control over, such as the increase to the RHAM budget, the increase in the cost of maintaining a resident state trooper, which went up more than 13 percent, "and the fact the budget is basically absorbing the municipal aid cuts expected from the state."

Warren added, "This budget is also taking the first steps to kind of get a better managed public works and road improvement program which is something people have been talking about for a couple years. Between the road condition survey and getting a public works/facilities manager I think this budget goes a long way to spending those public works dollars much more efficiently."

And, he concluded, "We're not proposing to increase taxes."

* * *

The 2016-17 budget proposal will head to the annual town budget meeting next Thursday, May 5, at 7 p.m. in the town office building. If the budget passes, it will then head to referendum for a final vote.

The full budget document is available at Town Hall, 17 School Rd., or at andoverconnecticut.org.

Crash Closes Route 6 in Andover

by Geeta S. Sandberg

A two-car crash closed Route 6 at the intersection of Parker Bridge Road, and brought LifeStar to the scene, last Friday morning, according to state police.

The crash took place around 7:40 a.m. April 22, when, police said, Manuel Tavalera-Lopez, 31, of 66 Spring St., Willimantic, who was heading eastbound, traveled into the westbound lane and struck Ciaran Wilcox, 44, of 362 Day St., Brooklyn, in a near head-on collision.

According to Andover Fire Chief Ron Mike, Route 6 was closed "no more than an

hour."

Tavalera-Lopez was transported via LifeStar to Hartford Hospital with non-life threatening injuries; Wilcox was transported to Windham Hospital via ambulance for an evaluation.

Police said both vehicles were removed by wreckers.

Tavalera-Lopez, who has since been released from the hospital, was charged with driving without a license and failure to drive right.

East Hampton Police News

4/8: Thomas Einsiedel, 19, of 6 Edgerton St., was arrested and charged with possession of cocaine, possession of heroin, possession of a hallucinogen, possession of less than half an ounce of marijuana and possession of drug paraphernalia, East Hampton Police said.

4/14: Angelo Salvatore Capparella, 33, of 130 Lewis Ave., Meriden, was arrested and charged with violating a protective order, police said.

4/16: A 17-year-old juvenile of East Hampton was issued a summons after a brief investigation into an evading one-car motor vehicle accident. The juvenile was charged with driv-

ing under the influence, evading responsibility, failure to drive right, violating passenger restriction and possession of alcohol by a minor.

4/17: Joshua Secore, 20, of 229 East High St., was issued a summons for third-degree criminal mischief, police said.

4/18: Robert Glidden, 28, of 11 Brookside Ct., was issued a summons for after hours in a state park, operating while under suspension and operating an unregistered and uninsured motor vehicle.

Colchester Police News

4/17: Colchester Police said they are investigating after a resident on Halls Hill Road reported someone entered their apartment and stole miscellaneous items. Police said there was no sign of forced entry and the incident may have occurred a week and a half earlier. Anyone with any information can call Officer Cyril Green at 860-537-7270.

4/18: State Police said Jameela Stoney, 30, of 69 Winchester St., Hartford, was arrested and charged with failure to appear.

4/18: State Police said Arthur Bruce, 39, of 324 Boswell Ave., Norwich, was arrested and charged with violation of probation.

4/21: Colchester Police said Nicole Clarke, 33, of 108 Hope St., Willimantic, was arrested and charged with operating under suspension and following too closely.

Hebron Police News

4/21: State Police said Cody Shorey, 18, of 22 Westridge Dr., Bolton, was arrested and charged with DUI and failure to drive right.

Obituaries

Portland

Dorothy Eccles

Dorothy Patricia (Sullivan) Eccles, 89, of Portland, died Monday, April 18. Born to the late Maurice J. and Susan (Murray) Sullivan March 15, 1927, in Greenwich, she was a lifelong resident of Connecticut.

Predeceased by her husband, Thomas R. Eccles, Sr. and her son, Thomas R. Eccles Jr., she lived nearly an equal number of years in both Greenwich and Portland.

Known as Pat, Dot and Dottie to her fine and supportive friends, she is survived by her four children: Patricia E. Clausen of Portland; Jeffrey M. Eccles of Brookfield; Mary Linda Reitz of Norristown, Pa.; Timothy J. Eccles of Portland; seven grandchildren, seven great-grandchildren and several nieces and nephews.

She will be remembered always as a great lady who lived the true meaning of unconditional love.

A Mass of Christian Burial was held Friday, April 22, at Saint Pius X Church, 310 Westfield St., Middletown. Burial will be private in Saint Mary's Cemetery in Greenwich.

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

Hebron

Barbara Heneghan

Barbara (Frederick) Heneghan, 87, of Hebron, formerly of Bloomfield and Old Saybrook, passed away Tuesday, April 21, at Hartford Hospital, after a brief illness. She was born to the late Austin and Catherine (Vaughan) Frederick on Feb. 24, 1929, in Hartford.

She was predeceased by her husband of 58 years in 2008, Robert (Bob) Heneghan.

Barbara grew up in Rocky Hill and attended St. Peter's School, the Mount and Annhurst College. Barbara shared the values of family and friendship with all whom she came in contact with and was especially proud of her Irish heritage.

Barbara leaves her three loving children, Carol (Brian) Mahoney of Middletown, R.I., Robert Jr. (Maureen) of Ventnor, N.J., and John (Allison) of Hebron. She also leaves nine adoring grandchildren, Patrick Mahoney of New York, N.Y., Brendan (Sharon) Mahoney of New York, N.Y., Tim Mahoney of La Jolla, Calif., Daniel (Kelley) Heneghan of Haddon Township, N.J., Michael (Karli) Heneghan of Collingswood, N.J., Kate (Mike) Isgro of Cherry Hill, N.J., and Taylor, Kylie and Ryan Heneghan of Hebron. She was loved as "GiGi" by her five great-grandchildren, Madalyn, Grace, Thomas and Reagan Heneghan and Isabella Isgro. She also leaves numerous extended family and friends.

The family will receive guests at noon Saturday, April 30, followed by a celebration of Barbara's life at 1 p.m. at the Church of the Holy Family, 185 Church St. (Route 85), Hebron, CT.

In lieu of flowers, donations in Barbara's name may be made to the Hebron Volunteer Fire and Ambulance, 44 Main St., Hebron, CT 06248 or to the No Freeze Shelter, 5 Bridge St., Willimantic, CT 06226.

The Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home of Colchester has been entrusted with these services. For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

Colchester

Andrew Walker Jr.

Andrew Walker Jr., 78, of Colchester, formerly of Gardner Lake, Bozrah and Hartford, passed away unexpectedly Tuesday, April 19, at home of natural causes. Born Dec. 11, 1938 in Hartford, he was the son of the late Andrew and Nobie (Dupre) Walker.

Andrew served proudly with the U.S. Marine Corps during the late 1950s. Mr. Walker had worked as a machinist for Pratt & Whitney, Electric Boat and Sikorsky Aircraft before his retirement. An avid equestrian, he was one of the first black members and bareback riders in the "Black Rodeo" and was also a founding member of the Ebony Horsemen Club of Hartford. Furthermore, he loved to fish and spend as much time as possible with his family and friends on Gardner Lake in Salem.

He leaves eight children, Jerry, Andrew III, Mark, Ronald, Michelle, Jacqueline, Michelle and Anthony; three stepchildren, Charles, Vanessa and Fatima; 21 grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren; a sister, Arlyce Walker of Bloomfield; and numerous extended family and friends.

He was predeceased by a son, Michael.

A Celebration of his Life will be observed and announced at a later date.

Donations in his memory may be made to the Colchester Senior Center, 95 Norwich Ave., Colchester, CT 06415.

Care of arrangements has been entrusted to the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home of Colchester. For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

East Hampton

Gary Hollis Young

Gary Hollis Young, 45, formerly of East Hampton and Marlborough, passed away suddenly Monday, April 18, in Port St. Lucie, Fla., leaving behind his daughter Laura, who he cherished more than anything in this world.

Gary was born Oct. 28, 1970. He's the son of Daniel Peter Young and Francie Houston and Judith (Moore) and Smokey Varrichio. Mourning the loss are brother Jay and wife Denise of Marlborough, sister Kimberly Kamins and husband Jay of Andover, brother Greg and his wife Leigh-Anne of Coventry, and numerous nieces and nephews who will miss him greatly.

Gary graduated from RHAM High School, Class of 1991, taking a little longer than most, but we swear he stayed for all the sports. A majority of his career was working as a driver for Premier Limousine and as a private chauffeur. He was an avid golfer at Blackledge Golf Course, the place most likely to experience his game and also the scene of several charity events he sponsored. Gary was a huge sports fan, throwing his support behind the New England Patriots, as his many friends will attest.

Our son and brother was extremely giving and caring, with an outgoing personality, which garnered him a lifetime of friends he would do anything for and they in return. In the short time Gary was with us, he left his mark on so many hearts.

There has been such an outpouring of support from all of Gary's friends and the community; it is overwhelming to the family he left behind.

Instead of a public service, the family plans a private ceremony near their childhood summer retreat in Maine, where so many great memories were created.

In lieu of flowers, donations in his memory may be made online by going to suicide.org/hotlines/connecticut-suicide-hotlines.html.

Hebron

Bernice S. Hibbard

Bernice S. Hibbard, 81, of Hebron, passed away Friday, April 22, Earth Day, at the Marlborough Health & Rehabilitation Center. Her loving husband John and her daughter Beth were by her side. She was born Dec. 23, 1934, in Mechanicsburg, Pa., daughter of the late Jacob S. and Alverta (Burket) Stoner.

Bernice married John E. Hibbard on July 3, 1965, in Mechanicsburg. They resided in Glastonbury before moving to Hebron in 1966. She attended Messiah Academy in Grantham, Pa. She graduated from Elizabethtown College, Harrisburg Hospital School of Nursing, and then received her MS in Nursing from Yale (in 1964). In 1958 and 1959, she volunteered with the Brethren Volunteer Service and served as a nurse at a hospital in Castañer, Puerto Rico.

She worked as a nurse in various capacities throughout her career, as a visiting nurse, maternal and child health nurse and nursing instructor. Most recently, she was employed by the Connecticut Department of Public Health before her retirement in 1992. Following her retirement, she volunteered with several nonprofit healthcare organizations.

She will be sadly missed but always remembered with love by her husband John of Hebron; her daughter, Beth Hibbard and her partner Theo Golinko of Watertown, Mass.; brother, Leonard E. Stoner and his wife Helen of New Oxford, Pa.; and many extended family and friends.

She was predeceased by her sister, Peggy J. Stoner of Mechanicsburg, Pa.

Funeral services will be held at a later date.

Contributions in her memory may be made to the Gilead Congregational Church at 672 Gilead St., Hebron, CT 06248, or the charitable organization of their choosing.

The Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home of Colchester has been entrusted with funeral arrangements. For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.



Andover

Caitlin Rose Jones

Caitlin Rose Jones, 34, of Manchester, died peacefully on April 15, 2016, surrounded by family.

She is survived by her mother, Laura Green of Manchester; her father, Todd Jones of Andover; and her sister, Jessica Neumuth of Mansfield; her aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces, and nephews; and her best buddies, Thor and Wesley.

A 2000 graduate of RHAM High School, Caitlin loved animals, being with good friends, painting, music, nature, camping, adventure, photography and artichokes.

Calling hours were Saturday, April 23, at Brooklawn Funeral Home, 511 Brook St., Rocky Hill.

In lieu of flowers, donations would be welcome to Protectors of Animals, 144 East Main St., East Hartford, CT 06118.

Andover

Jean Herrick Marco

Jean Herrick Marco, of Andover, passed away Saturday, April 9, following a lengthy illness. Jean was 91 years old and was predeceased by her husband, Michael.

Jean was born in Manchester in 1925. She attended school in Ridgefield and graduated in 1943. After graduation she began a career with Pratt & Whitney that lasted until her retirement in 1990. After retirement Jean and Mike enjoyed spending winters in Fort Meyers, Fla.

Jean is survived by her sisters, Evelyn Hampson of Bolton and Marion Booth of Manchester; her brother and sister-in-law, Carl and Barbara Herrick of Leesburg, Fla.; and many nieces and nephews.

A memorial service will be held today, April 29, at 11 a.m., at Andover Congregational Church, 359 Route 6, Andover.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to Andover Volunteer Fire Department, 11 School Rd., Andover, CT 06232.

Colchester

Benjamin Labonosky III

Benjamin "Ben" Labonosky III, 82, of Colchester, passed away after a brief illness at the UConn Medical Center in Farmington Monday, April 25. Born in Pringle, Pa., on July 24, 1933, he was a son of the late Benjamin and Lottie Labonosky Jr.

He served proudly in the U.S. Army during the Korean War and for several decades worked as a union carpenter. Ben later owned and operated the Country Café, most recently known as Benjamin's Restaurant in Colchester with his family.

He was married to Eleanor Zisk, who predeceased him in 1964. Ben later married Marion Clark, who predeceased him April 24, 2013.

Calling hours will be held from 1 to 3 p.m. Sunday, May 1, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. Military honors will be rendered at the funeral home at 3 p.m.

Colchester

Helen Cecelia Ueberacher

Helen Cecelia Ueberacher, formerly of Brewster, N.Y. and St. Petersburg, FL, passed away Tuesday evening, April 26, in Colchester. Born in Brooklyn, N.Y., Jan. 22, 1914, she was the daughter of the late Michael and Mary (King) Meagher.

Helen married Fred Ueberacher Oct. 15, 1938. The couple raised their family in Brewster, N.Y., and retired to St. Petersburg, Fla. At age 100, Fred predeceased her on Jan. 16, 2015. They shared 76 years of marriage together.

Although Helen had several part time jobs she enjoyed through her life her main commitment was to being a "homemaker" in the truest sense of the word. She created a loving home for her children and grandchildren alike and they were among her greatest joys in life.

She will be sadly missed but always remembered by her son and daughter-in-law, Peter and Barbara Ueberacher of Dover Plains, N.Y., with whom Helen most recently made her home; her daughter and son-in-law, Lynn and Robert Coffey of Hebron; and her five grandchildren, Todd and Marty Ueberacher and Jeff, Diane and Kevin Coffey.

Her granddaughter, Amy, will be welcoming her with open arms.

A funeral Mass will be celebrated Monday, May 2, at 10 a.m., at Good Shepherd Church in Brooklyn, N.Y., the church in which Helen and Fred got married in 1938. Burial will follow at the Cemetery of the Holy Cross, Brooklyn, N.Y.

The Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home of Colchester has been entrusted with these arrangements. For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

Colchester

Robert Thomas Niland Sr.

Robert Thomas Niland Sr., 85, of Warren, Maine, formerly of Colchester, husband of Susan (Holbrook D'Alessio) Niland and the late Jean (King) Niland, died Tuesday, April 19, after a brief illness. Born Sept. 27, 1930, he was the son of the late James M. Niland I and Yvonne (DuPont) Niland.

Bob resided in Meriden for 57 years before moving to Maine. He was a parishioner of St. Joseph Church while in Meriden and later St. Bernard's Church in Rockland, Maine. He attended St. Joseph School and was graduated from Meriden High School. His family summered at Lake Hayward in Colchester, and "the Lake" was always one of his favorite places.

Bob had a love of all things nautical, and served in the U.S. Navy in the Air Transport Squadron in Norfolk, Va. Later in life, he enjoyed sailing on two of his own boats, the Molly Brown and Haste, and was part of a crew of five on a trans-Atlantic voyage on the 35-foot Sprite in 1983.

After his time in the service, Bob worked at The Immick Company in Meriden, which he later purchased and operated after moving it to its new location on South Colony Street. Upon divesting himself of Immick, he worked as a weight technician for the Connecticut State Police. After moving to Maine in 1987, he returned to his love of the water by working at boatyards in the mid-coast area.

Bob was passionate about all his interests, which included camping, bicycling, ham radio, sailing and spending time with his family. He also loved music, and after retirement performed with his church and local barbershop choirs as well as community theatre.

Besides his wife Susan, he is survived by children, Robert T. Niland Jr. and wife Bernadette of Portland, James M. Niland II and wife Lucy of Bloomfield, Patricia J. Gwara and husband Edward of Bristol, Maine, and Erin M. Chenard and husband Tyler of Bath, Maine; stepchildren, Mark E. D'Alessio and wife Darlene of East Hartford, Burry G. D'Alessio of Meriden, and JeriLynn (D'Alessio) Vitale of Warren, Maine; grandchildren, Jennifer (Niland) Wright and husband Michael of Palm Coast, Fla., Simon R. Chenard of Bath, Maine, Mark E. D'Alessio Jr. of East Hartford, Jeremiah C. and Hailey S. D'Alessio of Richmond, Va., Faylyn A., Emily R. and Anthony N. Vitale of Warren, Maine; brother, Jerome J. Niland and wife Hazel of Anville, Pa.; sister-in-law, Joanne (Klisky) Niland of Southington; and several nieces and nephews.

Besides wife Jean, he was predeceased by his parents and brothers, James L. Niland, Richard F. Niland, Francis E. Niland; and sister-in-law, Lucy (Carofino) Niland.

Family and friends attended a Mass of Christian Burial Monday, April 25, at St. Joseph Church, 22 Goodwill Ave., Meriden. Burial with military honors was in Sacred Heart Cemetery. Family and friends called at the John J. Ferry & Sons Funeral Home, 88 E. Main St., Meriden on Sunday, April 24.

In lieu of flowers, contributions in his memory may be made to the National Kidney Foundation, Inc., 30 East 33rd St., New York, NY 10016.

For online condolences, visit jerryfh.com.

Colchester

Daniel L. Clifford

Daniel L. Clifford, 75, of Old Saybrook, passed away Saturday, April 23, at St. Francis Hospital, Hartford. Born July 18, 1940, in Hartford, son of the late Thomas and Esther (Wolfe) Clifford in grew up in Colchester then lived in Oakdale before moving to Old Saybrook in 1985.

Daniel was employed for over 40 years with R.R. Donnelley and Sons as a machinist before retiring. He was a craftsman and a photographer and he enjoyed gardening.

He is survived by a daughter, Stacey Clifford of Windsor; a sister, Constance Wang of Long Island, N.Y.; his nieces and nephews and a cousin; also his granddogs, Jax and Scarlett.

A Mass of Christian Burial will be held Saturday, April 30, at noon, at St. John's Church, 161 Main St., Old Saybrook. Burial will be at the convenience of the family.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to: Estuary Council of Seniors, 220 Main St., Old Saybrook, CT 06475.

Carmon Windsor Funeral Home has care of arrangements.

